

MARCH 2026 • MICHELLE BUTEAU: NEW YORK'S QUEEN OF COMEDY • 24 HOURS IN COPENHAGEN • SINGAPORE CITY GUIDE • SLOW AND STUNNING COSTA BLANCA • YOUR FREE COPY TO TAKE HOME

HOLLAND HERALD



*"In the world of comedy,
everyone's an odd one out"*

COMEDIAN MICHELLE BUTEAU

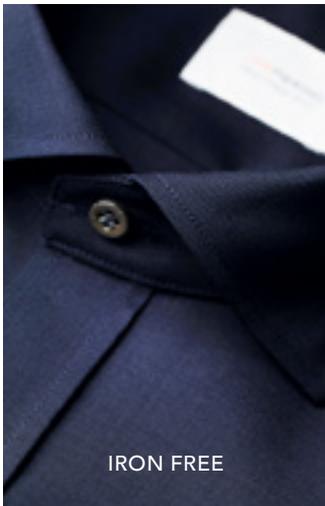


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Luxury Merino Wool Essentials for Men

Welcome

Marjan Rintel

UNIQUE RESILIENCE



Cover Story

In celebration of International Women's Day (8 March), we're featuring American comedian Michelle Buteau (p. 26) as a powerful example of a woman who isn't afraid to be herself and is reshaping the industry on her own terms.

Each spring, our Dutch tulip fields transform into a stunning palette of colours. They symbolise our deep roots, our resilience after cold winters and our national pride. It's a breathtaking sight – one we're proud to share with the world. You feel that same energy when wandering through the lavender fields of Provence or witnessing the gentle blue nemophila in Hitachi Seaside Park in Japan. In this edition of *Holland Herald*, we reflect on the global allure of flowers (p. 52).

This world full of wonders is more accessible than ever, and I'm especially proud of that. With the introduction of our new summer schedule, we're opening even more doors to dazzling destinations, including Jersey – one of the Channel Islands – and Santiago de Compostela and Oviedo in Spain. At KLM, we feel the drive every day to make the world a little smaller, bringing beautiful and colourful experiences within reach.

Rediscovering resilience time and again is what makes KLM strong. Resilience is the ability to adapt, recover from setbacks and even grow from challenging experiences. It's this continual process of adapting and bouncing back, enriched by new insights, that leads to growth.

“Rediscovering resilience time and again is what makes KLM strong”

You can find this spirit in nature, in the restoration of historic cities and in the strength of women who continuously reinvent the way they navigate life's challenges. This edition of *Holland Herald* is filled with stories like these. A wonderful example is Michelle Buteau (p. 26) – stand-up comedian, actress and producer. Married to

Dutch photographer Gijs van der Most, she became a mother of twins at 42 and seems to effortlessly balance motherhood with a thriving career. She uses her voice and platform to promote inclusiveness in entertainment and everyday life.

Whatever the reason for your journey, we hope it will be a memorable experience – one that inspires growth in your own life.

Welcome on board.

Marjan Rintel
KLM President & CEO





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March 2026

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Your Next Destination

Building the case for a journey to **Inverness**

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MEET THE TEAM



Lisa Beijer

As a flight attendant and freelance graphic designer, Lisa combines the best jobs in the world. Working for KLM allows her to meet new people, experience new cultures and explore the globe. As a designer for *Holland Herald*, she enjoys making pages beautiful with subtle details and a touch of storytelling. Working in these two worlds gives her a lot of energy and fuels her creativity.

Lisa's travel tip: "Cartagena has everything. You can stroll through the Old Town and grab a great coffee or a drink at one of the amazing rooftop bars, or head straight for the tropical beaches and soak up the sun."



Dana van Leeuwen

Dana has been a photographer for more than 25 years. Her work has taken her to remarkable places and introduced her to inspiring people worldwide. She's currently focusing on travel and lifestyle photography, collaborating with companies and people committed to making the world a little better. Dana took the photos for the main travel story on Spain's Costa Blanca (p. 38).

Dana's travel tip: "I recently explored the foothills of the Spanish Pyrenees. It's an area defined by beautiful rolling landscapes, almond and olive groves, small mountain villages and affordable, family-run restaurants."



Bert Vanblaere

An all-round media producer, Bert has worked on editorials, campaign shoots, TV programmes, theatre productions and events. Driven by a passion for food and travel, he makes the impossible possible by turning the wildest ideas into reality. Bert produced the photo shoot for the article on American comedian Michelle Buteau (p. 26). **Bert's travel tip:** "I once took the sleeper train from Mumbai to Jaipur. This unique journey immediately immersed me in the rhythm of India. When I arrived in the Pink City the next morning, it seemed as if all the world's beauty had gathered there."

Colophon

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LONDON CALLING

Francis Bacon • David Hockney
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Now at
**Kunstmuseum
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& Contemporary Art,
Design, and Fashion.

London Calling shows icons of postwar British painting who called London their home. Renowned favourites meet new icons, each one a celebration of the human figure, faces and relationships between those sharing an ever-changing city. A love letter to real lives in an extraordinary place.

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from Amsterdam

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from Schiphol

30 minutes
from Rotterdam

2 hrs
from Brussels

3 hrs
from Paris

KUNSTMUSEUM
DEN HAAG



THROUGH *your lens*





Havana
Cuba



A DIFFERENT BALLGAME

STREET PHOTOGRAPHER KARLYNNE WINTELS' EYE WAS CAUGHT BY BOYS PLAYING FOOTBALL IN HAVANA, CUBA.



I started taking photos during the pandemic while living in Singapore, which was our home at the time. After finding myself without a job, I turned to photography as a distraction. The more I learnt about my camera and the art of photography, the more seriously I started taking it. I began running the Women in Street Singapore club, a group of female photographers who enjoy taking to the streets to shoot images. As a mother of two, I don't get much time to practise this passion, so once a year, I take a trip to focus fully on photography, taking pictures from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. In late March last year, I travelled to Havana, Cuba for a week. I chose Cuba because I'd been there once before, about 20 years ago, and I was curious to see how it had changed. I've noticed that taking photos on the street outside Europe is a lot easier to do. People in the Netherlands often object to their photo being taken, but in Cuba, and in other parts of the world, people seem less

concerned. These boys were playing football in a kind of sports complex on the outskirts of Havana. I'm sure I was seen as some crazy tourist taking random pictures, which allowed me to do my thing as long as I didn't bother anyone. I loved this environment, where people were roller-skating in an empty pool, and playing games and sport.

Your Photo

If you'd like to have your travel photo featured in this section, email an image (300dpi; landscape mode) to: hollandheraldhome@hearst.nl.

Monthly Prize

If we publish your travel photo, we'll send you a copy of Jimmy Nelson's latest book *Between the Sea and the Sky*, which is about traditional Dutch communities.

Some of the images are also available as fine art. jimmynelson.com/fine-art-intro





We co-own five unique holiday homes

WE SPOKE TO LENE ESPERSEN (FORMER MINISTER OF JUSTICE IN DENMARK) AND HER HUSBAND DANNY, WHO'VE BEEN WITH 21-5 SINCE 2013.



Lene & Danny, a 21-5 family

When did you join, and what made you choose 21-5?

We joined the first 21-5 group at the beginning of 2013, so we have been co-owners for over 12 years. At the time, we had been looking for a home of our own in Southern Europe for years, but we couldn't find anything suitable at a reasonable price. When we came across 21-5, we

could instantly see the advantages and eventually decided to join - a decision we have never regretted.

What do you like most about 21-5?

We love the concept of not having to think about all the practicalities and repairs that come with owning a property. When we are on holiday, we are on holiday! For a large family,



it's perfect to be able to choose between a skiing holiday, a city break, or simply relaxing in a warmer location. On top of that, we get to treat our family to great holidays. We often lend our homes to family members - we have enough weeks for everyone.

**What about planning your holidays?
Can you travel when you want to?**

We enjoy planning our holidays well in advance, but we also travel at short notice. If we want to book specific weeks during the school holidays, it's best to plan ahead, but we almost always get the weeks we want.

What has been your experience with the 21-5 team?

Without them, it simply would not work. They are always engaged and quick to respond. They have

a remarkable eye for design and combine this with very practical solutions. Put simply, our homes are great, and even after 12 years, they are still in very good condition. We recently updated our Paris apartment with a new kitchen and an extra bathroom.

Has 21-5 been a good investment for you?

We never joined 21-5 for the money; for us, it was about improving our quality of life. Joining 21-5 has certainly done that. The freedom we feel when we return to our beautiful five homes is a great privilege, and, as mentioned earlier, our homes also allow us to travel with grandparents, siblings and friends. On top of that, 21-5 has also proven to be a very good financial investment - our share has more than doubled since we joined!

