

PHOTOGRAPHER: DAVID SYKES



25 RIMOWA LUGGAGE

Best luggage combo

MONOCLE maintains strict rules when it comes to men and wheely suitcases. Only bags of a reasonable size are permitted to be pulled through terminals as there's nothing quite so unmanly as a gentleman dragging along a briefcase on wheels. For our money, miles and muscle pain, a Rimowa Topas paired with a Porter tote is the only way to go. This particular Rimowa model allows us to travel for a good two weeks and the tote allows for easy access to documents and doosh.

rimowa.com

PHOTOGRAPHER: KATJA KULENKAMPFF



24 ANA PILLOWS AND BLANKETS

Best sleep combo

Catching 40 winks in a Club ANA seat is a cosy departure from the standard business class experience of other airlines. Blue-branded and duvet thick, the blankets have a pocket into which legs can be tucked. Pillows easily beat the flat napkin-style creations found on board other aircraft; not only plump and generously sized, they are also bug busting, thanks to the anti-bacterial silver thread woven into the cotton cover. Most importantly, both are feather filled.

23 BABOUCHES AND TABIO SOCKS

Best inflight hygiene solution

There is nothing nice about visiting the facilities on board most flights longer than four hours after take-off and we've learned that the simple and effective solution is to pull on a pair of Tabio socks and slip into our Johnny Farah JF 37 babouches, which are hand-cut and sewn in the leather designer's own workshop in Beirut. One never need tread in dread again. tabio.com, johnnyfarah.com



22 NADIA IN COMO AND ST MORITZ

Best hands for a massage

Nothing rivals a well-executed massage to remedy hours spent in an awkward airline seat. To work away knots, we happily lie down for Nadia Fanoni. Skilled in shiatsu, her healing hands alleviate chronic aches without the need of smelly oils. Her technique is so good that two premium hotels vie for her services. In summer, she's lakeside at Villa d'Este near Como, while winter sees her decamp to St Moritz to work out the kinks for guests booked at Badrutt's Palace.



PHOTOGRAPHER: PIETRO PAOLINI



21 THE CROSBY

Best new hotel in NY

The Crosby Street Hotel is the latest inn to open in New York (you'll find it on said Crosby Street in SoHo) and it's also the first New York venture for the British-based Firdale hotels. You'll know the company for the warmly styled hotels it has opened in London with equally geographical names: Charlotte Street, Soho, Haymarket and Covent Garden. Owners Tim and Kit Kemp understand when contemporary styling should stop and comfort kick in. Beds are big, rooms decorated with playful fabrics and fuss-free technology. There's a 99-seat screening room, private statue garden and a suite that comes with its own meadow (really). There are places to perch on the extra-wide windowsills and look down on Manhattan, and the bar and restaurant are very good too.

firdale.com



PHOTOGRAPHER: ENRIQUE PARDO

20 ROBERTO, GENEVA

Most reassuring restaurant

We have at least one in every port and in Geneva a table at Roberto is always reassuring because the room full of face-lifts, Thierry Mugler shoulder pads and elaborate hair weaves reminds you where you are (a crowd like this could only be in Geneva) and the food is solid. The overly decorated room is also oddly comforting and chances are it's a walk from where you'll be staying.

+41 22 311 8033



01

19 PASAR, TOKYO

Best roadside pitstop

If you've driven Tokyo's toll roads you'll know that "getting there" is rarely half the fun, if it's even tolerable. Finally some of your trip can at least be enjoyable, if you're heading through Chiba via Makuhari (near Narita) – or back. The East Nippon Expressway Company has opened Pasar, a new generation of highway rest areas, one on each side of the freeway (the name comes from "parking area"; "service – or saabisu – area"; and the "r" from relaxation), providing not only hamburgers but over a dozen elegant stores and restaurants offering gifts and locally sourced produce, all-natural bakeries and clean facilities. They're almost a destination in themselves.



02

PHOTOGRAPHER: KOHEI TAKE



03

- 1) One of Pasar's restaurants
- 2) Bright, naturally lit spaces
- 3) Outside a Pasar pitstop
- 4) There are more than a dozen restaurants and shops to choose from
- 5) Food is locally sourced



04



05

18 AIR FRANCE MAGAZINE

Best inflight read

Inflight magazines may have upped their game but none have reached the *bon goût* of *Air France Magazine*. With Gallimard, one of France's most prestigious publishing houses in charge of editorial, the French-English monthly offers chic travel features, informative city guides and expert cultural listings, illustrated with elegant photography and artwork. We wish they would start a subscription service. airfrance.com



PHOTOGRAPHER: DAVID SYKES



PHOTOGRAPHER: ANDERS GRAMER

17 BERKELEY PILLOW A GO-GO

Best freebie

Freebie, giveaway and hand-out are words that rarely result in the receipt of anything worthwhile, especially when associated with the hospitality industry. Well done, then, to The Berkeley in Knightsbridge, which is furnishing its guests with a complimentary travel pillowcase by Italian linen house Pratesi to cover one of the nasties you'll be given by BA. The wheels are already up on plans for a Berkeley travel candle and amenities kit. the-berkeley.co.uk

