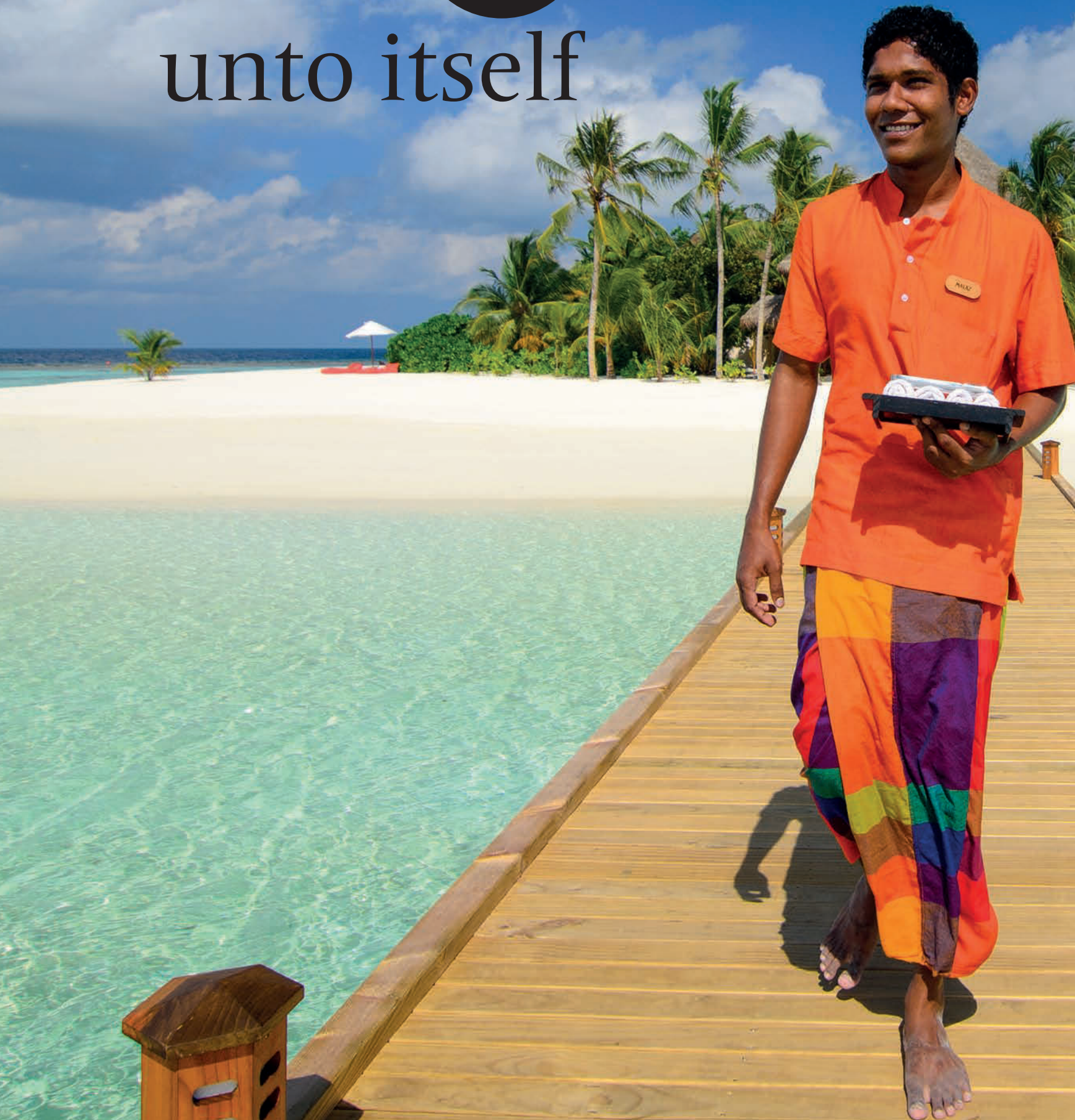


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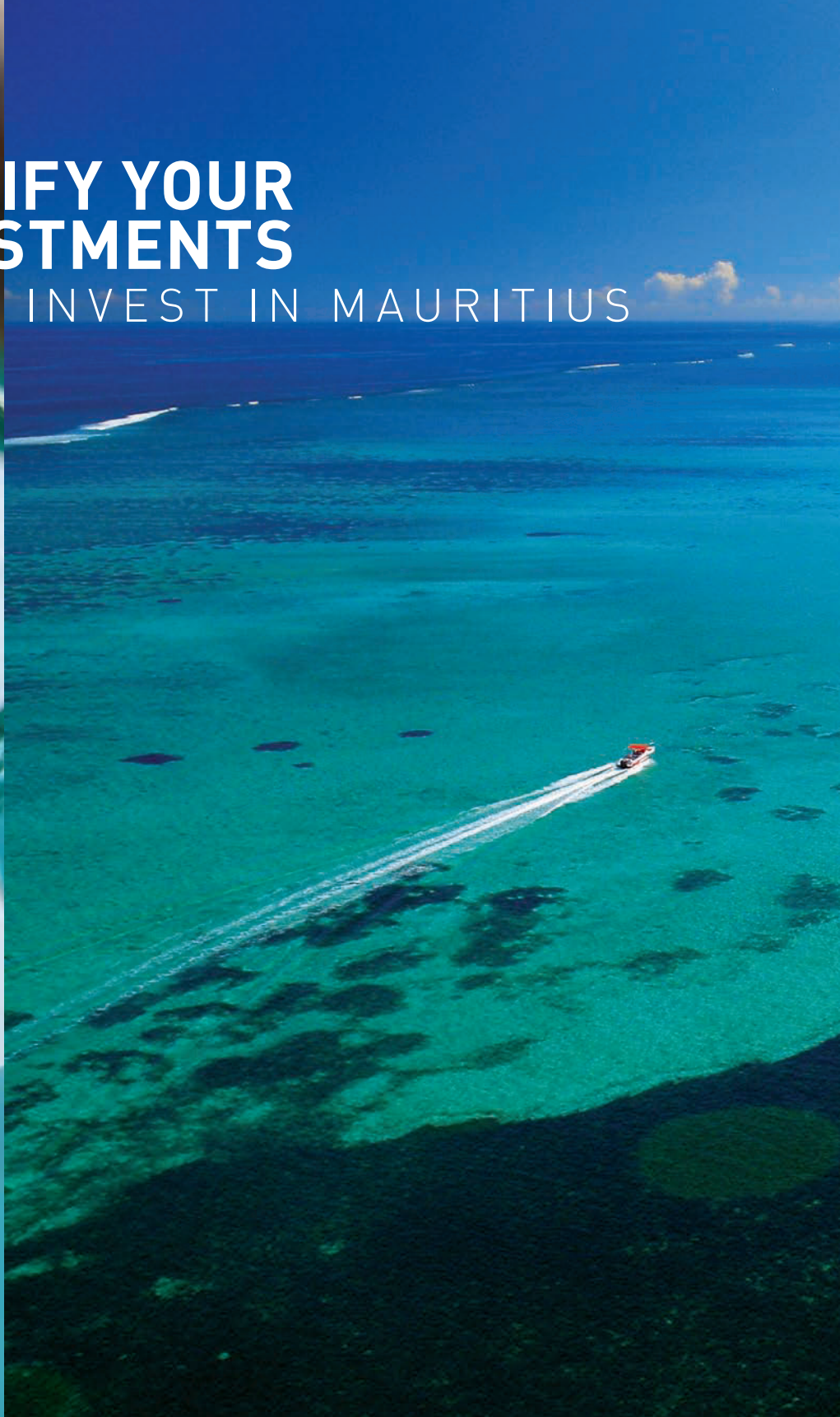


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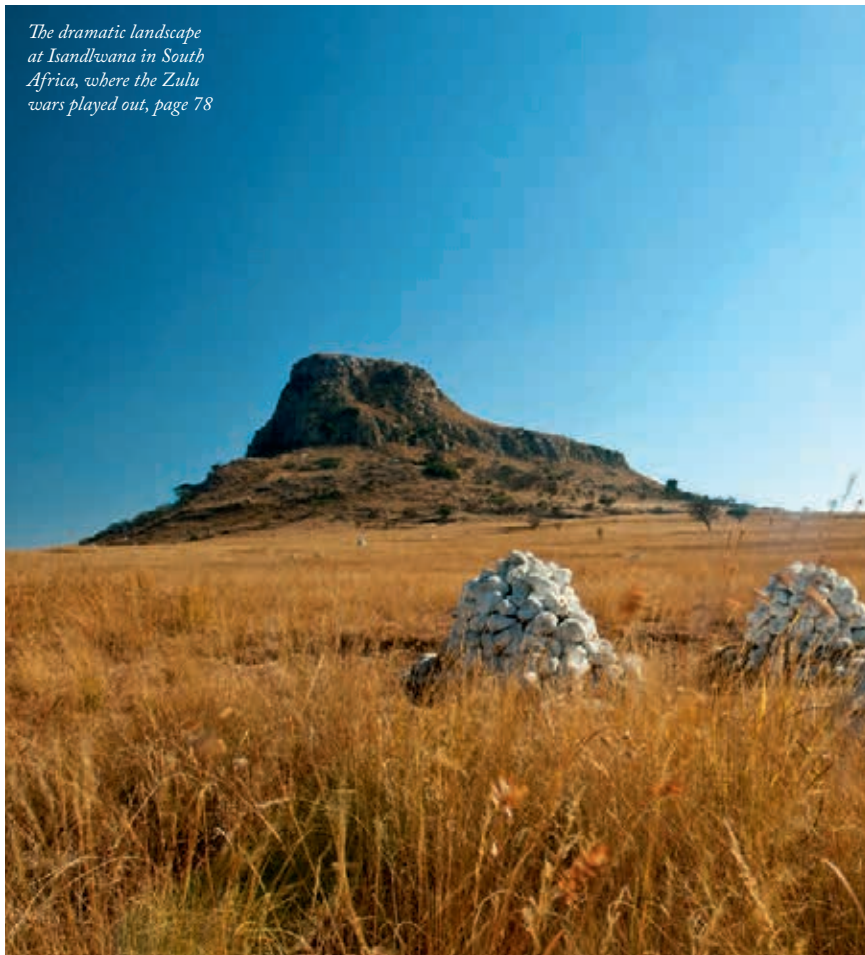
Although Concorde made its final flight almost 12 years ago, for some people, and for all sorts of reasons, the supersonic airliner remains a bit of an obsession

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PHOTO © MICHAEL WINKOUR

The dramatic landscape at Isandlwana in South Africa, where the Zulu wars played out, page 78



Gaggan Anand's almond and saffron kulfi, page 42



Cover: the Jameh Mosque in Yazd, Iran. Image © Mohammed Reza Domiri Ganji

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The exclusive world of luxury air cruises



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Contributors (as collectors)



JOSH SIMS

Our resident writer on all things design and craft related (this month it's Paolo Pininfarina, p36) is a fan of denim and vintage work-wear, mostly British, French and American pieces from the 1930s to the 50s, and mostly jackets. Rather cool.



JEREMY TAYLOR

Freelance motoring journalist Jeremy collects Irish whiskey (with an 'e'). His favourite is Midleton and has been since he lived in County Down 14 years ago. He's careful not to mix hobby and career, especially with guns involved (p21).



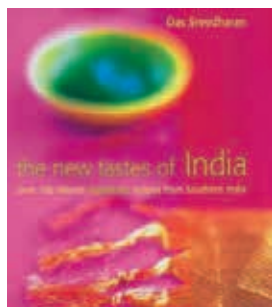
PETER WATTS

He wrote on Concorde collectors (p58) but Peter's passion is London. He has amassed around 150 books about the city but forced to pick one selects Richard Neville's counterculture memoir *Play Power* for its groovily psychedelic cover.



JAMES PARRY

James has a freezer full of corpses. No need to call the police: they are all small animals. Taxidermy has been a fascination since childhood. His favourite piece is a stoat killed by his dog. No animals were harmed in writing his story, see p78.



JENNI MUIR

No surprise that food writer Jenni has a vast cookbook library, several of which she's ghost-written – she's fond of these because of the friendships that developed with the chefs. For this issue she spent time getting to know chef Gaggan Anand (p42).



MICHAEL STREICH

Illustrator Michael (p25) says he can't drive past a nursery without buying a plant. His lawn is getting ever smaller and will, he expects, be taken over by plants in a few years. 'Is this collecting or just a form of hoarding?' he wonders.

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EDITOR

Andrew Humphreys
ART DIRECTOR
Jamie Trendall
PICTURE EDITOR
Julia Holmes
SUB-EDITORS
Kirsten Foster
Steve Handley

PRODUCTION

Helen Hind
REPROGRAPHICS
KFR Reprographics
PRINTING
Wyndeham Grange,
a Wyndeham Group company
LOGISTICS
Spatial Global

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Manuela Festa
+44 (0)20 7613 8782
manuela.festa@ink-global.com
SALES EXECUTIVE
Ariane Perruchot

PUBLISHED BY INK

www.ink-global.com
CEOs
Michael Keating
Simon Leslie

FOR

PrivatAir

PrivatAir SA
Chemin des Papillons 18
PO Box 572, 1215 Geneva 15
Switzerland
Telephone +41 (0)22 929 6700
Fax +41 (0)22 929 6701
info@privatair.com
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To Have or, Possibly, Have Not

Auction Whether she was any good as an actress is up for debate but her status as an enduring screen icon was secured the moment Lauren Bacall turned to Humphrey Bogart, in 1944's *To Have and Have Not*, and said, 'You know how to whistle, don't you, Steve? You just put your lips together and blow.' Moviegoers were instantly smitten, as was Bogart who began an affair with his 19-year-old co-star (who was 25 years his junior) and made her his fourth wife soon after. They did three more pictures together, including *The Big Sleep* and *Key Largo*, before Bogart died of cancer in 1957, when Bacall was just 32. She continued working almost up to her death last year at the age of 89, although she was principally always known as Bogart's girl.