FACTS ABOUT 21-5

- Since 2012, over 1,400 families have joined 21-5
- Over 300 homes have been purchased for our families
- Over €540 million has been invested through 21-5
- 21-5 is the world's leading model for families sharing homes in small groups
- The average resale profit is 50%



For more information:

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FEMALE CANCER
FOUNDATION

“
QUALITY CARE FOR WOMEN
ISN'T OPTIONAL, IT IS ESSENTIAL
”

Cervical cancer is the second most occurring cancer for women under the age of 45. Nearly 94% of deaths occur in low- and middle income countries, caused by a lack of healthcare and screening programs. Yet, cervical cancer is easy to prevent with early diagnosis and timely treatment. Female Cancer Foundation provides care and education on the spot in hard to reach corners of the world. **Scan the QR code**, save a woman's life. With just 15 Euro you can save her and give her children a brighter future!



The SELECTION

Holland Herald presents a global selection of things to see, do, taste, meet & wish for.



Amsterdam

VISUALS FROM JAPAN

Japan's idiosyncratic culture and nature have always inspired creatives around the world. For the exhibition *Ekō – Japan in two visual narratives*, Amsterdam's Scheepvaartmuseum dove into its archives to find some of the first pictures taken in Japan in the mid-19th century, and juxtaposed these against the work of contemporary visual artist Anaïs López. 5 Mar-30 Aug; hetscheepvaartmuseum.com

TO *see*

Amsterdam

AMERICAN MYTHS

FROM BARBIE DOLLS TO COWBOYS, DAVID LEVINTHAL EXAMINES POWER, IDENTITY AND HEROISM IN AMERICA.

Using toys and miniature figures to stage moments from US history, American artist David Levinthal offers an original perspective of his country's culture and identity. *American Myth & Memory: David Levinthal Photographs* at Amsterdam's H'Art Museum is his first exhibition in the Netherlands.

Until 6 Sep; hartmuseum.nl



Rotterdam

ART IN ALL FORMS

Bringing together creatives from diverse disciplines around the world, Art Rotterdam takes place over three days in March at the Dutch city's Ahoy complex. For the first time this year, the art fair has joined forces with photography fair Unseen, making it an even more appealing and relevant event for lovers of various forms of artistic expression.

27-29 Mar; artrotterdam.com

Paris

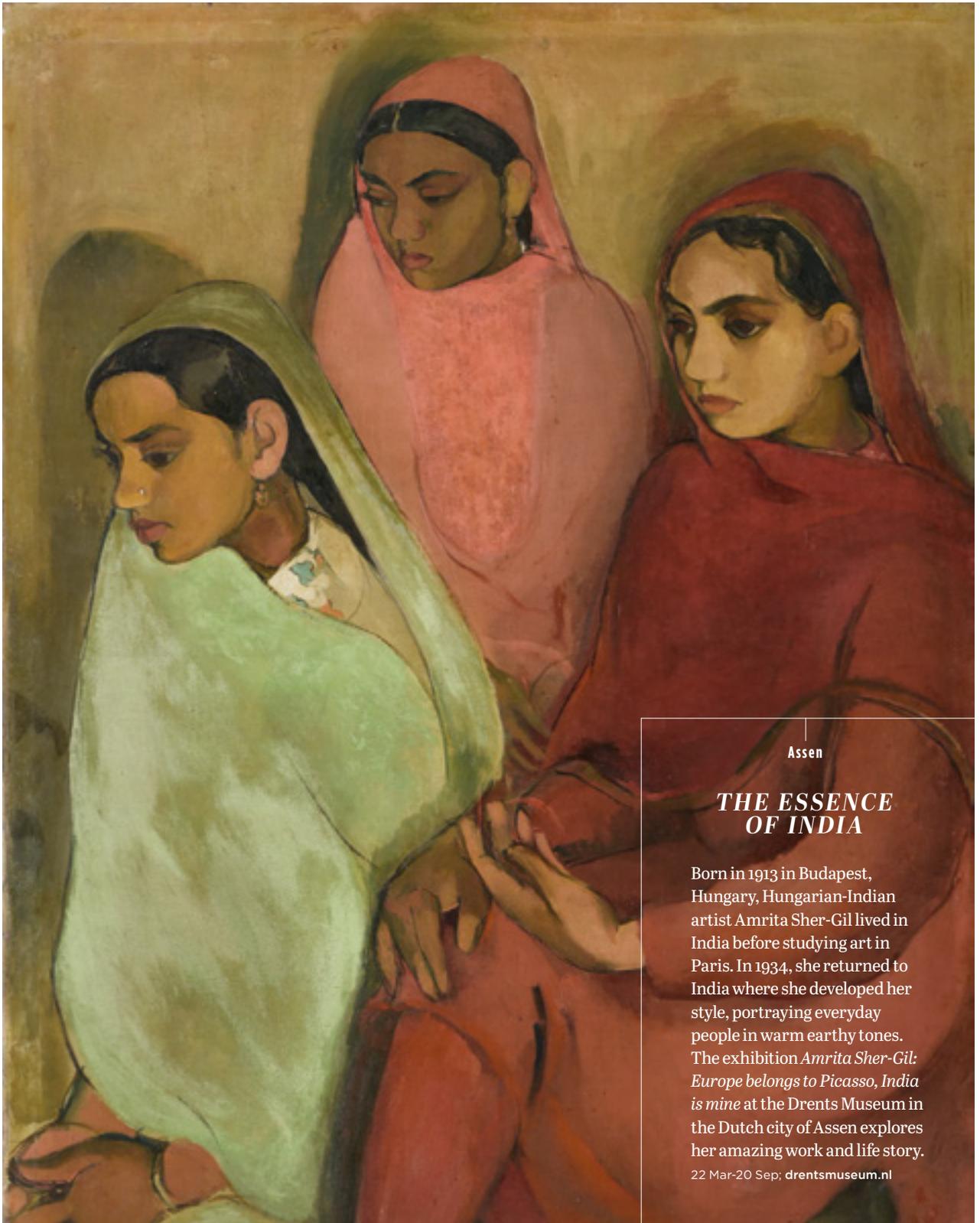
AN ODE TO GEMSTONES

Twentieth-century French writer Roger Caillois, who's best known for his literary criticism and philosophy, was also an avid collector of minerals and picture stones. The exhibition *Stones and Reveries: The Poetry and Minerals of Roger Caillois* at Paris' L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts displays nearly 200 minerals from his collection, along with texts by the author.

Until 29 Mar; lecolevancliefarpels.com



At 19 years old, Amrita Sher-Gil became the **youngest artist and first Asian** to win the gold medal at the Grand Salon in Paris, for her painting *Young Girls*



David Levinthal, *Untitled from the series Barbie*, 1998 (top), *Untitled from the series Baseball*, 2004 (middle), *Untitled from the series Wild West*, 1989 (bottom), Polaroid Polacolor ER Land Film © David Levinthal, c/o Pictoright, Amsterdam 2026 (Amsterdam), Saidou Dioko, *Yellow Spring*, 2024, Contour Gallery (Rotterdam); *Nuclear Explosion Over the Ocean*, Agata, Brazil, Paris, Museum national d'Histoire naturelle, photograph by François Farges (Paris); *Three Girls*, Amritsar (India), January 1935; National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi (Drents Museum)

Assen

THE ESSENCE OF INDIA

Born in 1913 in Budapest, Hungary, Hungarian-Indian artist Amrita Sher-Gil lived in India before studying art in Paris. In 1934, she returned to India where she developed her style, portraying everyday people in warm earthy tones. The exhibition *Amrita Sher-Gil: Europe belongs to Picasso, India is mine* at the Drents Museum in the Dutch city of Assen explores her amazing work and life story.

22 Mar-20 Sep; drentsmuseum.nl

TO wish for



Socks

FROM GHANA WITH LOVE

In 2015, Ghanaian brothers Kurtis Kudjo and Mawunyo Agbeko launched Chale Socks, a home-grown brand that features a collection of colourful socks inspired by African patterns and the energy of Ghanaian street culture. For every pair of socks purchased, the brand donates footwear to an underprivileged child.
chalesocks.com



Jewellery

True to the tulip

Born in India, raised in Dubai and based in Amsterdam, Sanah Khurana, founder of jewellery brand Tripet, translates her cultural heritage into unique designs for her collection. Her 14-karat-gold tulip pendants with different gemstones are inspired by the vibrant Dutch flower fields and lush floral landscapes of Kashmir. €990; tripatjewellery.com

Camera

CAPTURE IT

FUJIFILM'S INSTAX MINI EVO DELIVERS PERFECT PICTURES ON THE GO.