16 SWISS SEATS

Best new first-class cabin

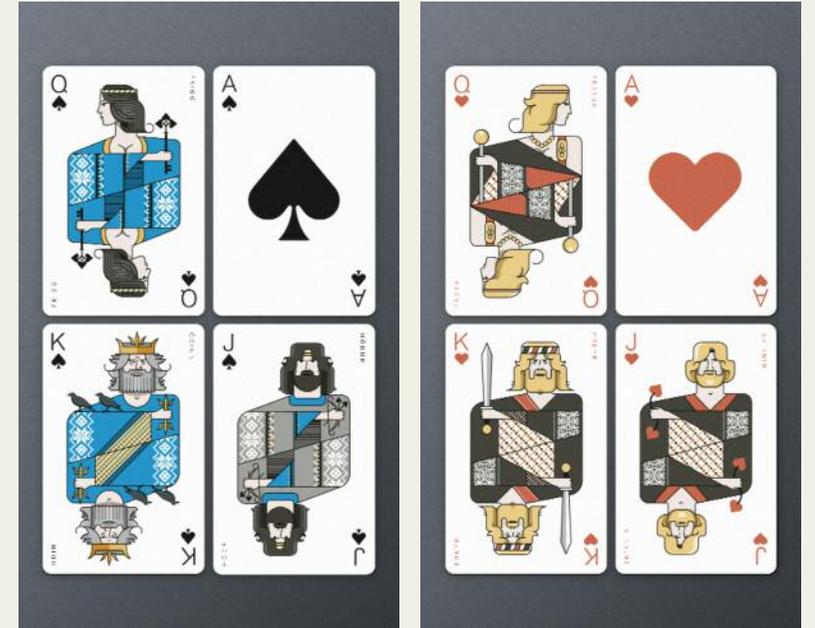
In a sector that likes to standardise as much as possible (have you ever wondered why drinking glasses, air vents and catering trolleys all look the same?) it was refreshing to see that Swiss opted for a unique approach to its business- and first-class cabins with the arrival of its new A-330s. Instead of adopting a generic approach, the carrier has created sharp, precise, and, well, Swiss environments. Swiss's use of woods and lean profiles feel both on-brand and timeless.



14 ICELANDAIR CARDS

Best inflight takeaway

Most duty-free gift offers on the pages of inflight magazines are a dire affair – just who is buying anything with a Beckham insignia? But next time you find yourself on an Icelandair flight, why not while away the time with the airline's new set of playing cards. Wonderfully illustrated by Reykjaviker Thorbjörn Ingason, they depict the deities and demigods of ancient Norsemen. Old-fashioned in concept and modern in execution, an onboard present worth every króna.



15 THE UPPER HOUSE

Best Hong Kong newcomer

To say Hong Kong's hotel market has been a bit stagnant of late would be a gross understatement. Thankfully the Upper House, adjacent to Pacific Place, has shaken things up with its Andre Fu interiors, stunning views and generous rooms. Owned by the Swire Group, it will be interesting to watch how the company grows the brand internationally. upperhouse.com



PHOTOGRAPHER: ANTHONY WALLACE



PHOTOGRAPHER: MARIANO HERRERA



13 RENFE

Most admirable initiative

Spanish state railway is holding fast to its promise of becoming the leading railway in Spain and Europe by maintaining a 98.54 per cent punctuality record on Renfe AVE high-speed services, second only to Japan Railways with 99 per cent. By 2020, 90 per cent of Spaniards will be able to board a high speed locomotive from stations less than 50 km from their homes and by 2011 Renfe is projected to carry 78 million passengers, almost two million more than in 2008. renfe.es/ave

12 LOUIS HOTEL, MUNICH

Best new European hotel

Opening to critical acclaim in September, The Louis Hotel in central Munich is the latest venture from Rudi Kull and Albert Weinzierl, the hoteliers who brought Bavaria the restrained charm of MONOCLE favourite the Cortina hotel. Situated on Viktualienmarkt, the bold Hild und K architecture taps into the cosmopolitan setting while the subtle Kull & Weinzierl interior harks back to a refined era of European travel, using local Bavarian materials and craftsmanship. The 72-room hotel is overseen by the ever capable André Garcia, following his experience at the Mandarin Oriental and Vier Jahreszeiten among others.

louis-hotel.com



11 JAL

Best premium economy

It will be interesting to see what Air New Zealand brings to market in 2010 when it launches a fresh cabin concept across its new 777 fleet – rumoured to include a special bed for economy passengers. Having taken the prize for best premium economy in the past we reckon JAL's gone one better with its warm colour palette and cosy-looking shell style seat.