It turns out she was also a collector of art and curiosities. On 31 March, Bonhams in New York will be offering at

an auction approximately 750 items reflecting the actress's, it's fair to say, eclectic tastes. Included in the auction are paintings by Noël Coward, six bronze maquettes by Henry Moore (one of Bacall's favourite artists, apparently), hand-coloured engravings from *The Birds of America* by John James Audubon, Picasso ceramics, tribal works of art, fine jewellery, monogrammed luggage, a Mason & Hamlin baby grand piano and a chunky patinated bronze figure of Humphrey Bogart as Sam Spade from *The Maltese Falcon* in trademark raincoat and fedora.

Also for sale, though not included in the auction, is Bacall's Central Park-facing apartment in the Dakota Building in Manhattan. She bought the home for \$48,000 in 1961 and lived there for the rest of her life; it's currently on the market for \$26m.



TOP: Bacall at home in her Dakota Building apartment, that recline 17 degrees.

ABOVE: a Jean Schlumberger amethyst, turquoise and diamond ring, part of the sale

The Art of Selling

Exhibition The TV show *Mad Men* has been credited with inspiring revivals of everything from boozy cocktail lunches to architecturally impressive tailoring, but one of the most pleasing spin-offs has to be the rediscovery and celebration of artist McCauley Conner. Now 101 years of age, 'Mac' was one of the real-life *Mad Men*, an illustrator who worked on advertising for clients like United Airlines, General Motors, Bell Telephone and even the US Army, as well as turning around editorial commissions for such iconic titles as *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Colliers* and *Good Housekeeping*. This was a time when illustration was often preferred over photography as a medium for presenting the idealised American way of life. 'Optimistic realism' they called it. The work of Mac and his contemporaries didn't so much capture post-war America as help create it. You can draw a line back from Mac's work to that supreme peddler of folksy Americanism, Norman Rockwell, but Mac's Americans inhabit the city and do so with style. The anxieties of city life are often present (as in *How Do You Love Me*, right) but these, of course, could no doubt be dispelled by buying whatever product or subscribing to whichever service Mac was drawing on behalf of.

Mac Conner: *A New York Life is at the House of Illustration in London's King's Cross neighbourhood from 1 April until 28 June; houseofillustration.org.uk*



Pruning the Ivy

Auction For a quarter of a century The Ivy has been one of the hardest restaurants in London at which to get a table. This March it may be possible to secure one permanently for an estimated £1,000-£1,500. Table six is one among hundreds of items from the restaurant up for sale as it undergoes refurbishment. The table comes with six complete place settings – linen, crockery and cutlery – and six armchairs.

Although the restaurant has been around since 1916 and at one time boasted a clientele including the likes of Laurence Olivier and Noël Coward, it had long been out of fashion by the time it was bought by Jeremy King and Chris Corbin in 1990. The Midas twins of the London restaurant scene, they restored not just the physical interior of the place (the exterior has never been much to look at) but its theatrical soul. Under their stewardship The Ivy became the celebrity haunt of the 1990s, where a late sitting on a Friday night was like the Oscars, the Tonys and a Saatchi opening rolled into one. A protected preserve, stained-glass windows thwarted the paparazzi, while neither mobile phones nor cameras were allowed inside.

The Ivy changed hands again in 2005 but maintained its pre-eminence. Now it's being smartened up in time for its centenary celebrations. Not only is table six surplus to requirements, the 25 March auction at Sotheby's ranges from glasses starting at £50 or £80 for a cocktail shaker (left) to the doormat on which thousands of celebrities have wiped their feet. The restaurant itself reopens to diners in May. sothebys.com

The Man Behind the Face on the Plate



Exhibition In case you missed the centenary retrospective that was held in Milan not so long ago, Piero Fornasetti: 100 years of Practical Madness is being reprised in Paris as Piero Fornasetti: la Folie pratique. Fornasetti (born 1913, died 1988) was the Italian artist and designer known primarily for putting a woman's face on a plate. She is winking on one, veiled on another, or she variously sports a Chaplinesque moustache, a helmet, a veil, a mask. She appears in mosaic or sprouting from a shell. It is the same woman, wearing the

same expression. Nobody knows who she is: Fornasetti called her 'Lina Cavalieri' after a famously beautiful Italian soprano, but she was an anonymous face he found in an old wood engraving and then went on to interpret some 350 times.

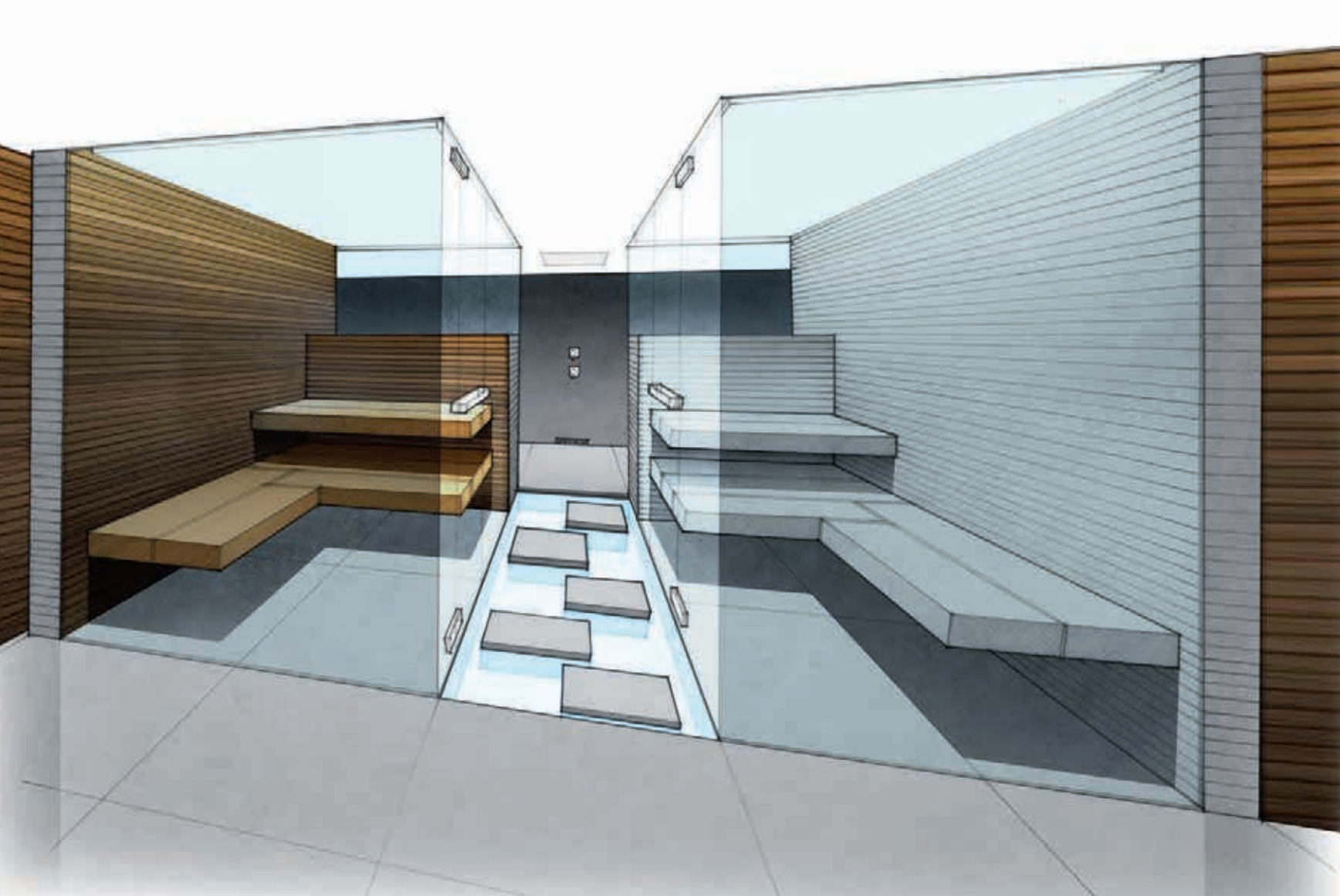
But the plates were only a part of Fornasetti's work, which ran from ceramics to furniture to fabrics, which ran from ceramics to furniture to fabrics to stage sets. He started by studying painting and sculpture in his native Milan, only to be thrown out of art school. Instead he went to Africa. On his return to Italy, one of his first

projects was creating designs for silk scarves, which he produced in vast quantities. His work was characterised by wit, whimsy and a fondness for recycling engraved motifs like the sun, moon and stars. But more than anything, he was prolific. He regarded his work as manufactured pieces, not art, and by the time of his death he was reckoned to have produced some 13,000 items decorated with his signature illustrations. The Paris exhibition stretches to a just a modest thousand exhibits and it's at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs until 14 June. lesartsdecoratifs.fr



Good to Go

Fashion Having made its name providing luxury leather for the restoration of antique cars, and providing the same for the finishing of cabin areas in superyachts and private jets, Italian leather specialist Foglizzo is now turning its hand to luggage. New designs include bespoke trolleys, duffel bags, golf-club holders and tennis-racquet bags, all of which buyers can elect to have made in Foglizzo's array of suede, nubuck and cowhide, in up to 480 colours, depending on the finish. All the items are crafted by the company's in-house designers and artisans at its factory below the Alps. In a hurry? Foglizzo will courier goods anywhere in the world. The company will be present at the European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition in Geneva on 19-21 May. foglizzo.com



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Land Rover's Shooting Star

A collaboration with a gunmaker has created the most luxurious Range Rover ever

Driving There's little to choose between flying first class and travelling in the rear of Land Rover's latest limousine. The Holland & Holland special edition Range Rover may be closer to terra firma but it's also superbly equipped for passenger comfort.

'Holland & Holland make just 70 guns a year, each costing from around €88,000. It was therefore only right that we teamed up with a car manufacturer also regarded as a great British brand,' says managing director Daryl Greatrex. 'We both also hold prestigious royal warrants – Holland & Holland supplies the Prince of Wales with guns – so we compliment each other perfectly.'

From the outside there is little to suggest the new car is anything but a standard, long-wheelbase Range Rover. It's only when you climb inside the cabin that the bespoke character of the €240,000 Holland & Holland model becomes apparent.

Seats are deeply sculpted in premium leather and recline up to 17 degrees. A pair of multimedia screens is mounted on the back of the front seats, while French walnut tables deploy at the touch of a button. There's unique green paintwork and door handles engraved to resemble the side of a gun.



TOP: premium leather seats that recline 17 degrees.

ABOVE: discreet Holland & Holland badging in the interior

If that's not enough to tempt a shooting enthusiast, Greatrex reveals one more unique feature: a leather-bound gun cabinet. Designed to carry the brand's own shotguns, it can be deployed from the boot on an aluminium platform. It also doubles as a picnic table.

While the new Range Rover is a masterpiece in itself, a Holland & Holland gun can take craftsmen over 800 hours to assemble. Most are sold in America, as well as the Middle East and the UK. 'We like to think that while you can buy a less expensive four-wheel drive or a much cheaper gun, this is a vehicle that perfectly represents the values Land Rover and Holland & Holland stand for,' says Greatrex.

Just 40 Holland & Holland models will be built every year for the next three years, each loaded with either a 4.4-litre diesel or 5.0-litre supercharged petrol engines, the latter capable of 0-60mph in 5.1 seconds.

What remains to be seen is how many Holland & Holland owners are prepared to take the most expensive Land Rover ever off the road and across a very muddy field.

Jeremy Taylor



LEONARD
PROPERTIES

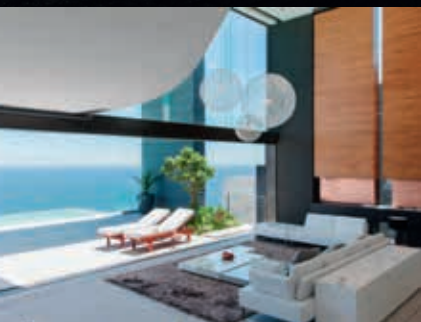
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GENEVA, COLOGNY



The Viceroy is located on the left hand side of the trunk of the Palm looking back across the ocean towards Dubai Marina. It is situated directly on the water so the view will never change.

With 4 en-suite bedrooms, 4 separate living spaces and a private infinity pool, this penthouse has everything needed and more! The penthouse comes fully furnished by Viceroy to a 5 star standard.

4 large bedrooms, sea and city view, 5 star hotel service easy access, private pool, fully furnished, built up area 13,660 sq. ft.

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This magnificent, uniquely-appointed, contemporary villa - with swimming pool and floor area of 876 m² including a 6-car garage - will be located on a plot of approx. 2,000 m², enjoying an incredible view of the lake.

The villa will consist of a very large living room with access to the terrace, a dining room, an open-plan kitchen, 6 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, a spa, a fitness room, a wine cellar and a home cinema lounge. It will be luxuriously-finished, have a lift servicing all 3 floors, and home automation and security devices throughout.