Whether you wish to illustrate your travel diary with a few images or gift friends with a visual memory, the Fujifilm instax mini Evo is a hybrid instant camera that allows you to print images

on the go. Its compact design, rechargeable battery, and range of lens and film effects make it the ideal travel companion for anyone looking for an instant visual souvenir. €199,95; fujifilm.com

The first Polaroid instant camera was released in 1948 and sold out within minutes



Home interior

PROVENCE STYLE

For their collaborative collection, French interior design brand Bonsoirs and French designer Margaux Keller drew on *Provençal indiennes*, a style of printed cotton fabric that originated in the 17th century in Provence and was inspired by Indian printed textiles. The collection includes bed linen and cushions. bonsoirs.com

Bags

ON THE BALL

From the Chicago Bulls to the Los Angeles Lakers, the NBA x Eastpak collection is for basketball fans who enjoy carrying their favourite team on their back. Other than backpacks, the collection includes travel trolleys, cabin bags, mini bags, pencil cases and a mini pouch. Whatever you chose, it's sure to be a slam dunk. eastpak.com



TO meet

Argentinian-born Queen Máxima of the Netherlands is the **UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Financial Health**

Delfina Chaves

PORTRAYING QUEEN MÁXIMA

WHEN DELFINA CHAVES LANDED THE ROLE OF QUEEN MÁXIMA OF THE NETHERLANDS FOR THE TV SERIES *MAXIMA*, IT WAS A DREAM COME TRUE FOR THE ARGENTINIAN ACTRESS.

When did you know that you wanted to become an actress? Quite early on. When I was nine, my parents got divorced, and I began moving back and forth between my father and mother. When I was with my mother, I often went along to her acting group. From that moment on, I was hooked. For my 15th birthday – which is an important milestone in most Latin American countries and is called a ‘*quinceañera*’ – my father gifted me an acting workshop at Universal Studios in Los Angeles. Just after finishing high school, I landed my first role in a theatre production; after that, things moved quickly, especially when I was cast in the popular Argentinian series *La Casa del Mar* in 2015.

You play Queen Máxima in the Videoland series *Máxima*, and the second season starts this month.

What attracted you to that role?

I knew of Queen Máxima, of course, as she’s hugely popular and beloved in Argentina. But I didn’t know much more about her other than that she’s the queen of the Netherlands and always looks beautiful. So before the audition, I read a lot about her and her family, and was impressed by her intelligence and courage. I thought it was especially cool that she worked as a banker on Wall Street in the 1990s. That can’t have been easy as a woman in such a male-dominated world. I have huge admiration for Queen Máxima’s perseverance and positivity.

The first season has been sold to more than 50 countries – how do you explain the show’s success? I think people enjoy being taken into a world

that usually remains hidden. Royalty has always captured the imagination – just look at the success of other series about royal families. That said, the series is partly fictional; of course, we don’t know exactly how everything happened, and we had no consultation with the royal family. I also don’t know whether Queen Máxima has seen it. As a fellow Argentinian who’s proud of her accomplishments, it would be nice to

know what she thinks of the show and to meet her.

What can we expect from Season 2?

One of the major events this season is the wedding of Queen Máxima and King Willem-Alexander, which took place on 2 February 2002. I got to wear a replica of her iconic Valentino wedding dress, which was very cool!

From 14 Mar; videoland.com



TO *taste*

Utensils

STYLISH STICKS

In Japan, chopsticks are seen as tokens of goodwill and serve as symbolic gifts at weddings, birthdays and other celebrations. The 12-piece ceramic Mino Ware Chopsticks Rest Set Japanese Motif by Omakase features elements from the country's cultural heritage.

€105; omakase-forest.com



French winemaker Marcel Ott created the **classic bowling-pin-shaped rosé wine bottle** in the 1930s to make the wine instantly recognisable



London

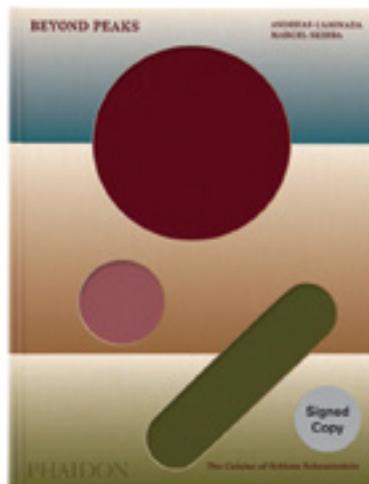
INTIMATE DINING

Hidden behind an unassuming Soho facade is Humble Chicken, a two-star Michelin, Japanese-inspired restaurant led by chef-owner Angelo Sato. Seating is limited and guests are centred around an open kitchen, where a meticulous *omakase*-style tasting menu, which features a chef's selection, unfolds over 16 courses. Sato uses only high-quality ingredients, largely sourced from local producers, farmers and fishermen, as well as specialist ingredients from different prefectures in Japan. humblechickenuk.com

Cookbook

COOK LIKE A MASTER CHEF

Located in the heart of the Swiss Alps in a historic castle, the three-star Michelin restaurant Schloss Schauenstein is a true cultural experience. Their cookbook, *Beyond Peaks*, tells the stories of the people who make it a success – not just the chefs, but also the gardeners, bakers and many others. Recipes are included as well. €59,95; phaidon.com



Rosé

Pink, sparkly and alcohol-free

Delivering the fresh, crisp taste of a dry rosé, along with its celebratory bubbles, Beau Viva offers an alcohol-free alternative for all rosé lovers. For its development, French winemaker Nicolas Quiles drew on years of experience in traditional sparkling wine production, combined with extensive research into alcohol-free techniques.

€21; beau-viva.com



TO do



Hamburg

INTERACTIVE ART MUSEUM

As a new cultural landmark solely dedicated to digital and interactive art, the German city of Hamburg is debuting the UBS Digital Art Museum this month. Opening exhibition *teamLab Borderless Hamburg* is an immersive ecosystem spread across the entire building where digital artworks move freely between rooms and transform with human interaction.

digitalartmuseum.com

Regular sauna visits may offer **health benefits** such as improving cardiovascular health, reducing stress and relieving chronic pain

Amsterdam

LEARNING IS FUN AT PLAYHOOD

Curious kids will have a ball at Playhood Amsterdam, an indoor playground where young ones can explore a replica of a little village, while children aged seven and older can find their way out of two escape rooms. Part of Playhood, Escapehood features a mysterious movie theatre called Premiere at Cine Hood and a science lab, The Forget Lab. playhood.nl; escapehood.nl



Book

SWEAT IN STYLE

From cosy cabins hidden deep in the woods to striking lakeside capsules: Gestalten's *Ridiculously Good-Looking Saunas* showcases some of the world's most spectacular sweat lodges. The 36 projects featured in the book have been selected and personally visited by British curator Christopher Selman, who developed a love of saunas thanks to his Finnish aunt, and now runs outdoor sauna company Out of the Valley.

€45; gestalten.com

Festivals

DANCE IS IN THE AIR

THE ARRIVAL OF SPRING IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD IS PLENTY OF REASON TO CELEBRATE. HERE ARE THREE EPIC FESTIVALS HAPPENING THIS MONTH.

SXM Festival

Taking place at beach clubs and jungle villas, the Caribbean island of Saint Martin is the centre of electronic music during the SXM Festival. This year's line-up includes Carl Cox and Deep Dish.

18-22 Mar; sxmfestival.com

Caprices

With 360-degree alpine views, access to glasshouse stages and gondolas running until 4 a.m., this festival takes electronic music to the slopes in Eggli, Gstaad in the Swiss Alps.

13-15 and 20-22 Mar; capricesfestival.com

Latin Crazy Tribe

A Latin festival in Dubai may not seem like an obvious match. Still, top Latin-dance instructors gather in the UAE city for workshops in salsa, bachata and more.

26-30 Mar; latincrazytribe.com/dancefestival



Column

Freek Vonk

DISPELLING A MODERN MYTH

FREEK, A DUTCH BIOLOGIST WHO STUDIES AND FILMS UNIQUE ANIMALS WORLDWIDE TO INSPIRE A LOVE FOR NATURE, TALKS ABOUT STILL-EXISTING DINOSAURS.

“A deep rumbling sound rolls through the jungle”



I'm walking through the Daintree Rainforest in Australia. The warm and heavy air makes it feel like I'm moving beneath a wet blanket. High above me, the treetops link, forming a cathedral of leaves. Below, lianas hang like loose ropes in a climbing frame. There are countless shades and layers of green around me. This is no ordinary jungle; this is a biological archive. At more than 180 million years old, it's one of the oldest rainforests in the world. To put that in perspective, it existed when the mighty *Tyrannosaurus rex* roamed the Earth.