jal.com



PHOTOGRAPHER: KOHEI TAKE

10 AIR FRANCE

Best seamless rebranding

The golden rule when rebranding an established and fondly thought-of logo is evolution, not revolution: a maxim that air France employed when embarking on its recent identity revamp. The newly spruced marque echoes its predecessor yet still feels smart and sharp. Presented in a similar palette and shape it is clearly recognisable, only now without its anachronistic 1970s typography. airfrance.com



09 GRAND-HÔTEL DU CAP-FERRAT

Best hotel renovation

The grande dame of the Côte d'Azur has had a delicate lift in all the right places and is now more captivating than ever. She has held the attention of Europe's high faluters and august excursionists for exactly a century and to mark the milestone the Grand-Hôtel du Cap-Ferrat has treated herself to a Pierre-Yves Rochon designed expansion including a new sea-front wing that features eight suites with private pools. Every inch of the property has been pinched back into glorious place with a few extravagant additions including a new restaurant and a garden spa. grand-hotel-cap-ferrat.com



PHOTOGRAPHER: MANOLO YLLERA

08 NEW FASANO, BRAZIL

Best sporty hotel

After hotelier Rogerio Fasano and designer Isay Weinfeld's success creating the beautiful Uruguayan summer retreat Las Piedras Fasano, they have teamed up again – this time back in Brazil. Their new modern country hotel and villas just 86km from São Paulo will be open by end of 2010. The Fazenda Boa Vista Hotel will have 26 apartments and 26 suites along with 90 houses, two golf courses, a 75m pool, an equestrian centre, five lakes, football camps, running trails, a sand running track, polo pitches, tennis courts and racquetball courts.



07 LUFTHANSA, MUNICH

Best lounge

It was a toss-up between Cathay's lounges at Hong Kong airport and Lufthansa's facilities for its best passengers at Munich. In the end Munich took the prize because it works so hard at removing as many obstacles as possible from the passenger experience – on-site customs officers check passports and the dedicated security team mean there's never a queue for bag screening. Our favourite features are limo services for distant gates and a good barista behind the bar.



04 SEASTAR

Best seaplane

Having put in a brief appearance over a decade ago, the Dornier Seastar looks set to take flight again as the designs were purchased by a consortium that recognised the need for a high capacity seaplane. With its retro looks and respectable speed, the Seastar will transform summer house life on the Baltic, in Muskoka and on the Great Barrier Reef.

03 TARTES KLUGER

Best snack-stop

From behind her desk as a high-powered lawyer, to pulling Paris' most prestigious tarts out of a Eurofours ventilation oven, Catherine Kluger has done a professional volte-face. In her former bakery turned laboratory and communal eatery in the Marais, she produces a daily selection of scrumptious pies made with AOC cream, and fruit and veg sourced from small producers. Take-out goodies include Charlemagne bio chocs and Belvoir fruit cordials.

www.tarteskluger.com



02 ISTANBUL

Hub in waiting

All eyes might be fixed on Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Doha and Bahrain but it's Istanbul's Ataturk International Airport that could easily change the game. As Turkish Airlines grows its fleet and cements its position in Central Asia, it has the ability to transform Istanbul airport into a facility that passengers would look forward to connecting through. For the moment, the airport looks like a lost opportunity but that could, and must, change – given the enviable position Istanbul enjoys in Europe and the world.



06 SPANAIR

Most promising purchase

Despite having liveried only one of its aircraft in the new corporate identity created in May, Spanair is set to shake up the Spanish airline industry as it challenges Iberia and Vueling, and indeed Madrid, to an air-off, consolidating operations and moving them to Barcelona from Palma de Mallorca. A conglomerate of unnamed Catalan families and businesses bought Spanair from SAS earlier in 2009 in a competitive bid to win back business lost when Iberia redirected key routes from Barcelona through Madrid Barajas. This means war.

05 LUFTHANSA WI-FI

Best inflight internet

At last! Lufthansa is plugging itself back into the fray three years after the cable was unceremoniously pulled from its on-board internet on long-haul flights because of insufficient demand. FlyNet, the updated high-speed wi-fi service, is provided by Panasonic and promises to be as fast as "a powerful hotspot or high-end hotel". Lufthansa says that half of its fleet of 100 long-haul aircraft will be fitted with FlyNet by the beginning of 2011.



01



PHOTOGRAPHER: JOSÉ HEVIA BLACH

03

01 NAVARRA HOTEL

Best designed hotel

Sometimes getting away from it all means heading off further afield, and in this case the field in question is located in the Basque countryside and was once planted with golden wheat. Aire de Bardenas reclaimed the site and commissioned architects Emiliano López and Mónica Rivera to design a collection of glass, steel and wood cubes. These would become the Aire de Bardenas retreat, where guests are invited to leave their cares at the recycled wheat container fencing and enjoy the rural isolation. airedebardenas.com



02



04



05

- 1) The restaurant, for which ingredients are all sourced locally
- 2) The cubes made of glass, steel and wood
- 3) Sun loungers by the pool
- 4) View of bedroom from bathroom
- 5) The lobby, bar and deli