The construction has started and the delivery will be in summer 2016. Price: on request

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OUT IN THE WILDERNESS

Resort Vancouver Island is true wild country. This vast landmass of over 30,000 square kilometres contains mountain ranges to rival the Rockies, as well as alpine lakes, glacial ice fields, and ancient cedar and hemlock forests. Over on the island's west coast, beside the Bedwell River, Clayoquot Wilderness Resort celebrates this native landscape, while bringing a level of luxury few would expect from a former mining locale.

Founder John Caton didn't intend to produce Exhibit A for the global 'glamping' phenomenon when he created this sanctuary, but he had a hunch that guests would connect with the notion that you can have it all: a remote wilderness get-away and all the amenities of a five-star resort. The place is constructed to blend with the environment, so guests hardly notice the platform tents peeking out of the forest above the Bedwell estuary, or the cookhouse, spa or billiards tent.

Arriving down from the resort town of Tofino, which is a 30-minute ride by boat (the resort

also has a private floatplane to ferry guests directly from Vancouver), the adventure begins dockside where a Norwegian Fjord horse team trots guests up to the main camp. Here, you are introduced to your 'tent', each the size of a small apartment, appointed with heirloom furniture, including custom-built willow bed, and illuminated by candles and kerosene lanterns.



It would be tempting to wallow in pampered indolence, but the wilderness calls. Clayoquot has a dedicated activity director who oversees a menu of activities ranging from skeet shooting to horseback riding in the rainforest. After a hard day's adventuring, dinner is served in chef Ryan Orr's cookhouse, and may well include king salmon and halibut caught that morning in local waters, eaten in the company of guests swapping tales of a visit to a glacier field or a first deep sea-fishing lesson out on the Sound (if you wish, the camp will freeze and ship your catch back home).

For anyone short on time, new for 2015, Clayoquot is offering a one-night fly camp at the top of nearby Ursus Mountain. Guests are flown in by helicopter to spend 24 hours at the 'Cloud Camp', set 1,370m above sea level. You get to enjoy walks around a private mountain lake and dine under the stars on a five-course meal prepared by a private chef. The price is equivalent to €1,769 per person based on adult double occupancy. *Crai S Bower*

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WHY BOTHER WITH BURGUNDY?

*Because there's a world
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says Nina Caplan*



*Nina Caplan is the Fortnum & Mason
Drink Writer of the Year 2014*



THERE IS NOWHERE QUITE LIKE Burgundy – the legendary Côte d’Or looks down its elegant slopes at the idea of blending grapes, an attitude that makes it the perfect example of *terroir*, or the expression of a place through wine. Great Burgundy wines are made from Pinot Noir if red, Chardonnay if white. On the one hand, this means winemakers can’t adjust the proportions of different grape varieties to suit the year’s weather or prevailing fashions, as those in other wine regions, even revered ones such as Bordeaux and Champagne, can. On the other, it ensures that every variation in the soil sings in the glass.

Using just two grapes should make life simple when it comes to the label, but it doesn’t work like that, thanks to a hierarchy of vineyards, usually divided among multiple owners (often sharing a surname, thanks to French law, which requires land to be divided equally between children). There are Grands Crus and Premiers Crus, village names, district names and family names. There’s no denying, it’s confusing. No wonder *Inside Burgundy*, the excellent book by Jasper Morris on the region’s wines and wine-makers, is a wrist-snapper at 650 pages.

So, why bother with Burgundy? Well, for a start, because there is nothing quite like it. The heady fragrance of great Pinot or the warm, intense subtleties of the region’s best Chardonnays are much imitated but never equalled. Burgundy, planted with vines by the Romans, has been *the* wine of France since the time that such a place first appeared on maps. Burgundy is what France drank back when the French were the undisputed leaders of the drinking world. Contrast that with Bordeaux, which was made for the English, who owned the territory for 300 years from the middle of the 12th century, thanks to Henry II’s marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Burgundy is also a prime demonstration of the joys of complexity in wine: if wine were not complex, we’d all drink vodka with grape juice and have done with it. In the same way that opening a bottle of wine doesn’t mean having to drink the whole thing, appreciating Burgundy doesn’t require huge levels of expertise, just an adventurous palate and a reasonably open wallet. It might be useful to remember that Gevrey-Chambertin wines are substantial and chewy while Volnay wines are more delicate, or that 2002, 2005 and

RIGHT: *The Seysses family has been making superb Burgundies at Domaine Dujac in Morey-Saint-Denis since 1969*



'If wine were not complex, we'd all drink vodka with grape juice and have done with it'

2009 are this century's best vintages so far. You might also like to be aware that Burgundy proper consists of the Côte d'Or, or Golden Slope, a limestone escarpment extending 30 miles south of Dijon that divides into the Côte de Nuits (red wines) and the Côte de Beaune (red and white), or that greater Burgundy also incorporates Chablis and the Auxerrois to the north and the Mâconnais and Côte Chalonnaise (and, some would say, Beaujolais) to the south. Then again, you might not.

Generally, good Burgundy of either colour is not cheap but a talented vigneron with scattered holdings will make wines at different price points. Take Bruno Clair, based in Marsannay-la-Côte. I've never had a wine of his that was less than drinkable but that doesn't mean they're all of the same quality – or price point. Justerini & Brooks sell his Marsannay Les Longeroies 2011 for around €22 a bottle. This single-vineyard is bright, full of red plums – a wine that can keep for several years. But it lacks the patrician finesse of his Chambertin Clos de Bèze, which is a

Grand Cru, the highest denomination a Burgundian vineyard can have. Berry Bros offers this at around €4,000 a case for the 2009, or half that for the 2008, which was a poor vintage. I'd be tempted to buy a case of each and try them against each other, one bottle of each a year. I'd also get the Longeroies for earlier drinking – and probably taste that against its older and nobler siblings, too, to begin understanding the nuances, fine as chalk powder, of terroir.

Other names to try include the great Domaine Armand Rousseau, the fragrant, ever-consistent Domaine Dujac, Maison J Faiveley in Nuits-St-Georges, the wonderful white wines of Domaine Leflaive (not to be confused with those of Olivier Leflaive who, in my opinion, fails to match the quality produced by his cousin Anne-Claude), and Hubert Lamy in St-Aubin. There's a lifetime of adventuring to be done among the bottles of great Burgundy – and, thanks to those tiny domains, clustered in that short, undulating strip of extraordinary vineyards, you won't have to travel very far.



Drinking with Hemingway *Dingo, Paris*

Ernest Hemingway was not yet a published novelist in April 1925 when he met Scott Fitzgerald at the Dingo bar in Montparnasse. Yet, although his novel *The Great Gatsby* had just been released, it was Fitzgerald, squiffy on Champagne, who indulged in hero worship, praising Hemingway's short stories.

At least that's how Hemingway tells it in *A Moveable Feast*, the account of his early years in Paris, published in 1964. Hemingway describes the older writer quizzing him about his sex life before being suddenly overcome by drink, whereupon he had to be loaded into a taxi. So began a brief and later acrimonious friendship of sorts between the two (if you had Hemingway as a friend, there was no need for enemies).

The bar where they met was at 10 rue Delambre; a small place, with only six tables and a few stools at the bar. By common consent its greatest asset was its Liverpudlian barman, Jimmy Charters, a consummate diplomat and ready ear. He'd also boxed in his youth, which would have impressed the pugilistic Hemingway. When Jimmy wrote his memoirs, Hemingway supplied a rare introduction: 'If his book has only one-half of his charm, one-quarter of his knowledge, and one-quarter of his experience it should still be a fairly intoxicating volume.'

In the late 1920s Jimmy moved to the Falstaff on nearby rue du Montparnasse. His regulars, including Hemingway, followed. Some preferred the faux-English Falstaff for being quieter and less drunken, qualities you wouldn't usually associate with a Hemingway-favoured bar. Today, the Falstaff survives, the Dingo does not, and *The Great Gatsby* is more popular than ever. History is unfair.

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THE LOAN UNARRANGER

A record-breaking Gauguin sale has made museum directors twitchy, says James Parry

ART AFICIONADOS HAVE BEEN AGOG SINCE the announcement in *The New York Times* in early February of the private sale of Paul Gauguin's 1892 oil painting *Nafea Faa Ipoipo* (*When Will You Marry?*) for a sum believed to be close to \$300 million. If the price tag is correct, this would make it the most expensive artwork ever sold, trumping the \$250-plus million that was paid four years ago for Paul Cézanne's *The Card Players*.

The Gauguin painting, a voluptuous portrayal of two Polynesian girls, is regarded as one of the artist's most desirable works and was created during the first of his two visits to Tahiti. The buyer is rumored to be the Qatar Museums Authority – the big-spending purchaser of *The Card Players*. The enthusiasm of the Qataris for acquiring art is the stuff of contemporary legend, and their prodigiously deep pockets are having a defining impact on certain parts of the art market. Saleroom prices for top quality Islamic pieces were blown out of the water a few years ago when the Qataris went on a buying spree to fill what has since become the flagship Museum of Islamic Art in Doha.

Nafea Faa Ipoipo was sold by Rudolf Staechlin, a retired Sotheby's executive responsible for a personal family collection that contains over 20 Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works by the likes of Picasso, Pissarro and Van Gogh.

Largely assembled by Staechlin's grandfather (also Rudolf) during and after the First World War, the collection was passed on loan to the Kunstmuseum in Basel after Rudolf senior's death in 1946. The disposal of the Gauguin painting and its removal from the Kunstmuseum has prompted an outcry and much handwringing, both in Switzerland and further afield, about the vulnerability of longstanding loans to mega-wealthy buyers in search of trophy pieces.

At press time, Staechlin had so far refused to confirm either the price paid or the identity of the buyer, but he was keen to make the point that the world moves on.

'In a way it's sad,' he admitted, 'but on the other hand, it's a fact of life. Private collections are like private persons. They don't live forever.'

In this particular case there was the added complication of a dispute between the family and the local canton, but the reality of the situation was not lost on the public. The Kunstmuseum closed a few weeks ago for renovations and will not reopen until spring 2016. A record-breaking 7,500 visitors crowded in on its final weekend for a last peek at the Gauguin in what had been its home for decades.

However, there's still a chance to see the painting; it remains on show in Basel as part of an extended tour, currently at the Fondation Beyeler,



James Parry is consultant editor of Sorbet magazine



PHOTO © CORBIS; ILLUSTRATION KATY WAKEFIELD



'Private collections are like private persons. They don't live forever'

just a few kilometres from the Kunstmuseum. From there it will travel to Madrid (to the Reina Sofia museum) and then Washington DC (the Phillips Collection) for a last hurrah before being received by its new owners next January.

Gauguin's star status was further burnished at the Beyeler on 8 February when Hollywood celeb Keanu Reeves – who has Polynesian ancestry – took a break from his day job to read from *Noa Noa*, Gauguin's travel journal from his time in Tahiti, in front of a spellbound crowd.

Although it may still grace the walls of a public venue in future, the fate of *Nafea Faa'ipoipo* has focused attention on the fact that long-term loans to museums are just that: loans. They can be recalled by their owners and then disposed of, potentially disappearing from public view – if the price is right. As Rudolf Staechlin pithily put it, he sold the painting 'mainly because we got a good offer. The market is very high and who knows what it will be in ten years. For me [the paintings] are history and art. But they are also security and investments.'

Museum directors around the world will no doubt be sleeping less comfortably as a result of this sale. Perhaps it's time for them to check the deeds of loan for the most precious objects in their galleries and maybe start schmoozing the lenders a little, just in case.

PRIVAT
PROPERTY

The World's Best Addresses

When you have the option of living absolutely anywhere, in any city, then where do you choose? asks Zoe Dare Hall

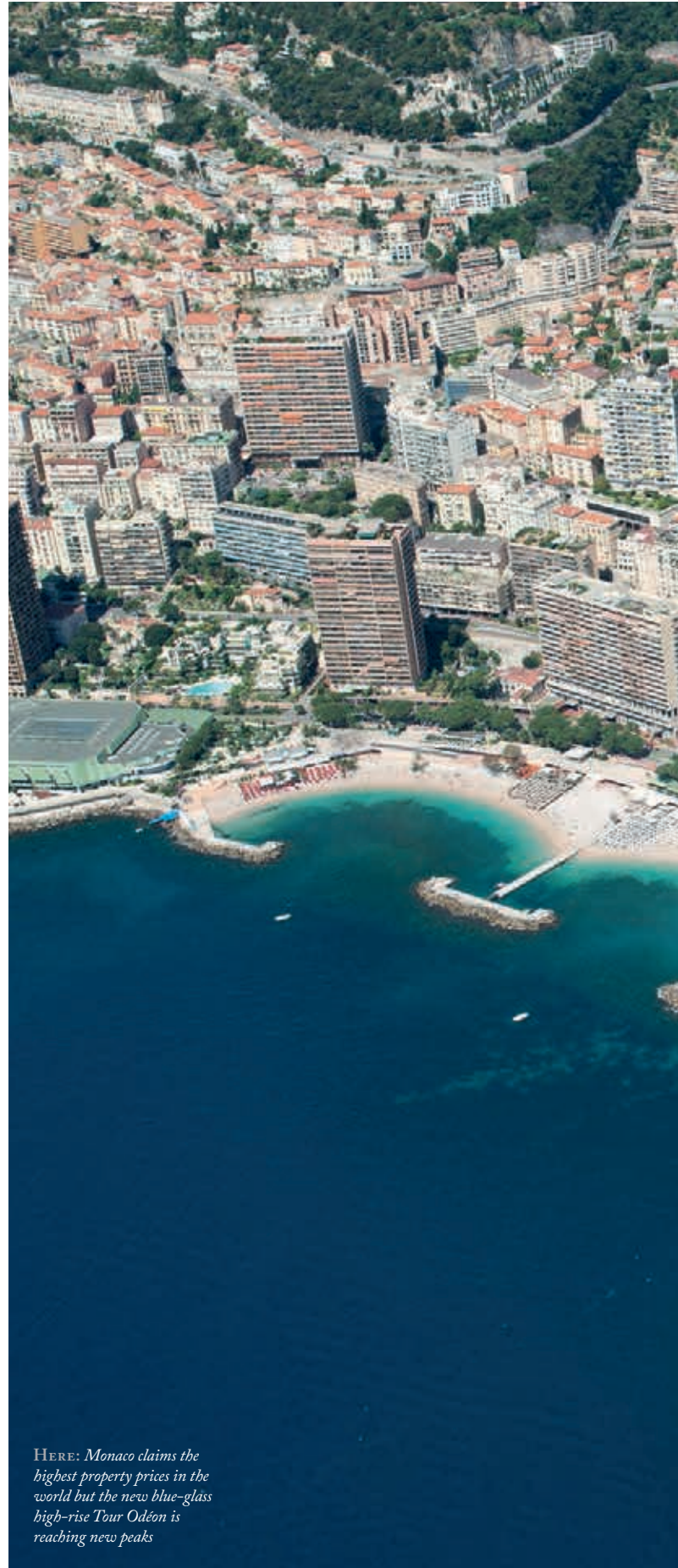
FOR THE SUPER-RICH IN SEARCH of a home with the best address in town, some cities – Sydney or Singapore, for example – are simple. There is an undisputed trophy street or two that offers unbeatable views, lifestyle and architecture at the highest prices around.