As I continue on my path, the calm is suddenly broken when a deep rumbling sound rolls through the jungle. The ground trembles slightly beneath my feet, and the air seems to press against my chest. Then I see her: 60kg of pure, primal instinct. She's 1.5m tall, has a bright-blue neck, jet-black, glossy feathers, eyes that seem to look straight through you and enormous claws capable of killing with a single, well-aimed kick. On top of her head is that unmistakable helmet. This is the animal I came to see: the southern cassowary. With her beak pointed towards the ground, this huge, flightless bird uses her entire body as a resonating chamber. The low, booming sound she produces is so deep you feel it before you hear it. It's a seismic signal meant for other cassowaries, and it contrasts sharply with the high-pitched chirping and

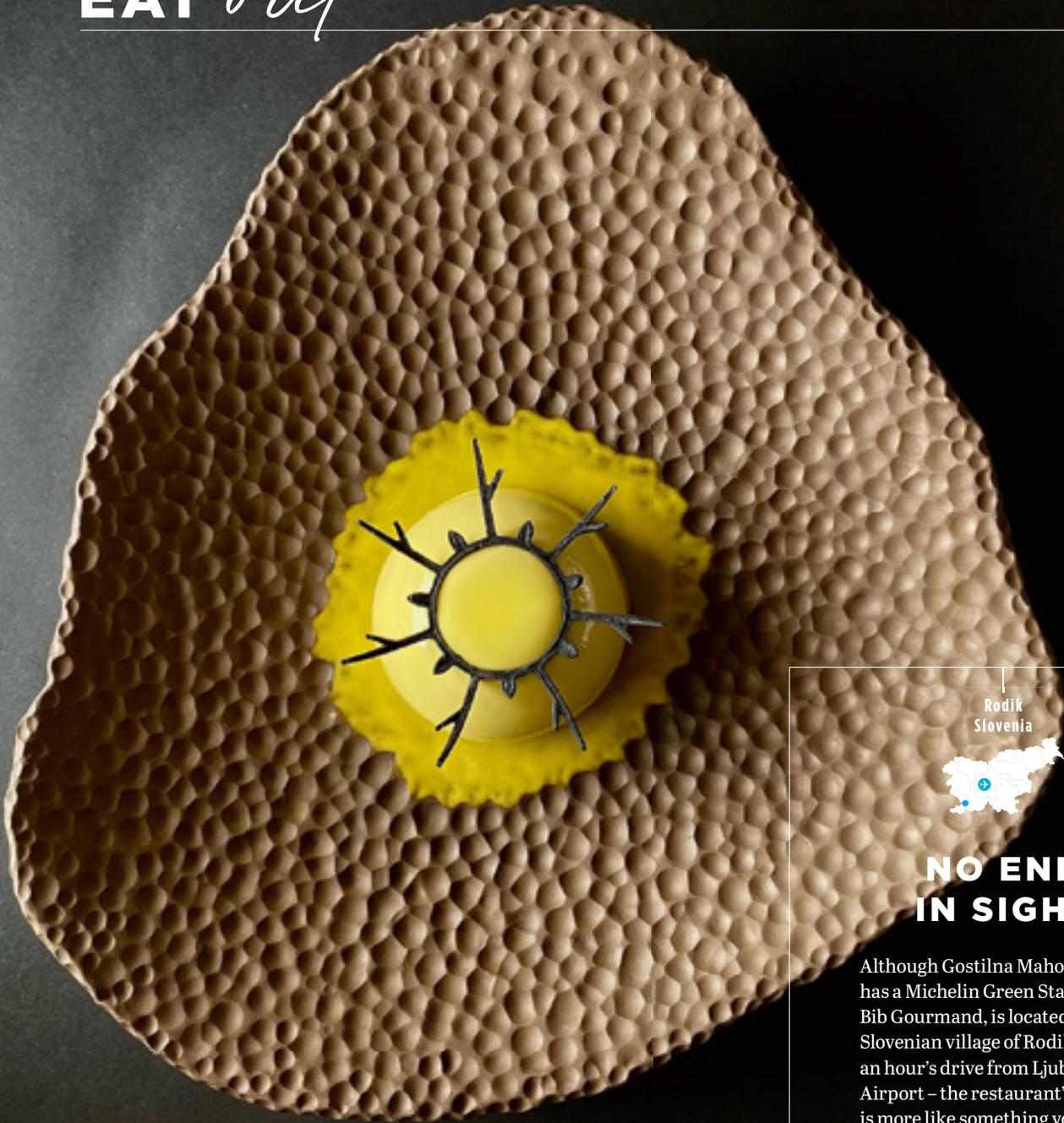
fluttering of the tropical birds around me. You cannot get closer to a living dinosaur than a cassowary. And that's not poetry; it's science.

We now know for certain that all birds are dinosaurs: direct descendants of two-legged, meat-eating dinosaurs from the group known as the theropods. It's the same group to which *T. rex* belonged. To look a bird in the eyes is to look millions of years back in time. And yes, every bird is just as much a dinosaur as the next. But let's be honest: that evolutionary link is far easier to visualise in a cassowary than in a house sparrow on your balcony.

Many dinosaur species also had feathers. While some might have used them to glide, they were primarily used for staying warm and showing off. Some species were even brightly coloured, striped or spotted. We know this thanks to fossils with so-called quill knobs, small structures on bones where feathers were attached, just like in modern birds. There's even a 100-million-year-old dinosaur tail preserved in amber, complete with skin and feathers.

Although a meteorite struck the Earth about 66 million years ago – ending the age in which dinosaurs dominated the planet – a small group did indeed survive that catastrophe. So no, not all dinosaurs went extinct. They no longer run through the ferns, but they do fly above our heads. Anyone who wants to see a living dinosaur today need only look up.

EAT *out*



Rodik
Slovenia



NO END IN SIGHT

Although Gostilna Mahorčič, which has a Michelin Green Star and Bib Gourmand, is located in the Slovenian village of Rodik – about an hour’s drive from Ljubljana Airport – the restaurant’s cuisine is more like something you’d find in a culinary capital. This delicate caramel almond tart, for example, isn’t just delicious and pretty, but fun, too. Once Chef Ksenija Mahorčič has created a dish, she will often make the tableware to complement it; perhaps a little too well in this case because some guests try to scrape off the yellow ‘sauce’, which is actually the plate’s glaze. josefina.si

My

Singapore



SINGAPORE

RACHEL GEERMAN, CO-FOUNDER OF THE BUILDING AMS HAIR SALON IN AMSTERDAM, MOVED TO SINGAPORE WITH HER HUSBAND AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN A FEW YEARS AGO FOR HIS JOB. AS SHE STILL MANAGES HER SALON, SHE RETURNS TO AMSTERDAM EVERY THREE MONTHS.



What do you love most about living in Singapore?

The incredible diversity of cultures that coexist here so naturally. You can walk down one street and see a church, a mosque and a Buddhist temple. I also love that it's a safe environment for families and feels more like an island than a metropolis.

Your favourite parts of the city?

Marina Bay ①, the sleek, futuristic part of Singapore where everything feels new, spotless and innovative. This is where you'll find high-end shops, amazing architecture and Singapore's famous forward-thinking vibe. Then you have charming historic areas, such as Chinatown ② and Katong-Joo Chiat, with their beautifully restored shophouses. I also love the adjacent Telok Ayer and Maxwell areas. They're full of boutique gyms, hidden bars, independent shops and cafés.

What about must-dos?

Visit Sentosa, the island just

off the southern coast, where you'll find ONE[°]15 Marina Sentosa Cove (11 Cove Dr) with its waterfront restaurants, lots of beaches ③, Adventure Cove Waterpark, Universal Studios and Singapore Oceanarium (all at 8 Sentosa Gateway). I love Tanjong Beach Club (120 Tanjong Beach Wlk). It has great food and is the perfect spot to unwind by the water. I also suggest cycling from Gardens by the Bay ④ (18 Marina Gardens Dr; another must-do for its vast collection of plants and incredible views) along Marina Bay to the Marina Barrage, and then to Merlion Park.

Best places to stay? The luxurious Indigo Singapore Katong hotel (86 E Coast Rd), which blends Peranakan heritage with modern design; 21 Carpenter (21 Carpenter St), a stunning boutique hotel in a restored heritage building near Chinatown; and the 5-star Artyzen Singapore (9 Cuscaden Rd). This hotel feels incredibly serene despite

being close to the bustling Orchard Road.

Where should we go for a drink?

Bar Somma (46 Kim Yam Rd) is an intimate place inside the New Bahru lifestyle hub that's perfect for a relaxed Italian cocktail night. Atlas (600 N Bridge Rd) in Bugis is an Art Deco dream and has one of the world's largest gin collections. On entering, it feels like you're stepping into *The Great Gatsby* novel. And at The Standard (12 Orange Grove Rd), you can enjoy a cocktail in its fabulous swimming pool because it has a swim-up bar.

Where should we eat?

From beautifully designed restaurants to casual hawker centres ⑤ (food courts), Singapore has it all. I love going to Chatterbox (333 Orchard Rd), in the Hilton Singapore Orchard, for local favourite Hainanese chicken rice. I also recommend Madame Fan (32 Beach Rd), a lovely modern Cantonese

restaurant with amazing dishes and a sophisticated vibe. Another favourite is Bibik Violet ⑥ (28 Orchard Rd) in the Temasek Shophouse. It's an all-day Peranakan café and bakery serving authentic dishes in a warm, colourful and stylish setting.

How do we get around?

As Singapore is compact, I find walking to be the best way to travel. Alternatively, use the MRT, which is one of the world's fastest and most reliable metro systems, or one of the numerous bike-sharing services.

Book this story



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Hawker centre



Siloso Beach



Marina Bay

*In Marina Bay
everything feels new,
spotless and innovative*



Chinatown



Bibik Violet



Gardens by the Bay

A full-page photograph of Michelle Buteau on a rooftop. She is wearing a dark, sleeveless, belted dress with a large buckle. Her hair is long, dark, and curly. She is looking upwards and to the left with a slight smile. The background shows a city skyline under a clear blue sky.