Other cities, however, such as London, may leave a poor billionaire with a tough decision. With unadulterated luxury on offer across the map, it ultimately comes down to whether you want historical prestige or high-tech bling. Or there's Paris, where you can choose from historical prestige with idiosyncrasies or historical prestige with a different set of idiosyncrasies.

Luxury realtor Engel & Völkers routinely records the world's most expensive addresses and currently it places Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat's Avenue Claude Vignon at the top of the pile. A villa recently sold there for €120m. Knight Frank's World's Priciest Streets index – last done in 2013 – puts Pollock's Path on Hong Kong's The Peak at number one. 'To achieve the highest prices, it's all about the micro-location – not just being on the right street, but on the right side of the street and the right floor of a building,' says Engel & Völkers' Julia Grobecker.

Disregarding opinions to the contrary, marketing brochures for London's One Hyde Park make the claim that this prestigious, unimaginably luxurious and inconceivably expensive development in Knightsbridge is in fact 'the world's best address', which would make the three resale apartments currently on the market with Strutt and Parker at €13-26m a comparative bargain.

'If you are coming from the Middle East, then living on Hyde Park with hot and cold running staff is the ultimate. Others want lateral living but across three historic buildings in Eaton Square,' says David Forbes, head of Savills' Private



HERE: Monaco claims the highest property prices in the world but the new blue-glass high-rise Tour Odéon is reaching new peaks

PHOTO © ALAMY



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CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: *New York's best address is Park Avenue, ideally with Central Park views; park views also demand a premium in London, particularly in Nash's Palladian terraces overlooking Regent's Park; in Paris, some of the most covetable homes overlook the greenery of Place des Vosges*



Office. 'Older European money will look at an address such as Chesham Place in Belgravia, which is low-key externally and utterly secure. If you're the ruler of a small country, you'll head to The Bishop's Avenue for a low-build house with electric gates, security cameras and large gardens.'

There is a degree of consensus among prime central London agents, with three addresses routinely cited as the best. The first is Kensington Palace Gardens. 'The size of the houses – often 30,000 square feet [2,800 square metres] – the location and security have made it the choice of billionaires wanting to settle in London,' says Howard Elston from Aylesford International. 'But they'll need £100m [€135m] to buy here and accept that this is for a Crown Estate lease.'

Next is Eaton Square, which is probably the most famous garden square in London due to its size, high-value transactions of architecturally pure, white-stucco mansions costing up to and over €100m and its famous residents, including the land-owner himself, the Duke of Westminster, at No.100.

Third are Sir John Nash's Palladian-style terraces overlooking Regent's Park. 'Buyers are drawn by the beautiful period architecture, the location, views and exclusive sense of community,' says Mark Pollack from Aston Chase. Recent buyers include Tom Ford, Damien Hirst and – tellingly, for someone at the forefront of creating London's best new addresses,

including One Hyde Park – property developer Christian Candy.

In central Paris, the choice seems relatively simple. There is less architectural diversity than London, almost no new-build, and – no matter how international and wealthy the clientele – the overriding style is still very Parisian. Many Middle Eastern and Russian buyers will look no further than the 8th arrondissement's Golden Triangle and particularly Avenue Montaigne. 'It's the most elegant and exclusive avenue that Paris has to offer,' says Marie-Helene Lundgreen, director at

Daniel-Feau, affiliate of Christie's International Real Estate, who is marketing a one-bed serviced apartment for €3.5m.

Susie Hollands from Vingt Paris argues that while the Golden Triangle is supposed to be at the top of the market, the Champs-Élysées is 'definitely not the best address any more. It's a bit "has-been" and unsophisticated. You would choose it purely for bling.' Hollands would nominate Place des Vosges in the historic Marais – popular with British and American buyers – or prime Latin Quarter streets around Boulevard St Germain. A three-storey apartment off Place Saint Sulpice is on sale for €12.5m with Vingt Paris, and it has a garden, one of the features even super-rich buyers in Paris will be hard pressed to find, along with garages, staff accommodation and concierge services.

There is little dispute about New York's best address. 'The answer has to be Park Avenue, preferably with uninterrupted views of Central Park,' says Savills' David Forbes. 'Then a buyer has the choice of a luxury development with a hotel such as 157 Park Avenue, with a Grand Hyatt, where the penthouse sold for \$100m [€87m], or a purely residential tower such as 432 Park Avenue at 57th Street.'

Similarly, there's no question that in Sydney, for anyone with the funds to afford it, a modern waterfront mansion on Point Piper is at the apex of desirability. It's where you will



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Madrid's premier address is arguably Calle Alfonso XII, running alongside Retiro Park; in Sydney it is definitely Point Piper; in Barcelona it's possibly Paseo de Gracia, particularly if the property has views of Gaudí's fantastical Casa Batlló



find Wolseley Road, one of the world's most expensive streets and home to Sydney's – and increasingly some of Asia's – wealthiest buyers. Currently up for sale on neighbouring New South Head Road is the Elaine Estate. Described as 'Australia's most significant home', the 1.7-acre Victorian waterfront estate fronting onto Sydney Harbour is on the market for offers in excess of €54m. 'Wealthy people don't live downtown in Sydney, they go to Point Piper for the views of the harbour, bridge and Opera House, and direct water access to their boat,' says David Forbes.

Oddly, the super-rich in Barcelona aren't so bothered about being on the waterfront. Catalan – and, increasingly, global – wealth tends to congregate around Paseo de Gracia, the wide, designer brand-lined boulevard where prime property prices can exceed €20,000 per square metre. 'It has always been the best address because of its architecture, including Gaudí's landmark buildings, and apartments can be up to 500 square metres with wide views and impressive entrance halls,' says Alex Vaughan from Lucas Fox. Prices are likely to see another boost when a planned Four Seasons hotel opens there. The ultimate trophy property on Paseo de Gracia has to be the flamboyantly palatial apartment Lucas Fox are marketing for €3m, with gilded mouldings, mosaic floors and – most importantly – views directly across the street to Gaudí's wonderful Casa Batlló.

In Madrid, prime addresses are more to do with quality of life rather than postcode prestige, so the choice is highly subjective, says Lucas Fox's agent there, Rod Jamieson. But for a sought-after street that combines the best of both, it has to be Calle Alfonso XII, which runs along Retiro Park. 'There are stunning señorial 18th-century buildings and nearby are the Prado, luxury boutiques and Michelin-starred restaurants.

'Tour Odéon's penthouse owners can feel confident they have the priciest property on the priciest street in the world'

Residents are typically wealthy, old-money Madrileños,' says Jamieson. Expect to pay €3-4m for those park views.

You will need rather more to afford Singapore's two trophy addresses. If it's smart and central you fancy, it has to be the Orchard Road area, with its posh boutiques and restaurants. The must-have address is Nassim Road, home to the Nassim Park Residences where recent sales average around €7.8m. For something less urban, the prime address is Sentosa Island. 'It has more of a holiday feel, with golf, casinos and marinas, but it's still linked to the business district by a bridge,' says David Forbes. 'If Orchard Road is Singapore's Knightsbridge, Sentosa is its Wentworth,' he adds. Savills has a four-bed 'resort-style villa' on Sentosa for €22m.

And finally, an address that could make even One Hyde Park's residents blush. Monaco's newest and tallest building, Tour Odéon, is home to the world's most expensive apartment – the five-storey penthouse, whose price is open to negotiation but in the realm of at least €240m. Neighbours on Princess Grace Avenue include Lewis Hamilton and Roger Moore, and the penthouse's owner can feel fairly confident they have the priciest property in the priciest street in the world. Now that's a micro-location that will take some beating.



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A Nice Problem to Have

*Family-run Italian design
firm Pininfarina is facing
exciting new challenges,
from sustainable car
design to space labs*

*Story by Josh Sims
Photography by Susan Wright*





D

DESIGNING A FERRARI MIGHT

be said to make you over-qualified to design a drone – a self-assembly toy drone, that is, not the kind favoured by the US government. But Paolo Pininfarina is having none of it. ‘The drone flies, and we’ve always been devoted to aerodynamic design,’ he says drolly. ‘Besides, recently we’ve been involved in aircraft design projects, so it felt natural to design the drone. And, actually, it has been quite well received...’

It’s an unexpected moment of pride, perhaps, for a man who really has nothing left to prove when it comes to design. Paolo Pininfarina is head of the eponymous company that’s still best known as the Italian coach-builder, established 1930, that has given car enthusiasts the likes of the 1960 Ferrari 250 GTE, 1963 Chevrolet Corvette Rondine, 1966 Alfa Romeo Spider and 2008 Maserati GranTurismo. Yet that image is changing. In recent years the company has also lent its high-end design insight to a wearable tech jewellery line, a bicycle, a writing instrument, headphones, a kitchen and a new residential skyscraper in São Paulo, with Pininfarina also hinting that a super-yacht may be on the cards.

‘The fact is that if you can design a car then you can design a train. And if you can design a train, then you can design a chair or the interior of a stadium,’ says Pininfarina, the grandson of the company’s founder, Battista. His theory was borne out by a 2013 report on the Italian architecture and engineering industry that placed Pininfarina Extra – the general design arm of the business – tenth in Italy by value of production. In 2014 it had moved up to fifth place. ‘That was actually a proud moment for us because it was a real demonstration of our leading role in non-automotive design,’ says Pininfarina, who now has his sights on the number three slot. ‘For your information,’ he adds, ‘the first two places are held by Renzo Piano and Antonio Citterio.’ Design gods both.



TOP: Paolo Pininfarina photographed exclusively for this magazine in Turin in February 2015.

ABOVE: the Pininfarina Cambiano everlasting pencil, handcrafted from aluminium and wood, with an Ethergraf tip that allows it to write forever, without the need for ink or sharpening

It was Paolo Pininfarina who, back in the mid-1980s, first suggested diversification for the esteemed coach-builder. It was a visionary move, in part allowing the company to get back into the black after accruing huge debts and ceasing its own car production in 2011. Now Pininfarina, long a signifier of quality for classic car enthusiasts, is becoming a well-respected household name.

‘Pininfarina is becoming a prestigious brand, so it makes sense to express that reputation in fields other than cars,’ Paolo Pininfarina explains. ‘In fact, lawyers have told us that if we don’t position Pininfarina in certain categories, someone else will do so using the brand. That said, it’s not easy

deciding what could be a Pininfarina product and what couldn’t be. That just comes from my experience. It wouldn’t work for everything – no fashion products, for example. We’re best in industrial products, those that push ideas of durability. I’d love to design the interior of a space lab, for example. I don’t think the chances of it happening are too high, but you have to dream!’

Paolo, who took over as head of the company following the sad death of his brother Andrea in a traffic accident seven years ago, sets great store on fresh thinking. ‘Every luxury product comes with its own design challenges. Whisky bottles have to be expressions of the culture of luxury. Watches



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'I believe that eternity is the logical, extreme ambition for every designer'

are all about detail on a 10-to-one scale, while cars are traditionally designed on a one-to-10 scale,' he says. 'You have to keep retuning your design.'

The aforementioned writing instrument, launched last year, writes like an indelible pencil, but uses a special metal alloy for its tip, meaning that it will, in effect, last forever. 'Designing the "forever" is a fantastic project,' says Paolo, who is no fan of modern consumerism's leanings towards inbuilt obsolescence. 'I believe that eternity is the logical, extreme ambition for every designer. That said, you can't be too innovative, not be too ahead – that's all part of the game.'

Another recent project, one that definitely leans towards the ephemeral, saw the company design a limited-edition ice press for Chivas 18 whisky. The press created a teardrop-shaped 'cube', the result of studying the effects of air passing over a block of ice in the wind tunnel more typically used to test car aerodynamics. 'That project was out of the box,' Pininfarina says. 'But in any kind of project there's an opportunity to express a vision, a consistency in values, a classical look and sensuality that I think is quite true of Italian design. And yes, to create an ice cube using techniques more typically found in the automotive world is innovative.'

Ask Pininfarina what other examples of good design he sees around him and, a little grumpily, perhaps provocatively, he says there aren't any he would care to mention. 'One thing I've learnt is that the border between a commercial flop and an iconic product is a very grey area, but still I am not very much impressed by others' designs, probably because of the commitment I put into our own projects,' he says. 'There's a lot of superficiality and a lack of innovation in the design

ABOVE: the Pininfarina Sergio concept car, debuted in 2013, named in tribute to Paolo's father, Sergio Pininfarina, who died in 2012 aged 85

that's around now. Increasingly it's all about marketing. The business tends to focus on who shouts the loudest and I don't like that. Thankfully there are still masters at work, and in a world so full of decoration their work is essential.'

Many of those masters are at Pininfarina and are still, also thankfully, working on cars. The company recently unveiled its Cambiano prototype, a sports saloon with an extended-range electric powertrain that last year scooped Italy's National Award for Innovation, as well as an Honourable Mention Compasso d'Oro ADI (which Pininfarina won in 2012 for the F12berlinetta for Ferrari).

Unexpectedly, perhaps, super-car designer Paolo Pininfarina reveals that he's no petrolhead at heart. 'There are plenty of people who think cars are all about noise and fuel consumption, but not me,' he says. Rather, he sees the future of the car as being less about big engines and go-faster stripes and more about sustainability.

'It means a whole new architecture for cars, which presents a fantastic opportunity to redesign from scratch. There's a really dramatic potential there,' he says, clearly excited at the prospect of revolutionising the traditions his family's company has embraced now for 85 years. 'In interiors, too, I think we can expect a new emphasis on the user experience. People want to feel safer and more connected in their cars with systems that allow vehicle-to-vehicle communication on traffic conditions, for example. Of course, there may be some contradiction in feeling more safe and more connected. We need to find a balance there, and that's not a simple problem.'

But then a simple problem wouldn't be of much interest to Paolo Pininfarina.



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The Tandoor Man

Gaggan Anand is the Bangkok-based Indian chef whose restaurant ranks No. 17 on the World's 50 Best Restaurants list – the only ranking for Indian cuisine

Story by Jenni Muir

Chef portraits by David Terrazas

'HERE, SMELL MY HANDS,' SAYS GAGGAN Anand and gently holds out his palms. They have a faint orange-red hue and a deep aroma of spiced wood, like a tandoor oven. We are discussing kitchen equipment. Chefs who interned at Ferran Adrià's El Bulli, as Gaggan did back around 2007, typically wield siphons and high-tech gadgets in the manner of gun-toting cowboys, but the Kolkata-born Anand believes the 10,000-year-old tandoor is revolutionary.

'We Indians are not as good at selling as the Americans,' he says drily. 'If the tandoor were American things would be different. There would be one in every restaurant. It's not just about naan, it is a multi-purpose oven that can grill anything and make it taste phenomenal.'

Although he's as guilty as the next gastronaut of gelling, foaming and freezing, the authenticity of tandoor cooking is very much part of Gaggan's progressive Indian ethos. 'Two

hundred years ago we were all cooking with wood-fired ovens, so in that sense we've not progressed,' he says.

The laboratory he's planning for his eponymous restaurant in his adopted home of Bangkok (culinary research labs have become as important as salt in the world of modern cuisine) will be devoted to exploring Asia's traditional ingredients. 'Asia has so much depth and history, and we're losing it. How do we restore it? How do we make sure our grandmothers' recipes survive? Why do we only use lentil flour for dhokla? What else can be done with it? I am inspired by that, so the laboratory will look at our culture's cuisine, the heritage of our ingredients, and give those results to the world. I am following the same path as my gurus.'

Does he ever tire of being referred to as 'the Indian chef who trained at El Bulli'? He smiles benignly. 'No, I am the lucky one. It's like going to the Vatican to meet the Pope. I'm following my religion – why would I hide it? El Bulli is at



HERE: *Gagan Anand,*
photographed exclusively
for this magazine in
Bangkok, February 2015



ABOVE: *foie gras mousse with spiced red onion and raspberry-hazelnut praline glacé.*

OPPOSITE: *dhokla, or lentil flour cakes with curry leaves, mustard, chutney and coconut ice cream*

Humour is an important part of creating and naming the dishes. A dish of sheep's brain, an ingredient Gaggan believes is highly underestimated, is subtitled 'Indian foie gras'

the core of every modern chef who's made it to the top. It has revolutionised food, the whole dynamic. I don't think I'll ever disassociate from that and I'm always in touch with the team from there, always talking, always random emails...'

Visitors to his converted colonial house in Lumpini are presented with a choice of three tasting menus, which change constantly. Gaggan is as much inspired by food memories and travel as he is by seasonal produce. 'The food is the hero, not me – I'm the director,' he says.

It's true, key Gaggan dishes have acquired a certain celebrity status. The Alchemist Cake is his reinterpretation of dhokla, a vegetarian savoury associated with Indian grandmothers' home cooking. It's a bit fussy to make the traditional way, requiring the batter to be fermented for several hours before steaming. 'But my mum would rather cook dhokla than chicken tikka masala,' Gaggan explains. 'I wanted to create my fantasy version of it. The batter is put through a siphon then cooked in a microwave for 30 seconds



to create a texture like savoury gâteau.' The result is exquisite, with toppings of coconut ice cream and green herb chutney foam underlining the gâteau theme.

Humour is an important part of creating and naming the dishes. Brain Damage, for example, is also jokingly subtitled 'Indian foie gras'. It is made from sheep's brain, an ingredient Gaggan believes is highly underestimated. 'I was wondering: how do I present this as a delicacy and not seem obnoxious? How do I make sure it is treated as a delicacy? We all have

an image of foie gras and how the chef cooks it. It's the gentlest of meats and needs to be handled very well, and it's the exact same story with sheep's brain.'

The offal is transformed into the lightest of mousses, topped with hazelnut crumble and prettily strewn with flowers and cress. It looks like something you might encounter in France. As does Gaggan's take on pork vindaloo, which sees a neat square of pork belly slow-cooked and presented on a rich, aromatic gravy with colourful dabs of piquant finishing



ABOVE: the incongruous setting for the only Indian restaurant to feature on the World's Best Restaurants list is a colonial-styled villa near Bangkok's Lumpini Park

saucers. White chocolate panipuri might be a truffle – until you bite through the silver leaf-flecked shell to experience a miniature flood of fresh coriander chutney that references the street food stalls of Chowpatty beach.

Gaggan adores street food and makes frequent trips to India for research, but one senses that in order to blossom professionally, to become the most celebrated Indian chef in the world, he had to leave his homeland – and this involved much more than his months in Catalonia.

'I am lucky, I had my midlife crisis early in life,' he says. 'That made me what I am today. It was like a cocoon stage, a struggle towards what I wanted to be.' So why Bangkok? He was originally sent there on assignment with the Taj Hotels group but there was plenty of opportunity to move on.

'Apart from the UK, Thailand is the perfect place to be cooking high-level Indian food and not be in India,' Gaggan explains. 'The first day after I landed in Bangkok I went to the local market – it was the first time I'd left India – and to



“ *Terre Blanche, pure luxury* ”

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ABOVE: Anand told *Vogue* India recently that he was called 'the Titanic' by his family because they thought he'd never do well in life. 'Growing up, my cousins and friends all wanted to be doctors, lawyers... When I said I wanted to be a chef, they were shocked'

'I am personally satisfied, but not satisfied in my career. I'll be dead before I'm satisfied!'

me it was wonderful. There were fresh raspberries, strawberries, salmon, foie gras... such an exciting place for a chef to be. Bangkok was also virgin territory and the scale of economics was very comfortable for me. Even if the restaurant failed I could afford to pay it off. Setting up in the UK would have required two or three times as much money.'

Thailand has taught him to be patient, and not just with staff. 'I want to push it, but I can't always to the level I want. People come with very high expectations and they don't want to pay a premium. We are in a very challenging, price-conscious market here. For a couple of dollars you can get

very good food and a glass of beer on the streets, and the guy driving the Ferrari will eat at the street stall.'

In his own mind, Gaggan is clear he has more to achieve. There will be other restaurants in due course, but they will not be called Gaggan – he insists his current establishment will only carry his name as long as he is there at least 200 nights per year. His integrity is winning. 'I am at the bottom of the mountain I need to climb,' he says. 'It will take two more years for this restaurant to peak, then I will know where I am. I'm personally satisfied, but not satisfied in my career.' He gives a short laugh. 'I'll be dead before I'm satisfied!'

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PRIVAT
VENTURE

Siberia Under Steam

The operator of Russia's sole private luxury train and the first private Western train to venture into Iran is a former English wine merchant

Story by Andrew Humphreys





PREVIOUS SPREAD:
Golden Eagle is both the name of the trains and the English company that runs them, including, here, along the shores of Lake Baikal in central Siberia.

LEFT: the Golden Eagle engine, which dates from 1954 and was built at the Kolonna Works near Moscow, is the only privately operated steam locomotive in Russia.

OPPOSITE: founder and owner of Golden Eagle Luxury Trains, Tim Littler, of Cheshire, England

IN 1841 THOMAS COOK OF THE ENGLISH Midlands had a revolutionary idea. He was a religious man who travelled the towns and villages on foot conveying the word of God and preaching against what was viewed at the time as one of the most serious of all social ills, drunkenness. His heavenly devotion was matched by an equally firm belief in those other great virtues of the Victorian age, namely Progress and Industry, and at the age of thirty-three, he formed a vision of how these values might be combined. In July 1841, Cook organised for 540 workers to take advantage of the latest technological innovation, the railway, and enjoy an excursion of 12 miles from Leicester to Loughborough where they would attend a temperance meeting and be entertained by a band. After all, if you wanted to stop the working classes drinking, you had to give them something else to do. Out of an abhorrence of drink, a travel empire was founded.

Which makes Tim Littler a sort of anti-Cook. He also oversees a travel agency, founded on the rails of England and now with a global reach, only in his case, when his business launched in 1989, it was all about encouraging drinking.

The son of a successful wine merchant based in Cheshire, as a youth Littler, like many schoolboys, had a passion for trains. Unlike most, however, he had a precocity and well of self-confidence that enabled him to monetise his hobby. In 1966, at the age of 15, and head of his school's railway society, he approached British Rail, as it was, with a proposal to run a special charter with the legendary *Flying Scotsman* from London's King's Cross to Newcastle, with tickets to be sold through railway magazines. Amazingly, British Rail agreed.

Littler's father wrote to them saying he would not be responsible for his son's debts, nevertheless the excursion went ahead and 350 enthusiasts bought seats.

On leaving school he joined the family business, Whitwhams, becoming MD in 1975, a position he held until he sold up in 2003. During that time he oversaw sustained worldwide growth, largely founded on sourcing vintage wines in Europe and selling them on in America and the Far East; in 1988 the company achieved the world-record price for a bottle of wine (€170,000), which was only beaten in 2010.

But trains and travel remained close to his heart and in 1988 he ran a rail trip to the Champagne region of France for a dozen friends. 'The criteria that we set was it had to be the best trip anyone had ever been on and money was no object. It really was a good trip and part of it was on the Orient Express.' Afterwards people asked him if he'd ever thought of organising similar trips commercially, and a few months later he formed GW Travel to bring together wine and rail travel. The 'Champagne Express' was advertised several times. Except the problem, he soon realised, was that France is too accessible: anybody could easily jump in a car and do the tour themselves.

His solution was novel: he switched his attention to places that were difficult to get to. Specifically the Soviet Union. 'Even today,' he says, in his country-house office, where one wall is papered with an enormous map of Russia, 'nobody's going to drive the Trans-Siberian. Twenty people a year might but that's not a holiday, it's a forced march.'

The first trips in the region were in the Caucasus, in 1992, followed the next year by the Crimea in newly independent

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LEFT: *the Golden Eagle crosses an inlet on Lake Baikal*

‘People can convince themselves that something isn’t possible – and then that becomes self-fulfilling’

Ukraine. ‘The corruption was just awful. I remember when we got back to Kiev after the second trip saying, “We will never come back to this eff-ing country.”’ Instead, Littler went to Moscow to see about chartering a train to run to Vladivostok, on the famed Trans-Siberian railway. The reception was surprisingly enthusiastic and the railway ministry was even happy to meet a request for the carriages to be pulled by steam locomotive. ‘They had 9,000 steam engines in the reserves. They weren’t in use but they kept them operational for use in an emergency – which I think is spelled W.A.R.’

The first Trans-Siberian trip was in 1996, the next in 1998, and they have run every year since, with multiple trips per year since 2000. The Russians also supplied the carriages: ‘We had three Politburo carriages. In Russia every train used to run with three carriages less than the maximum so that at any time the Politburo carriages could be added. There was always space for them.’ From the outside, says Littler, they looked the same as

any other carriage but inside they were all brass and rosewood. The giveaway is that instead of the usual four wheels at each corner, they had six in order to carry the extra weight of floors lined with six inches of bomb-proof lead and windows that were three inches thick.

That was the old Russia. In the new Russia, the state coach-makers who built carriages for the Communist Party have new clients in the oligarchs, who, once they have their supercars, private jet and their yacht, sometimes like to supplement them with a private rail carriage. Littler now gets to assemble his trains with 21 of these new luxury carriages, leased from Russian Railways, including 12 sleeping cars, two dining cars and a purpose-built kitchen car.