American standup comedian and actress Michelle Buteau (48) is unapologetically herself and encourages others to follow suit. She is all about opening doors and breaking taboos, and she does so through the *Survival of the Thickest* Netflix series and her live comedy shows. Text Marieke Verhoeven Photography Anne Timmer

Michelle Buteau

UNABASHEDLY BUTEAU

“Michelle, I love you! Can I take a selfie with you?” We’re on the cobblestoned Water Street in the Dumbo neighbourhood, a former industrial area in Brooklyn that’s now a mix of converted warehouse apartments, independent boutiques and trendy eateries. A young, Black police officer steps out of her patrol car with visible excitement and approaches Michelle Buteau, who’s just arriving by Uber for our interview at the Dumbo House private members’ club. “Yes, girl, of course; come here,” Buteau responds while flashing a broad smile across her friendly freckled face for the officer’s smartphone camera. When we step inside the Empire Stores warehouse where the club is located, I ask Buteau if she minds being famous and having to take pictures with fans. “What, I’m famous, really?” she says. “That still sounds strange to me. New Yorkers are pretty casual about spotting celebrities; I usually walk around my Brooklyn neighbourhood without many people approaching me. But I don’t mind it if they do.”

Authenticity only

Since co-creating, co-producing, co-writing and starring in the ongoing *Survival of the Thickest* Netflix series – which first aired in 2023 – Buteau has gained a worldwide fanbase. The series is loosely based on her own life and follows Brooklyn-based stylist Mavis Beaumont, a woman in her late 30s who’s trying to find her place in the competitive and ruthless fashion industry as a plus-sized Black woman. Tackling complex issues such as inequality, interracial relations and body positivity in a light-hearted yet serious manner, the series has received critical acclaim and put Buteau on the map as a positive and outspoken voice on these topics. But for Buteau, who was born and raised in New Jersey by a Haitian father and a Jamaican mother, and who’s been on stage as a standup comedian and appeared in TV shows and Hollywood productions since her mid-20s, there was nothing new or strategically timed about the series. “Dealing with prejudice about my appearance and my life choices is simply my lived experience and that of my friends,” she says after we’ve sat down in one of the members’ club’s meeting rooms, and Buteau has taken off her shoes and casually joked about the designer chairs being too narrow for her round figure.

“FOR ME, CONFIDENCE CAME BEFORE COMEDY”

“I never set out to be the curvy woman’s voice; I just happen to be a curvy woman with a voice. I’m allergic to anything that feels performative or strategic. If it’s not authentic, I’m not interested.”

Buteau grew up as an only child in a religious Caribbean household and moved schools a lot because of her parents’ changing jobs. Becoming a standup comedian and actress was not something that she ever dreamt of as a child. “I was a shy kid, but because I changed schools a lot, I had to learn to adapt and find my place,” she explains. “Around the age of eight or nine, I realised that if I made people feel comfortable, then I’d be comfortable myself. That can veer into people-pleasing, but it taught me a lot about people’s characters and behaviours. I used to organise little ‘community events’, inviting friends over, baking banana bread and putting on shows with dolls. I guess I was already trying to create experiences for people back then. And since my family’s a melting pot of cultures, a lot of light roasting came from imitating each other’s accents and customs. I didn’t realise that that was a comedic education until later.” At the same time, Buteau’s father taught her how to take up space as well. “That wasn’t always easy because my body started developing before I was ready for it, and I was often asked about my roots because I was considered too light to be Black and too Black to be White,” she says. “But my father taught me »





“
I'VE ALWAYS
FOUND
COMMUNITY
IN QUEER
SPACES
”





the importance of owning your presence and claiming your space. For me, confidence came before comedy.”

Buteau studied journalism before starting her career as an editor at local news network WNBC in New York City. “I always liked the idea of being on the move, talking to people from all walks of life and reporting on exciting events,” she explains. “When I was working in news, people would tell me, ‘You’re so funny. You should do standup,’ and I thought they were crazy, even though I did enjoy entertaining them. Eventually, however, I figured that I might as well try it.” Buteau left her job and joined amateur nights at comedy clubs around the city. While some might dread the idea of going on stage and being judged by a group of strangers, she never found the comedy world intimidating. “I was used to being the odd one out, and in comedy, everyone’s an odd one out,” says Buteau. “It felt like home. I was never intimidated by the crowd. I figured that they left the house and paid to see me, so that was already cool. That perspective made it less scary. I’d never liked giving people power over me.” Even before she left news journalism, comedy had always been a way for Buteau to manage her anxiety and turn it into a tool. “I’ve struggled with anxiety my whole life, and doing standup allows me to anticipate challenges, empathise with others, and use my experiences and crazy thoughts as material. I also practise yoga, lift weights, write and cook to manage it. Anxiety can be a superpower when channelled productively.”

Thanks to her quick wit and brutal honesty, Buteau soon became a household name in the comedy scene. “Now, 24 years into comedy, I see how fast my mind works,” she explains. “Sometimes I slur because my mouth can’t keep up with my thoughts. It’s a gift and a curse, I guess. I look at old clips of the late comedian Robin Williams when he’s rumbling and mumbling and think, “Yeah, I get it.” Once you scratch that part of your brain, it doesn’t stop. Comedy is about observation; even something as insignificant as someone’s purple sneakers can turn into a 17-minute riff. A comedian’s brain is always thinking ahead, catastrophising and imagining solutions.” Her standup success didn’t go unnoticed, and Buteau also started getting roles in comedy series and movies. “In New York, lots of

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**A COMEDIAN’S
 BRAIN IS ALWAYS
 THINKING
 AHEAD AND
 CATASTROPHISING**
 ”

comedy shows look for comedians who can improvise,” she explains. “I’d audition and sometimes get parts. At first, casting directors saw me as awkward or ‘too much’, but once I embraced being myself, it clicked. *First Wives Club* (2019), a BET+ Original comedy series, changed my life. It was the first time I was high on the call sheet, and it was a Black-female-led show. It just felt right. It’s great that next to starring in the series, I’m now also on the production side with *Survival of the Thickest* and can give opportunities to others who might not have been given a stage before.”

Inclusive communities

Buteau has openly and hilariously shared on stage how she met her husband, Gijs, a Dutch photographer, through a one-night stand. He was visiting New York City but living in Amsterdam, and the couple maintained a long-distance relationship for a while before they got married and Gijs moved to the US permanently. They’ve been together for 17 years. “I think a good relationship is one where your partner makes you want to be a better person, you can grow together, you can pursue your own dreams, and you can communicate openly and without judgement,” Buteau explains. “But chemistry is also super important; after all these years, ours is as strong as ever.” »



Their long, complicated and unsuccessful journey trying to have children via IVF, which eventually led to the couple having twins via a surrogate when Buteau was 42 years old, was one of the starting points for Buteau to write her book, *Survival of the Thickest*, which later resulted in the TV series in an adapted form. “Those years were really tough for me, and I needed an outlet,” she shares candidly. “IVF and all the hormonal changes had a big impact on me, so I figured other women going through this might appreciate someone sharing her experiences openly in a book. My book agent was instantly interested, but it was hard for me to sit down and write about it while my life was still in turmoil. It wasn’t until the babies were born in 2019 that I took time off to write the book. And before it was even published, the TV studios and streaming services were already calling to turn it into a show.”

Another important issue in the book and the TV series is Buteau’s alliance with the Queer and Trans community. The favourite hangout of her character, Mavis, and her friends in the series is a drag bar, and real-life drag performer Peppermint has a role in the series that goes beyond portraying the extravagant stereotype. “I’ve always found community in Queer spaces,” Buteau explains. “Whenever I travel, I look for the gay and lesbian bars; those are my people. There’s joy there, even when the world tells them they aren’t worthy or that their existence is ‘illegal.’”

As for combining her busy career with motherhood, Buteau is still learning as she goes. “Motherhood has taught me to be patient, to slow down and to be present,” she says. “I now limit live shows to Fridays and Saturdays, so I can be home during the week to make lunches and pick up my kids. If the comedy club is in a city nearby, I take them along so they can see my work. I want them to witness what I do and feel included, rather than living a double life.” When asked if she has any last advice for women building their careers or struggling with motherhood, Buteau pauses and thinks. “Our life choices, whether it’s our careers, motherhood, relationships or personal goals, are all individual. Society doesn’t get to dictate our path. My philosophy is that the world should adapt to us, not the other way around. It’s like my father taught me: don’t be afraid to take up space and be yourself, no matter which room you’re in.” «

New York City
US



Buteau's Favourites

Brooklyn

I love New York for its diversity, shared spaces and the hustle mentality. The material for my comedy shows is literally on the streets here: I always carry a notebook around in case I overhear funny conversations. Living in Brooklyn is perfect for my kids; they meet people from all walks of life and experience different cultures.

Amsterdam

Since my husband is Dutch, we spend at least one month a year in Amsterdam. Amsterdam, like New York, has a unique mix of tradition and creativity. Certain neighbourhoods feel alive with imagination while maintaining institutions and culture. I enjoy the scalability of the city and how kid-friendly it is. I’ve been doing comedy shows there since 2008, so I’ve also built up a local network in comedy that feels like home.

Joan Rivers

The late comedian Joan Rivers has always been one of my idols because of her bold and candid sense of humour. I once asked her daughter, Melissa,

what it was like hearing material about herself, and she said her mother always considered comedy a family business. That resonated with me because I also use my experiences as a wife and mother in my comedic work.

Charity work

My uncle, who’s the Archbishop of Jamaica, and my mother founded Friends of the Good Shepherd, which has been running for more than 25 years, providing hospitals with furniture and food. I support them financially and in person. And for God’s Love We Deliver, I help deliver Thanksgiving meals in The Bronx and surrounding areas with my kids. It’s important for them to see that not everyone has the same means, and we should help others when we can.

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this
story



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COPENHAGEN *by day*

Denmark



COPENHAGEN IS EFFORTLESSLY COOL, STYLISH AND CREATIVE. BUT BEYOND THE SLEEK SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN LIES A SAFE CITY ANCHORED IN HISTORY AND A UNIQUELY RELAXED RHYTHM OF LIFE.



Historical sights

Copenhagen may be a modern design capital, but its story stretches back more than 1,000 years. Begin your tour in Nyhavn, the old harbour lined with colourful 17th-century houses. Once a rough sailor's district, today it's one of Copenhagen's most iconic areas. Follow the cobblestones to Amalienborg Palace (Amalienborg Slotsplads), the home of the Danish Royal Family, and catch the daily Changing of the Royal Guard at noon. For great views climb the spiral exterior staircase (open spring to autumn) of the Church of Our Saviour ❶ (Sankt Annæ Gade 29). From here, the rooftops and canals stretch endlessly. If you prefer something even older, head to Rosenborg Castle (Øster Voldgade 4A). Built in the early 1600s, it houses the

Danish Crown Jewels and immaculate royal gardens, perfect for an afternoon stroll.

Island break

Hop on a public harbour 'bus' and float along the canals like a local. For an arty afternoon, go on the short trip to Refshøleøen, a former industrial island that's now a hub for creatives where the city reveals its alternative side. See work from global stars and rising talent at Copenhagen Contemporary (Refshølevej 173A), an international arts centre. If it's the weekend visit Refshøle ❷ (Refshølevej 167A), the city's lively street-food market right by the water.

Shopping & Tivoli magic

No visit to Copenhagen is complete without exploring its charming shopping spots.

Strøget, one of Europe's longest pedestrian streets, runs through the historic centre and is lined with international brands, Danish design labels and sleek department stores such as Illum ❸ (Østergade 52). For something more intimate, wander into the side streets towards Grønnegade and Pilestræde. Here, boutiques, vintage shops and concept stores showcase the best of Scandinavian minimalism. Head into CPH Concept (Pilestræde 46) for a collection of high-quality second-hand clothes, or explore 'Scandi-cool' brands at Norse Store (Kronprinsensgade 3). A 20-minute walk away lies Tivoli Gardens ❹ (Vesterbrogade 3), Copenhagen's legendary amusement park dating

Visit the city's lively street-food market right by the water

back to 1843. Fun fact: the Tivoli vintage fairground atmosphere inspired Walt Disney when he visited in the 1950s, later influencing Disneyland's design.

Getting around

Copenhagen – which has dedicated bike lanes and traffic lights just for cyclists – is made for two wheels, so rent a bike and join the flow. Walking is just as easy, and public transport is, too. It's also efficient and simple. The metro runs 24/7.

COPENHAGEN *by night*

CANDLE-LIT, FULL OF *HYGGE* ('COSINESS') AND BUZZING WITH LIFE: COPENHAGEN TRANSFORMS AT NIGHT. WHETHER YOU'RE INTO FINE DINING, INTIMATE COCKTAIL BARS OR LIVE JAZZ, THE CITY DELIVERS.

Nyhavn at night



Sanchez Restaurant 🍴



Latin Quarter 🍷



Admiral Hotel 🏨



Enjoy amazing cuisine

Home to the New Nordic movement, which is centred on sustainability, seasonal produce and more, this city is one of Europe's most exciting culinary capitals. Begin in Kødbyen (Flæsketorvet), the trendy former meatpacking district full of restaurants and bars. Enjoy stellar organic sourdough pizza baked in a wood-fired oven at Mother (Høkerboderne 9-15). For refined Nordic cuisine, book a table at Barr (Strandgade 93), where traditional Nordic dishes are reimaged in a wood-clad setting. If you like Mexican food, try the five-course tasting menu at Sanchez Restaurant 🍴 (Istedgade 60).

Catch a movie

Nestle yourself in a plush chair in one of the city's

cinemas. Visit the Grand Teatret (Mikkel Bryggers Gade 8), one of Copenhagen's oldest arthouse cinemas, to watch international films in an elegant, historic setting. For something more modern, the waterfront cultural centre, Nordisk Film Biografer Imperial (Ved Vesterport 4), houses one of the largest single-screen cinemas in Northern Europe. If you're in Copenhagen during summer, outdoor screenings pop up around the canals and parks. Pack a blanket, stop at the TorvehallerneKBH food market to get some snacks and then join the locals for a movie under the evening sky.

Hit the town

Copenhagen has a relaxed yet stylish nightlife. For creative cocktails, go to Ruby

(Nybrogade 10), located in a gorgeous 18th-century townhouse. Lidkøb (Vesterbrogade 72B) offers something for most tastes. Choose the ground floor for wine, draught beer and a cosy fireplace; enjoy cocktails on the first floor; or head to the second floor for whisky. For a musical ending to your day, go to Christiania Jazz Club (Psyk 61A) in Freetown Christiania, Copenhagen's iconic hippie enclave. Jazz performances are usually held on four evenings each week, and jam sessions take place there on Sundays.

Get some sleep

Copenhagen has numerous design-forward stays. At Hotel SP34 (Sankt Peders Stræde 34) in the Latin Quarter 🍷, you'll find Scandinavian minimalism,

rooftop terraces and a free nightly wine hour (for guests). For seafront luxury, check in at the iconic Admiral Hotel 🏨 (Toldbodgade 24-28), housed in a converted 18th-century warehouse with harbour views. If you're after boutique charm, the Axel Guldsmeden (Colbjørnsensgade 14) eco-hotel also offers an organic breakfast, serene courtyard and lovely spa.

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ON THE SLOW COAST

Time seems to stand still in many of the charming beach towns and cities along Spain's Costa Blanca, where a fascinating history and unique culture are being preserved at a pleasant pace.

Text [Marieke Verhoeven](#) Photography [Dana van Leeuwen](#)





Costa Blanca
Spain



We're winding along the lazy curves of a scenic coastal road high above the Mediterranean Sea. As we pass rows of pine trees, glittering rays of reflected sunlight filter through the branches, casting majestic patterns across whitewashed villas perched high up on the other side of the road. "Stop! That was the turn," I say to my friend (who's driving our electric rental car) as we shoot past the barely visible sign for Olalà, a *xiringuito* (beachside restaurant in the locally spoken Valencian), the destination for today's late lunch. After negotiating a steep downhill stretch towards the water, we're rewarded with spectacular views of Cala Baladrar, a bay with a small pebble beach framed by pine trees and rugged rocks. Some locals are sitting on those rocks, others are swimming laps in the calm, turquoise waters. Even though it's late October, the temperature is still pleasant enough to enjoy without covering up too much.

Only a few other guests are occupying Olalà's large terrace. With an order of *patatas bravas* (fried potatoes), *chopitos* (fried cuttlefish) and *pan con tomate* (toasted bread with tomato, garlic and olive oil) on the table, we watch the time pass by. Later, in the fading light, our attention turns to the sun as it slowly sets behind the 332m-high Peñón de Ifach limestone rock off the coast in the distance. *Welcome to the slow life on the Costa Blanca.*

Quiet fishing villages

We're exploring this region, which runs along the coastline of the province of Alicante in southern Spain, from our base in the historic centre of Xàbia (also called Jávea). It's a charming town – about a two-hour drive south of Valencia – where the old church remains the heart of the community and locals linger over coffee or wine on shaded squares. As it's the off-season, there are only a few foreign visitors roaming the narrow, hilly, cobblestoned streets, and relaxing on the town's small but attractive sandy beach, Platja de l'Arenal. The region's history goes all the way back to prehistoric times and has seen many foreign invaders, from the Romans

to the Moors. But, the Costa Blanca hasn't always been a playground for international visitors who come to enjoy the sea and sun.