‘It is bizarre,’ says Littler, ‘that a British company runs Russia’s premier train.’ But he maintains that the Russians couldn’t be more helpful. ‘The *Golden Eagle* [the name of Littler’s train] was launched by Vladimir Yakunin, President



LEFT: the lavish interior of the bar car on the Golden Eagle, built by a subsidiary of Russian Railways that now provides bespoke rail carriages for the new breed of oligarchs

of Russian Railways and a close friend of Putin. If there are problems we can go directly to his deputy, something I wouldn't have a clue how to do with British railways. Yakunin has sent friends of his on the train and insisted on paying full price to show off Russia's best.'

In 2002 Littler added tours on the Jingpeng China Orient Express, the first private train service on the Jitong Railway in Inner Mongolia and China; in 2004 he debuted the Trans-Canadian Steam Express, the first trans-continental passenger train on the Canadian Pacific Railway for 30 years and the first to be steam-hauled for 50 years; in 2006 there was a first excursion in India, the 'Darjeeling Mail', the first luxury train to traverse the Indian sub-continent between Bombay and Calcutta and, two years later, a spectacular 34-day Cape to Cairo excursion.

Last year, the company, renamed Golden Eagle Luxury Trains in 2012, ventured for the first time into Iran, not a country one imagines would be welcoming of a luxury train filled with rich-going-on-decadent Western sightseers.

It was straightforward, says Littler. 'We went to a few operators with experience in Iran and asked who the best local ground handler was, then I went to him and said, "Can you approach the railways and ask if they'd accept a Western train coming in and touring." They asked for a meeting which took place six weeks later, and when they turned up they'd already authorised the train and issued the licence for it.'

It is a simple and bluff approach to business from a man who is unshowy but who gives the impression of being unshakeable once his mind is set. 'People can convince themselves that

something isn't possible,' says Littler, 'so they don't ask. It becomes self-fulfilling – because they've not asked, it doesn't happen.'

The train set off from Budapest with 13 carriages including deluxe sleeping cars leased from another British businessman who'd bought them from the Hungarian postal service and retrofitted them. Pulled for the first sixty miles by a 97-year-old steam engine, it travelled through Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey before becoming the first private European train to enter the Islamic republic (the alcoholic contents of the bar car were offloaded at Van on the approach to the Iranian border). The Iranian government supplied security but the only unwanted intrusions came courtesy of two sandstorms: 'Even the deluxe carriages, which are hermetically sealed, this very, very fine sand still got in. In the older carriages we had sand dunes,' says Littler.

The company is running four further Iran trips in 2015, as well as adding a one-off Swiss Rail Spectacular, a 10-day mountain tour taking in the Furka Pass, the Gornergrat railway and the Jungfrauoch. 'We have a regular clientele who are always looking for a new experience,' explains Littler. 'For 2017, it's a choice between Japan or South America. We're thinking from Salta in Argentina you can go over the Andes to Antofagasta in Chile, and then from Antofagasta up to La Paz, Potosí then Sucre, then across Lake Titicaca, a train from Puno to Cuzco and then down to Machu Picchu and finally fly to Lima. There isn't a train at the moment that's good enough so it's just an idea. Still, it would be a lovely tour.'

Littler has since confirmed that the tour is on. Nobody ever really doubted it would be.

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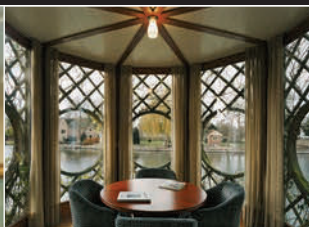
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PRIVAT
COLLECTORS

A HEART-STOPPING AEROPLANE

*Supersonic airliner Concorde made its last flight
in 2003, but for many the dream lives on*

*Story by Peter Watts
Photography by Michael Winkour*



WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED IN APRIL 2003 THAT Concorde would cease flying after 27 years, fans all over the world took stock. Musician Jimmy Webb's response may have been typical: 'I thought of the flights I'd been on and all the chances I'd missed to nick stuff,' he says, only half in jest.

Concorde, introduced in 1976 after decades of development as a European initiative led by France and Britain, had been unique on a number of levels. Its sleek appearance, commitment to a lost world of stylish travel and role as the catalyst for a huge number of technological breakthroughs made it the closest thing most people got to space flight, albeit in extreme comfort, surrounded by celebrities. Part of Concorde's appeal was the exclusivity. Only 14 actual planes entered service, with British Airways and Air France the only airlines to purchase them, strong-armed by their national governments.

Since flights ended, fans of the aircraft – 'Corde-heads', Webb calls them – have engaged with Concorde's legacy in a number of ways. Some enthusiasts, like Webb himself, became collectors, served by a number of specialist dealers and focussing on aspects that resonated personally, like the design of the crockery, the extraordinary technology or the political history. Other obsessives have looked at the bigger picture, and dream of returning supersonic planes to our skies or plan to open specialist museums celebrating this remarkable aeroplane.

Even today, 12 years after its grounding, Concorde continues to seduce like no other civil aircraft. 'It's a heart-stopping airplane,' says Jimmy Webb. 'A marvellous thing. I don't think we'll see the like of it again. Maybe one day there'll be another SST [supersonic transport] but it won't be quite so pretty.'

PHOTO © GETTY



THE FRENCH COLLECTOR
PASCAL MAZOYER, 47,
COLLECTOR OF AIR FRANCE
CONCORDE MEMORABILIA

After years working in travel, Pascal Mazoyer had air miles coming out of his ears, he just wasn't sure how to use them. Then in 1999 he got the chance to spend them on Concorde, flying from Paris to New York with his wife on Valentine's Day. It changed his life. 'We were on the plane with Spike Lee and Meryl Streep,' he says. 'It was fantastic. Unforgettable. My interest began after this trip.'

When Air France stopped their flights in 2003, Mazoyer decided he needed a souvenir, little realising where it would end. 'I bought a Concorde model on the internet,' he says. 'Then I saw another item I liked and bought that.' The collection now numbers 2,500 objects. 'My wife is supportive, but she doesn't understand!'

Mazoyer has focused on items from the Air France fleet. 'People in France were proud of Concorde. It was a real success for Europe. Behind Concorde were around 500 suppliers, all European.' That French enthusiasm has not gone away. 'Sometimes in France at an airshow you'll see people queuing for hours to spend five minutes in Concorde,' he says. 'Today, nobody can recognise different planes, but everybody still knows Concorde.' There are fewer French than British or American collectors, making Mazoyer's collection one of the largest in France.

Of all his items, Mazoyer is proudest of the gyroscope, which he's given a glass lid so people can see the insides – 'like an artistic creation that took hundreds of people hundreds of hours to make' – and the machmeter, which recorded the moment the aircraft achieved supersonic speed. 'This was the iconic instrument of the Concorde,' he says. 'It's the essence of the aircraft.'

concordescopia.fr



'It is as if Concorde single-handedly holds up the reputation of how special flying used to be, in an era of declining service, decorum and manners'



THE DEALER
 NICK BLOOMER, 56,
 FOUNDER OF CONCORDE
 COLLECTIBLES

In 1999 Nick Bloomer was arbitrating surplus goods between airlines when one day he received several pallets of unwanted Concorde material. 'I thought there must be a market for this,' he says. 'We set up a website and things just gained momentum.' Bloomer now runs Concorde Collectibles, selling authentic memorabilia to collectors and museums, as well as to individuals looking for a special present. 'Things like mounted engine blades are bought for people getting commercial pilot licences or aeronautical degrees,' says Bloomer. 'We also sell them as retirement presents or as anniversary gifts for people who proposed on Concorde.'

Objects start at £15-£20 for an original flight folder holding booklets, headed paper, envelopes and postcards. Rarer items include an extra-large chair built for British prime minister Ted Heath, an ashtray from the cockpit, and a pressurised space suit and helmet worn by a pilot on the first test flight. These can sell for thousands, although Bloomer notes in one sense value has declined. 'One object we sold for £6,500 cost £1.2m to manufacture in the late 1960s,' he says. Larger items often go to museums, but also to 'probably 20 or 30 people around the world with collections that occupy one room of a house. Then there's another half-dozen whose entire house will be taken over.'

Bloomer believes people are still fascinated by Concorde because of the political backstory and the technology. 'But there was the sheer visual beauty of the aircraft,' he says. 'There were a lot of people who could never afford to fly on it and would reject the elitism of those that could, but they still love Concorde.'
concordecollectibles.com

ABOVE: the items above and on the following pages belong to Nathan Shedroff of San Francisco. His collection of Concorde inflight service and gift items runs to around 365 pieces. He has a full service for 16, including placemats and linen napkins, plus serving utensils, a thermos,

coffee pot and salt and pepper shakers. He has hosted a seven-course Concorde dinner using his inflight items. 'Owning bits of Concorde and being able to share them with friends is a fitting use for the pieces in my collection. They bring out the childhood wonder in almost everyone who comes

into contact with them. Everyone gets a little wistful about Concorde even if they never flew in it. It is as if Concorde single-handedly holds up the reputation of how special flying used to be, in an era of declining service, decorum and manners.'
 nathan.com



THE DESIGNER
LAWRENCE AZERRAD, 41,
COLLECTOR AND DESIGN
ENTHUSIAST

As Lawrence Azerrad was growing up, he could not help but notice the way Concorde kept appearing in books or James Bond films. And the more he looked, the more fascinated he became, especially after he began a career in design. ‘Concorde kept the world of design in travel,’ says the California-based designer, whose clients include the band Wilco. ‘You had Raymond Lowey silverware, Christian Lacroix menus, cabins by Andrée Putman and Terence Conran. Design was the glue that held it together. And of course it was the design of the aircraft that enabled it to do what it could do.’

Azerrad was also seduced by the aeroplane’s air of exclusivity. ‘It was harking back to ocean liners, with that society aspect,’ he says. ‘You are up there with Mick Jagger, Henry Kissinger and Naomi Campbell. There was the sense that with the speed, the height, the Champagne, anything could happen!’

Azerrad began to collect ‘printed ephemera’ and compiled a book with design professor and fellow enthusiast Nathan Shedroff. He uncovered great stories – that Paul McCartney had ‘on more than one occasion’ pulled out the guitar for an onboard singalong to Beatles tunes or that Andy Warhol was always stealing the silverware.

But design remains his obsession. ‘It was the time of the space race and this was a similar idea, that you could advance the human race through design and technology. Concorde was seen as the future of travel.’ The plane, Azerrad says, has ‘influenced my own philosophy in that with Concorde no detail was too small to be considered. The design hoped to elevate humankind, to enrich the human experience, making lives better through design.’

supersonicsite.com



‘[With Concorde] there was the sense that with the speed, the height, the Champagne, anything could happen!’



ABOVE: Concorde gift items from Nathan Shedroff's collection include luggage tags, pens, flasks and cufflinks, and a dual alarm clock featuring – what else – two faces for two different locations.

PAGE SIXTY-FIVE: the white china used on board Concorde was simple in design, with subtle concentric ribs on the rim of the bowls and plates, and across the tea saucer. 'Rather plain,' says Shedroff.

PAGE SIXTY-SIX: one of Shedroff's favourite items is a bottle opener from the Air France service: one end flares like wings and the neck is angled at 10 degrees, so the whole thing resembles the iconic plane itself



THE MUSEUM
JILL TAYLOR,
BRISTOL AEROSPACE
CENTRE

When the last Concorde completed its final flight, it landed not in London or Paris but in a small airfield outside Bristol. It's there, at Filton, that the Bristol Aerospace Centre will open in spring 2017, with a hangar devoted to Concorde. 'Our vision is to use a corner of this historic runway where Concorde's first test flight took place and where the last flight landed,' says Jill Taylor, director of fundraising. 'Concorde's a national story, but it was built in Bristol. You can't meet anybody here who doesn't know somebody who worked on Concorde.'

The museum will tell the history of the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company, founded in 1910, which later merged into Bristol Aircraft Corporation and continues today as Airbus, BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce. Numerous planes, missiles and submarines constructed at Filton will be on display, but the centrepiece will be the restored Concorde 216.

'Everybody knows about Concorde, but they might not know the story behind its construction and the technological advances that developed from it,' says Taylor. 'Our Concorde is the last ever complete plane of any type made in the Bristol factory. People will be able to walk round the hangar, go on board, take photographs.'

A Concorde engine will be on display, and film will be projected onto the plane's fuselage showing how the technology worked. The museum's Concorde was owned by BA and maintained by Airbus. 'It's fantastic, immaculate, as if you could just stow your luggage and fly to New York,' says Taylor. 'You can see why when it returned to Bristol in 2003 for the final flight, hundreds of thousands of people came to watch.'

bristolaero.org

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Simon Jones remembers being a young boy in 1976 when the news was full of a magical-looking aircraft that was going to revolutionise world transport: Concorde. He remembers thinking, ‘God, I really want to fly on that!’ Flash forward to 2003. That April British Airways announced the imminent end of Concorde services and Jones immediately booked himself on a flight from New York to London. ‘I was in seat 7A, sitting next to a geeky guy who was also on a one-way trip of a lifetime. I’d been waiting for 27 years and, yes, it was fabulous. But it was over all too quickly.’

‘I thought, well, that can’t be it, that can’t be the end of Concorde. You develop something over 20 years between two nations and then it just falls off a cliff? It was taxpayer funded, of course, so where’s the return on investment there?’