Long before the first wave of tourism arrived in the 1960s, the coastal region was a string of sleepy fishing villages where life centred on the sea and the rhythm of the seasons. Even as the region grew into one of Spain's best-known holiday destinations, many towns and cities, including those on our itinerary, have managed to hold on to their soul. Away from the high-rise resorts in Alicante and Benidorm, narrow cobbled streets still tumble towards the sea, fishermen still mend their nets in the early morning light, and old watchtowers still stand guard over the bays, silent witnesses to centuries of change.

Preserving local culture

At the same time, the region is seeing a rise in upscale hotels and luxury apartment concepts, Michelin-starred restaurants, and independent boutiques selling high-end products. It's no wonder the region was recently dubbed 'The New Ibiza' by several international media outlets. How do the locals feel about that term? "Ambiguous," says smiling local guide Marziano, who I meet at the stylish coffee bar Nostro Café Costa in Xàbia for some historical context. "It's a fair comparison on the surface," he explains. "We've got a turquoise sea, whitewashed walls and palm-lined streets, yet Xàbia and the other towns in the region feel different. We have our own identity." According to Marziano, that identity is closely tied to being part of the Comunidad Valenciana, one of Spain's 17 autonomous regions. "Being Valencian is as important to people here as being Spanish," he explains. "The region has its own flag, parliament, and co-official Valencian language, which is a variety of Catalan." An important way to honour the local culture, history and traditions is with frequent festivities. "There's always a fiesta happening somewhere," Marziano continues. "The most beloved is San Juan, celebrated each June with bonfires that people leap over for good luck. »

Previous pages

Platja del Portet de Moraira beach in Moraira (left); shop in Gata de Gorgos

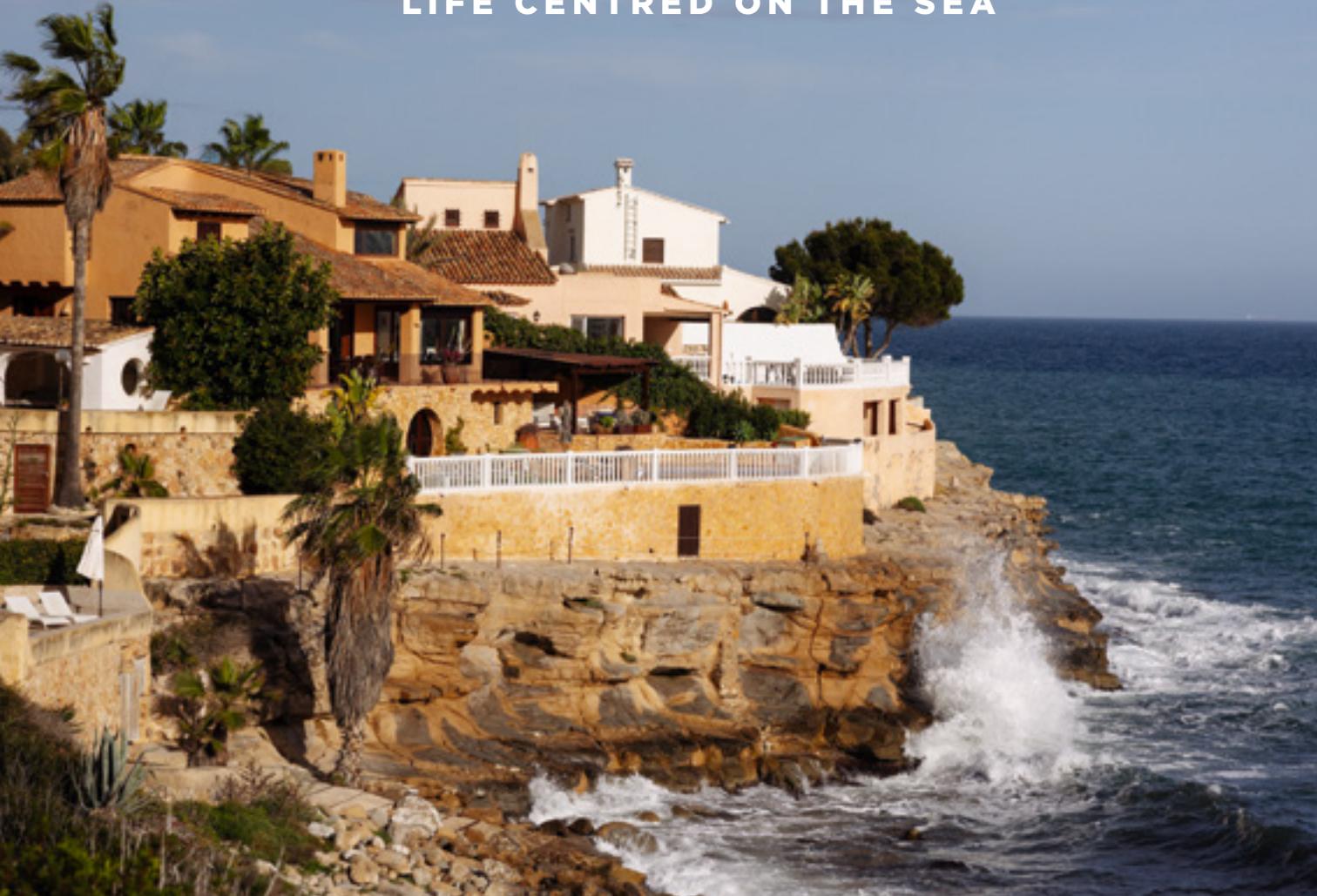
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Merendero Arrecife, a *xiringuito* on Platja de l'Olla beach in Altea; custard cake and *cortados* (espressos with warm milk).

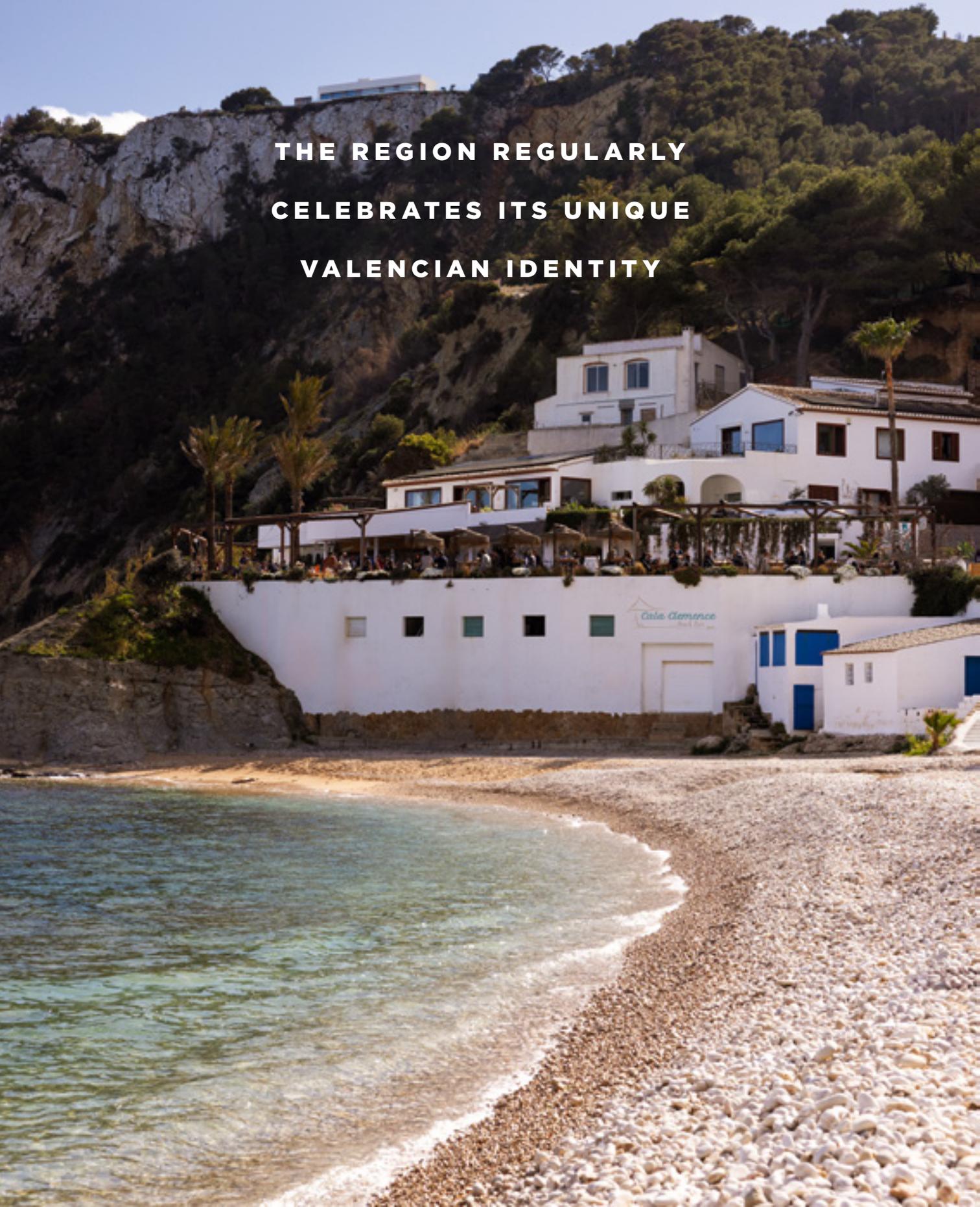
Bottom Cala Baladrar, a bay between Moraira and Calp



**COSTA BLANCA WAS ONCE A
STRING OF FISHING VILLAGES WHERE
LIFE CENTRED ON THE SEA**



**THE REGION REGULARLY
CELEBRATES ITS UNIQUE
VALENCIAN IDENTITY**





Above L'Obrador Altea restaurant in the city's Old Town
Left page Cala del Portixol bay in Xàbia

LUNCH CAN TURN INTO DRINKS AND THEN DINNER



It's a pagan ritual of purification later wrapped in Christian tradition and it's the most magical night of the year." Still, these fiestas are more than pageantry; they're community lifelines. "It's how we keep our identity alive. It brings people together. Even if it's noisy and might look silly to outsiders, it's ours."