A burgeoning curiosity in the mechanics and economics of supersonic flight initially found an outlet at a series of special Concorde auctions: his first purchase was a pipe that used to be fixed to Concorde’s wing and expelled waste water from



THE SUPERSONIC MAN
SIMON JONES, 47,
EX FINANCIER

the plane. ‘I think I paid almost the same for it as my Concorde ticket. In the taxi on the way home I said to the driver, “I bet you don’t know what I’ve got here. A piece of Concorde, mate!”’

City bonuses funded a spree on spare parts, literally bought boxes at a time, as well as big chunks of aircraft, like landing gear and windscreens – ‘enormous colossal bits, things you need a forklift truck to lift’. The buying culminated in 2007 with the acquisition of one of the distinctively beaky Concorde nose cones:

‘It’s the absolute cherry in the collection, the defining bit of Concorde.’

The plan now is to get his collection into the public domain. Jones believes we’re not yet done with the idea of supersonic travel. ‘I think we need to get back to where we were with Concorde, and better – for example can we do New York in two hours? We’ve got 50 years of advanced technology now. We should be taking Concorde as the blueprint and refreshing it for a modern era.’

His starting point is a proposed awareness-raising exhibition looking at the technology of Concorde, for which Jones is currently fundraising. The idea is to open on 21 January 2016, 40 years to the day since the first commercial supersonic flight, on 21 January 1976. ‘You need a lot of vision and you need a lot of bravado, and I think it’s a question of revolutionising forever the way we travel, that’s really what it’s about – saying, “Right, let’s banish subsonic forever, and let’s go supersonic now.”’ theconcordestory.com



Jimmy Webb, the man who wrote *Wichita Lineman*, *Galveston* and *MacArthur Park*, chuckles as he recalls the first item of Concorde memorabilia that came into his hands. 'I have to be honest, the first thing was a salt and pepper shaker that I stole in the Seventies. I loved it so much, I quelled my guilty conscience. It was like Gollum's ring, "my precious".' He pauses. 'A conscience is only useful up to a point.'

Webb, who lives in upstate New York, now owns thousands of items of memorabilia, including several editions of Concorde china, silk scarves worn by stewardesses, a model that once appeared in the window at Harrods, napkin rings, photographs, eggcups and cockpit instruments including a control yoke, artificial horizon and a machine showing the centre of gravity. He pines for the dial that measured radiation ('They had to descend if there were solar flares') but does have Champagne glasses ('They're quite rare, it must have been something people liked to tuck into their purse') and has



THE PILFERER
JIMMY WEBB, 68,
**SINGER/
 SONGWRITER**

made a 'very trendy' desk out of aluminium meal service containers.

His love runs deep. Webb flies gliders – 'the purest form of flying' – and enthuses about Concorde's combination of technology and beauty. 'It's where technology meets art,' he says. 'Concorde ranks very near the top of not only human technological achievement but artistic expression as well. It looks like Picasso drew it, and it wasn't just one technological breakthrough

it was a score of them.' He wishes that at least one Concorde was still flying. 'It would be a great symbol for Britain, to have one show up around the world.'

Webb recalls playing lawn bowls ('I am the only overseas lifetime member of Barnes Bowling Club') and everybody stopping to stare as the 'white angel' flew over. He travelled by Concorde many times but was never tempted to start a McCartney-style singsong because 'it was too hard to tear myself away from the window'. Of the flight itself, 'It was awe-inspiring,' he says. 'You had to change your underwear because it sounded like catastrophe when they opened up those big engines. It would vibrate through your body and you had a sensation of all this power strapped to your ass.' Elton John is another musical Concorde fan, Webb reveals: 'He took Concorde like we take taxis.' Though Webb hasn't written a song about the plane yet, there's still time. 'I can't think of a good reason not to.'

jimmywebb.com

"I lost over 29cms!"
- Maria

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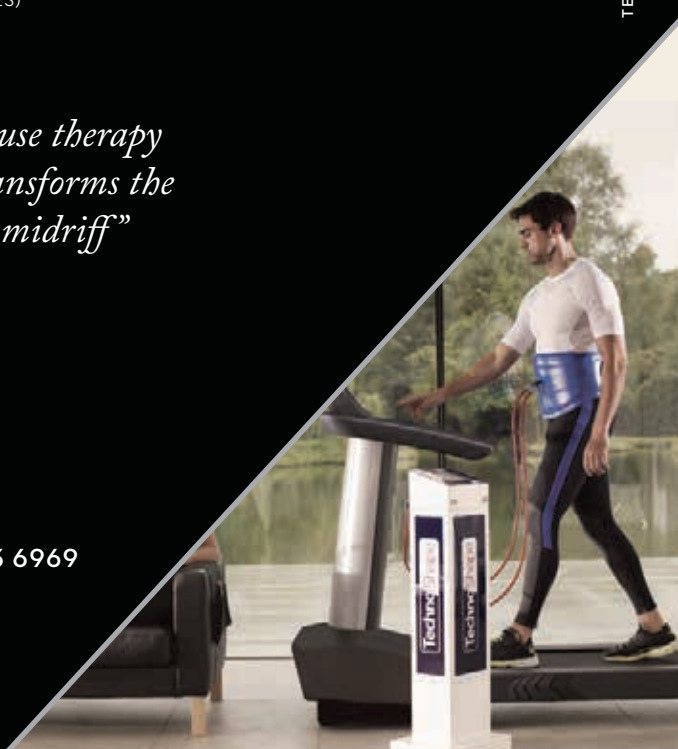
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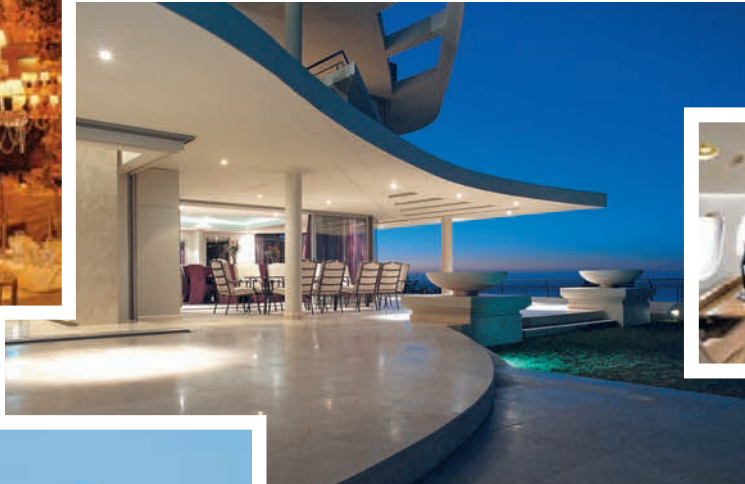
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From 1 May to 31 October 2015, visit the exhibition Expo Milan, which will explore the complexities of nutrition. Guests will be taken on a virtual tour around the world and try Italian and foreign foods and traditions. Onirikos is the official ticket re-seller for the festival – offering entrance to the Expo and its many events. For the occasion, Onirikos has created the programme Expo Experiences, which includes unique itineraries that, after visiting the

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Operating across more than 30 countries, Onirikos was established to satisfy the needs of travellers seeking advice, impeccable service and privacy. Its luxury travel specialists conceive, organise and provide personalised assistance on the highest quality experiences – for both individuals and groups. Its staff speak multiple languages to make sure everyone is catered for and they're available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to guarantee unrivalled support.

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PRIVAT
PORTFOLIO

IRAN THROUGH A FISH-EYE



A young, self-taught photographer from Iran has astonished his international peers with technically inventive portraits of the architectural monuments of his homeland







PAGE SEVENTY: interior of the Nasir Al-Mulk Mosque in Shiraz, also known as the Pink Mosque for its rose-coloured tiles.

PAGE SEVENTY-ONE: one of the pool rooms at the historic Vakil baths in Shiraz, one of Iran's most monument-rich cities.

PAGE SEVENTY-TWO: a ceiling at the Shah Mosque, also known as the Imam Mosque, on the central square in Isfahan.

PAGE SEVENTY-THREE: panoramic perspectives at, from top to bottom, the Vakil Mosque in Shiraz; the Nasir Al-Mulk Mosque

also in Shiraz; and the Shah (Imam) Mosque in Isfahan.

THIS PAGE: a traditional carpet repair workshop in

a second-floor room at the Vakil Bazaar in Shiraz.

For further photographs visit <http://gravity.ir>



MEET THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Anyone who has travelled in Iran is aware of the beauty of the country's rich heritage of Islamic monuments. That beauty is magnified and intensified in the most extraordinary way in the photographs of Tehran-born Mohammad Reza Domiri Ganji. Through his fish-eye lens, the colours and patterns of tiling in the mosques, palaces and bathhouses of Shiraz, Isfahan and Yazd become kaleidoscopic, verging on the psychedelic. There is no digital distortion: the images are shot using only natural light and the unusual perspective comes from wide-angle lenses and the fact that many of the images are composites, formed from several shots stitched together. More incredibly, 24-year-old Ganji is self-taught and a student of physics at the University of Mazandaran in Babol Sar, north-east of Tehran.

'When I was a child, I loved taking pictures with my grandfather's old camera,' he says. 'I bought my first compact camera when I was 14, a Wizen 5-megapixel.' Later he bought

'I've been really surprised by the reaction to my work'

himself a DSLR and learnt how to use it by watching YouTube tutorials and asking for advice from photographers he chatted to online. He began spending a few days a month travelling around Iran shooting mosques and historical sites, fitting the trips in between his studies. 'I do some research on the internet and then I ask a photographer who lives nearby for some extra information,' he says.

It's not a case of just turning up, pointing and shooting. It can take hours of observation to discover what time of day delivers the best light for a particular interior and Ganji has to apply for permits to shoot in certain buildings, a process that can take weeks.



The effort, though, is worth it. Ganji believes he's helping to create a visual record of his country's architecture. 'My main inspiration was when I saw some interior photos of the pyramids in Egypt. I wondered if I could do the same in Iran. There were tons of images of the country's mosques and buildings, but most were poor quality.'

He has exhibited in Iran and this January for the first time he took his work abroad for a solo exhibition in Sharjah. 'I've been really surprised by the reaction to my work,' Ganji says. 'I'm very happy that my photos are being seen worldwide and are a new way of looking at our traditional architecture.'

Interview by Sakbr Al-Makhadhi

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PRIVAT
TRAVEL

‘He was killed right here’

Spellbinding storytelling brings to life an episode of bloody colonial history in Zululand

Story by James Parry

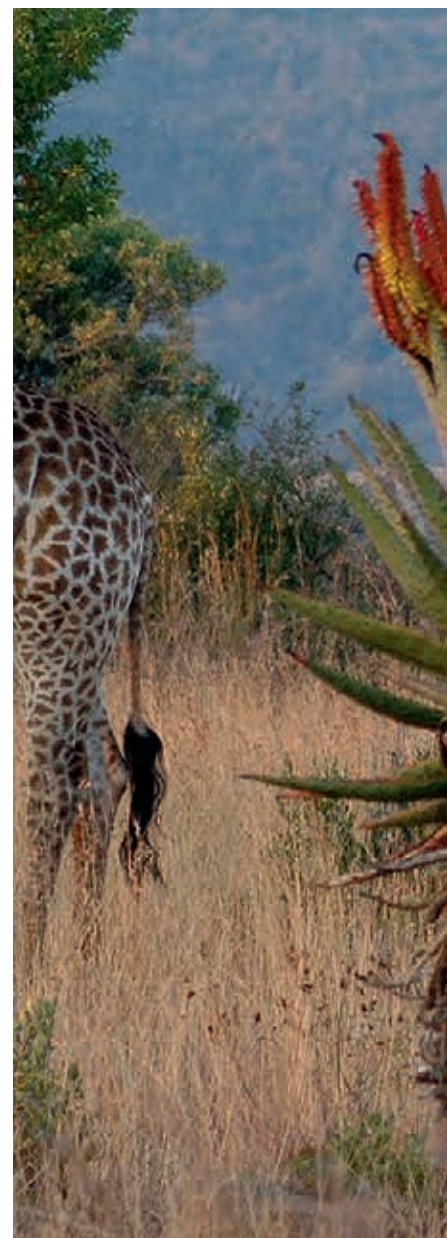
W

ITH A LOPING FLIGHT

and broad velvety wings, a purple-crested turaco glides into a nearby acacia as the first rays of morning sun spill across the lawn. The African bush is waking up, birds and animals busily responding to the creeping warmth and light. I am sitting in the garden of Fugitives' Drift, a lodge in the heart of South Africa's Zululand, drinking coffee and watching the birds wake up. It is a typical African scene, but this is far from being a typical African lodge. Forget any preconceptions about safari lodges being just about wildlife. Fugitives' Drift offers something quite different.

The name Zululand evokes hazy notions of a distant colonial conflict, a heroic defence and a film starring Michael Caine. This intriguing mix sits at the heart of the Fugitives' Drift experience. Here, thanks to the flair and ingenuity of the remarkable Rattray family, an intriguing chapter in the chronicle of both the British Empire and the more short-lived independent Zulu kingdom is brought alive in the most original and compelling way.

Husband and wife David and Nicky Rattray first came to Fugitives' Drift in 1989, but since boyhood Johannesburg-born David had been enthralled by the events of the brief but tumultuous Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, which played out across the dramatic landscapes around the Buffalo River, Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. He had always longed to tell a wider audience the story of the war, which still resonated in the oral heritage of the local Zulus among whom he had grown up. Soon, the couple had built two guest rooms and were running battlefield tours. 'We lived in one room behind the makeshift



office,' recalls Nicky. 'Our friends were both our guests and sounding boards as our story took shape and we built a new life here in this remote place. Such was our isolation that people felt sorry for us, bringing food, and small luxuries like magazines and newspapers!'

A quarter of a century later and the original Rattray family home is now a luxury lodge, complete with a magnificent library and a smaller but equally atmospheric guesthouse nearby. David's tours became the stuff of legend, his encyclopedic knowledge of the war's events and personalities combining with a boyish enthusiasm for the land and its people. This irresistible cocktail attracted a steady throng of visitors that included Prince Charles and Prince Harry in 1997. It was a golden period, but one that came to a tragic end in 2007 when 48-year-old David was killed in an attempted robbery.

PREVIOUS SPREAD:
Andrew Rattray bringing
alive the dramatic events
of 22 January 1879
at Isandlwana.

TOP: a campfire adds to
the Fugitives' Drift magic.
ABOVE: Fugitives' Drift
founder Nicky Rattray in

her herb garden and a photo
of her co-founder husband
David, who was one of
South Africa's leading
historians before his tragic
death in 2007.

RIGHT: giraffes survey
the scene in the Fugitives'
Drift private game reserve







ABOVE: *the church at Rorke's Drift was a storehouse at the time of the siege.*

LEFT: *the memorial monument to the Zulus who died in battle at Isandlwana*



The hugely supportive response from a deeply shocked local community was overwhelming. 'David's death plunged us all into uncertainty as to how we could possibly live somewhere else,' explains Nicky, 'until we realised that we didn't have to.' So it is that David's legacy lives on through Nicky and sons Andrew and Douglas, who are both fluent Zulu speakers and have inherited their father's passion and flair for evoking history. The formula remains unchanged: visitors are taken in small groups to the battlefields where they are transported back into the past through storytelling.

I set out one morning with five other guests to Isandlwana, which is less than half an hour away from Fugitives' Drift by 4WD. With Douglas at the wheel, we listen en route to a recording of his father setting the scene. Eager to subjugate the independent kingdom of the Zulus, the British commissioner for Southern Africa, Sir Henry Bartle Frere, issues an ultimatum to the Zulu king, Cetshwayo. The deadline passes without Zulu agreement and so, on 11 January 1879, British troops under Lord Chelmsford invade Zululand, setting up camp a few days later on the plains of Isandlwana.

The British hadn't even bothered to fortify their position, so confident were they about the threat posed by 'a bunch of savages with sticks'

The area looks much the same today as it did then, we are told, huge open vistas with scattered trees and an iconic Sphinx-shaped outcrop. 'But imagine that then there were no trees,' explains Douglas, 'and how crowded it would have been here on the morning of 22 January 1879. All those wagons, oxen and camp helpers, not to mention over 1,700 British soldiers.' He conjures up a vivid scene, describing how the British had not even bothered to fortify their position, so confident were they about the threat posed by 'a bunch of savages armed with sticks,' as Bartle Frere later disparaged the Zulus. Yet meanwhile the highly organised forces of Cetshwayo were massing over the brow of a nearby hill.

Douglas next describes the terrifying noises the Zulus then used to intimidate the British, how they rattled their spears against their cattle-hide shields and chanted a battle cry, a deep resonant 'zi-zi-zi', described by one witness as sounding like a swarm of giant bees. Over 20,000 Zulu warriors then poured down onto the plains, encircling the hapless encampment and rampaging through the British lines, slashing and stabbing with their spears. In the ensuing bloodbath, the vast majority of the British troops were slaughtered in what was the greatest defeat in the history of the British army against forces largely without firearms.

Just a handful of survivors scrambled to safety across the Buffalo River – the very 'fugitives' from which Fugitives' Drift gets its name. The intensity of Douglas's storytelling is such that it is hard to imagine how there could be greater drama to the occasion, but he then reveals that the battle took place under a total eclipse of the sun. Astonished, exhilarated and enthralled, we return to base.

*'No chance of escaping,
so the men at Rorke's
Drift just have to stay
put and do their best'*

The following day, it is brother Andrew's turn. We head for nearby Rorke's Drift, in 1879 a small mission station on the Buffalo River ('drift' is the local term for a causeway or crossing). Andrew sits us down in canvas chairs in the shade and starts on the next chapter in the story. Rorke's Drift has been turned by the British into a field hospital, Andrew explains, and is defended by only 100 or so combat-ready troops. Yet it is only a few miles from the carnage of Isandlwana and news soon arrives that the Zulus are on their way. 'No chance of escaping,' exclaims Andrew, 'so the men at Rorke's just have to stay put and do their best.' What followed was one of the most extraordinary defences in military history, in which a handful of men defied overwhelming odds and withstood the Zulu attack.

Andrew shows us where the British soldiers desperately stacked up mealie bags and biscuit tins to build a defensive wall. He then draws our attention to the hospital building itself (which still stands and is now a museum); trapped inside and with the thatched roof on fire, the men – some of them bed-ridden – engaged in fierce hand-to-hand fighting with the Zulus. Andrew tells us of the heroic endeavours of the individuals concerned. People like Private John Williams who, using only his bare hands, battered holes through walls so that patients could be dragged to safety, and Private Frederick Hitch, who despite being shot through the shoulder continued helping others until he passed out from pain.

Others met a worse fate. One patient was dragged from his bed by a Zulu. 'He was killed right here,' indicates Andrew, with a downwards nod of his head. We all stare at the patch of scuffed soil, imagining how it had probably been drenched with blood then and the air acrid with smoke from the burning roof and ringing with the screams of the dying and wounded. Rarely has history been made so vivid. This was a battle that saw the awarding of 11 Victoria Crosses, the most ever received in a single action by one regiment, and was the subject – although not without considerable cinematic licence,



Andrew adds wryly – of the 1964 film *Zulu*, starring Michael Caine and Stanley Baker.

The most poignant moment comes when Andrew relates what happened to the VC recipients in later life. John Williams's hands, torn and scraped down to the bone, never recovered; Robert Jones, gallant defender of the hospital ward, was to die later of a gunshot wound, registered at the time as an act of suicide but now thought to be an accident with a faulty gun; Frederick Hitch became one of London's first black cab drivers and 1,500 cabbies lined the British capital's streets at his funeral in 1913; and poor William Jones, who had helped Robert Jones drag sick men to safety through a barrage of spears, ended up destitute and in a workhouse.

Andrew is equally eloquent on the heroism shown by the Zulus. Many of the warriors had not eaten for 36 hours, having run across the plains for 120 miles to prevent the British from occupying their homeland. Emotion fills his voice as he asks us to remember those who played a part in the momentous events of that day 136 years ago. There is hardly a dry eye among us, yet at the same time we are uplifted and thrilled by what we've heard.

This is magical storytelling and not so much a tale of military endeavour as of human courage. Many of the personalities portrayed so colourfully in the Rattray narrative stand out, but my own favourite is Lieutenant Henry 'Charlie' Harford, a keen amateur naturalist. In the midst of a ferocious engagement with the Zulus he was seen to fall to the ground and the cry went up 'Harford is dead!' – only for his comrades to find him on his hands and knees examining a rare beetle. Such are the tales of empire, but how remarkable, too, that this story is still being told on the plains of Africa.





LEFT: revered by the Zulus, the Mangeni Falls are a popular destination for local residents and visitors alike.

FAR LEFT: excursions by 4WD enable guests at Fugitives' Drift to explore more of the area's dramatic landscapes



PRIVAT
AIR

THE ULTIMATE GRAND TOUR

*Charlotte Pénet gets an insight into the
exclusive world of luxury air cruises*

HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU WISHED, WHEN COMMENCING your holiday in a crowded airport, that you could just click your heels like Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz*, and be magically transported to your dream destination?

In today's world, ruled by immediacy, wouldn't the ideal travelling experience be one that allows you to do away with the commotion – the queues, cramped seats, paperwork, luggage and crowds – so that you have time and energy to appreciate the unique site you have chosen to discover? An experience that also allows you to connect as many of those awe-inspiring gems of culture or nature that each country has to offer, as smoothly and as quickly as possible? There lies the appeal of a luxury air cruise by private jet, because such a means of transport is as close as one can get to clicking the heels of those ruby slippers and whispering inspired variations of the magic formula: 'There's no place like... the Gobi Desert... the Mogao Buddhist caves of Dunhuang... Khustain

National Park... St Petersburg.' The air cruise is the exclusive ticket to highlight-hopping around the globe and Hapag-Lloyd Cruises are specialists. They have made it their mission to design unique itineraries that link up world-famous locations never before connected by scheduled flights.

The starting point for the team at Hapag-Lloyd Cruises is to select an inspiring theme, chosen in brainstorming sessions that dip into the knowledge and experience built up over the company's long history as one of the world's leading specialists in luxury and expedition cruising.

'These cruises are not designed for travellers to just see the sites,' explains Gabi Haupt, director product management EUROPA and air cruises for Hapag-Lloyd Cruises. 'Our guests all share a passion for gaining an understanding of the places they visit, by touching on the history, the culture, the important characters past and present. Our expert guides, who are present throughout the journey, play a significant

LEFT: *Kazakh eagle hunter on the Mongolian steppes.*

RIGHT: *the golden domes of the Catherine Palace at Tsarskoye Selo, near Saint Petersburg*

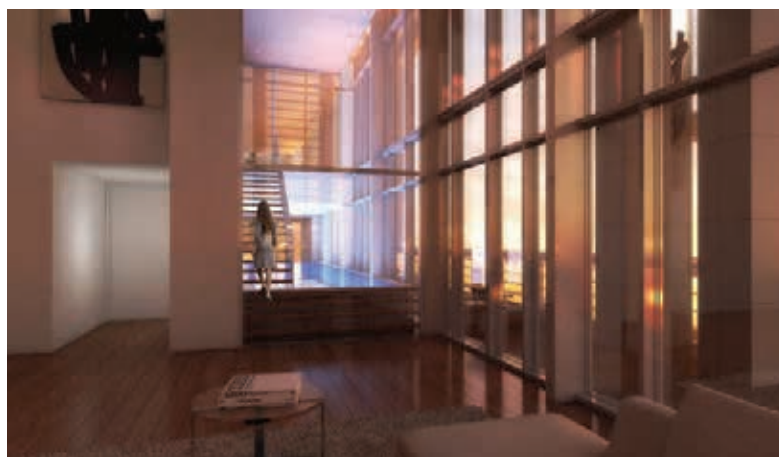


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Accept the suspension of time brought about by the lulling pace of the camels, as they meander through the silent sand dunes'

part in its success, often forging relationships with the guests that are long-lasting.' Indeed, as Gabi explains, there are many loyal clients who have been won over by the experience and return each year brimming with ideas of far-away places they wish to explore in the company of like-minded travellers and a guide they may already know.

One such upcoming itinerary has already sparked the imagination of many seasoned air cruise travellers, as it promises to roam the deserts of Mongolia and to unveil the mysteries of the Silk Road. The journey is designed so that every stopover unveils an awe-inspiring experience, with an element of exclusivity. To witness the wild fervour of the Kok Boru equine games held just outside Bishkek – manes flying and dust swirling, the magnificent horses pursuing one another while their young riders fight to seize the curious prize that is the headless corpse of a goat. To accept the suspension of time brought about by the lulling pace of camels, as they

meander through the silent sand dunes on the way to the Dunhuang oasis, where the north and south branches of the ancient Silk Road converge. To observe the infinite desert night sky, entranced by the visions of gods and beasts among the stars. To behold, undisturbed and carefully briefed, some of the finest Buddhist art, ensconced in the ancient Mogao caves. To gaze in disbelief at the immense army of exquisitely sculpted soldiers destined to protect the very first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang – every one of them alert and unique in expression. The journey is an amalgam of exceptional moments, the kind that imprint an image in your mind that will linger on through the years, feeding the imagination, providing perspective, transforming one's outlook.

Hapag-Lloyd Cruises have chosen to partner for these cruises with PrivatAir. 'Our two companies share the same notion of what customer service is about, which has enabled us to establish a collaboration that is based on trust and



ABOVE: camel trekking across the pristine sandy expanses of Mongolia's Gobi Desert

understanding' says Nathalie Beuchard, director charter sales at PrivatAir. From the perspective of PrivatAir, in addition to the availability of a 44-seater Boeing 737-700 configured for space and comfort, the key to success lies with the crew. An outstanding amount of work goes into planning the logistics of a trip so that every detail is not only perfect, but also enhanced with local flavour. Travellers get a taste of speciality dishes at every destination, they find local trinkets slipped as gifts on their trays or their seats, and they get a vision of local costumes as the crew enjoy dressing up in diverse traditional outfits. Above all, the enthusiasm of the crew and the personal relationships they build with their 'guests' on board are the intangibles that make the private jet a bubble where travellers can truly relax between each stopover.

'At PrivatAir, our work is based on building a strong relationship with each client,' explains Beuchard. 'We chose to work on the concept of luxury air cruises with Hapag-Lloyd Cruises, because in the spirit of our Service d'Excellence, we want to offer our clients the very best travel experience at all times and that includes for their leisure trips.' There may not be actual magic at hand as your heels click on the steps leading up to the private jet's cabin, but if you choose to embark on a luxury air cruise, you'll certainly be set for a memorable journey, highlight-hopping in unique style around the globe. *For more information on the Mongolia & Silk Road cruise or for other destinations, please contact: Hapag-Lloyd Cruises GmbH, Ballindamm 25, 20095, Hamburg, Germany, +49 40 3070 3050, info@hl-cruises.com, www.hl-cruises.com/private-jet-journey*



ABOVE: the Terracotta Warriors at Xi'an, in Shaanxi Province, China



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