With foreign visitors flooding Xàbia during the summer months, it can be challenging to keep the local culture alive and strong. Like many coastal towns in Southern Europe, it faces an exodus of young people seeking work in bigger cities, and a surge of international investors transforming its historic centre and raising the cost of living for locals. "In the Old Town, many buildings belong to big families, 10 cousins who can't agree what to do with it after a grandparent passes away," Marziano explains. "So, the houses just sit there." Recently, that's begun to change as foreigners, notably Dutch buyers, restore the crumbling facades. "Six years ago, the Old Town looked like Sicily," he jokes. "Beautiful but falling apart. Now you see boutique hotels and fancy shops. It's changing fast." The revival, however, comes with tension. "It's a good thing that buildings are being saved," he says, "but it's complicated. It still needs to be accessible for locals to live here." The upside is that newcomers are often required to preserve the original architecture and build sustainably when restoring houses. It's part of the region's focus on sustainable tourism.

Walking around Xàbia with Marziano, who was born and raised here but lived in various countries working as a Spanish teacher, it becomes clear that the charm of the town is exactly in the mix of its old buildings that breathe a sense of history and the stylish restaurants and shops that now occupy them. One of the shops is San, a concept store selling a mix of accessories, clothing and skincare products, on Plaça de l'Església square. The kind French owner explains how the store recently started a collaboration with Rassa Botanicals, a natural and organic skincare brand from the region. "There are so many beautiful, locally made products available

here," she says. "From the best olive- and almond oil to thyme, sage and eucalyptus. It only makes sense to offer these to visitors."

Architectural dream

The next day, we make the easy 20-minute drive from Xàbia to Moraira, a picturesque beach town with a pretty seafront promenade, for breakfast by the beach at Pluk Moraira, a large and attractive restaurant with a big terrace right by the boulevard. From there, we continue our trip to Altea, a city with white houses and cobblestoned streets in a dramatic hillside setting. The city's roots reach back to the Iberians and Romans, though its name comes from the Moors, who called it Althaya, meaning 'health'. The town later became a fortified settlement to guard against pirate raids, which explains the labyrinthine layout of its Old Town, perched high upon a hill. Today, those same winding streets invite a slower pace where time seems to pause between artisan workshops, quiet cafés and some excellent restaurants.

Climbing the steep street towards the heart of the Old Town, passing houses lined with bougainvillea and jasmine, we eventually reach Altea's Plaça de l'Església (most towns here have one it seems), crowned by the blue-domed Our Lady of Consolation church. From this hilltop square, the panoramic view stretches from the Sierra de Bernia mountain range to Altea Bay. We decide to make a stop and enjoy the view at El Negro Parrilla Restaurante, with an order of Argentinian empanadas and a fresh lemonade to quench our thirst. This is definitely the type of place where lunch could turn into drinks and then dinner, with the spectacular view of the Mediterranean Sea being sufficient entertainment. But there's one bucket-list destination on my schedule: La Muralla Roja in the town of Calp. This striking postmodern apartment complex, designed by Spanish architect Ricardo Bofill in 1968 and completed in 1973, was inspired by Mediterranean and Arab casbah architecture, and features a labyrinth of staircases in bright red and »

Top Merendero Arrecife, a *xiringuito* on Platja de l'Olla beach in Altea

Bottom (from left to right) Fresh fruit and vegetables in Benissa; Platja de l'Olla beach; narrow street in Xàbia

**NEWCOMERS ARE OFTEN
REQUIRED TO PRESERVE THE
ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURE**



Left page Cap
Negret in Altea

pink hues, and incredible views over the sea and Calp's aforementioned Peñón de Ifach rock. Since La Muralla Roja is a private residence and the owners understandably prefer to keep out floods of visitors, it's only possible to visit the property by renting one of the few available apartments, which we've done. To respect the residents, photography is only allowed between certain hours. We arrive around sunset, and I have about an hour to capture the marvellous building from all angles, before taking a dip in the rooftop pool.

Dancing with a paella pan

The next morning, on the way back to Xàbia, we make a quick stop in the port city of Dénia, where the fast ferry takes you to Ibiza in a little over two hours. Dénia is one of the larger cities in the region and the capital and judicial seat of the *comarca* ('county') of Marina Alta. Renowned for its culinary scene and even recognised as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, Dénia is particularly famous for its *gamba roja* (red shrimp) and hosts several gastronomic festivals. After a stroll around the historic centre, we sit down at Niki&Niki, an all-day bistro and bakery, where Latvian owner Ieva serves some of the best coffee and sweet treats I've tried on this trip so far.

Back in Xàbia, we're treated to an unexpected ceremony at Plaça de l'Església, where two dancers dressed in traditional clothes are performing a fascinating dance using a large paella pan. Locals have formed a circle around the dancers, watching in awe and applauding loudly after they've taken their bow. Afterwards, wine and snacks are served, while the onlookers linger on the square and engage in animated conversations. When I ask a young local what the dance was for, she shrugs. "I'm not really sure," she says. "It's not a holiday today, so it must have been something else." I think back to what guide Marziano told me a few days earlier about the town's many festivities. I guess it doesn't really matter what this one was for; there's always a reason for a celebration on the Costa Blanca. «



MARIEKE VERHOEVEN, *HOLLAND HERALD'S*
SENIOR EDITOR, STUDIED SPANISH IN GRANADA
AND LOVES SPAIN'S DIVERSE REGIONS.

To do

Hiking and cycling

With its gorgeous coastal roads, rock formations and mountains, the Costa Blanca is the perfect region to explore on foot or by bicycle. It's no wonder professional cycling teams organise their training camps here. There are trails for all experience levels. One popular option is a hike in Montgó Natural Park over the mountain between Dénia and Xàbia. A great way to find the best route around the park is by using the app AllTrails. For cycling routes, check the Cycle Fiesta website. alltrails.com; cyclefiesta.com

Snorkelling

Thanks to the clear waters, biodiversity, coves and cliffs, there are a lot of great snorkelling options in the region. Platja de la Granadella is one of the most famous locations and (depending on the conditions) is accessible to most, while Cala del Moraig with its unique Cova dels Arcs cave system is for the more advanced snorkeller. You may spot octopus, sea bream and other Mediterranean fish close to the shore.

To eat

LuLu Beachclub

Surrounded by lush lemon trees, LuLu Beachclub in Xàbia offers a beautiful botanical garden terrace with breathtaking views of Montgó mountain. LuLu is known for its exceptional dining experience, with a modern Mediterranean and Japanese fusion menu. lulubeachclub.com

Al Santuario

Located on the way to Cap San Antoni near the Montgó Natural Park, Al Santuario opened in the summer last year and has been praised for its high-quality dishes with a focus on Mediterranean, European and Spanish cuisine, all made with regional products. The owners and staff are also incredibly professional and friendly. alsantuarioboxabia.com

Oustau de Altea

This art-filled restaurant with a beautiful green courtyard is set in the historical heart of Altea and serves a mix of classic French dishes and seasonal produce of the highest quality. oustau.es

To stay

Casa4You

Run by a Dutch couple who have been living in Xàbia for nine years, this rental agency offers high-end yet affordable villas and apartments - that have Ibiza-style interiors - in Xàbia, Dénia and Moraira. casa4you.nl

Nomad Hotels

With a few locations on the Costa Blanca, this chain of luxury boutique hotels is all about creating a peaceful stay. To promote tranquility and balance, feng shui principles were used in the design of the rooms. nomadhotelcollection.com

Book this story



KLM operates two nonstop flights per day to Valencia Airport (and two per week to Alicante Intl Airport) from Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.

Book your flight on klm.com

Marieke Liem

“
**VIOLENCE
 AGAINST WOMEN
 OFTEN GROWS
 IN SECRECY**
 ”

After studying homicide and domestic violence cases in the Netherlands, Marieke Liem – Professor of Security and Interventions at Leiden University – developed the Femicide Monitor, a public database that tracks the murders of women. Text Marieke Verhoeven Photography Maurits Giesen

Why did you initiate the **Femicide Monitor**? A woman is murdered every eight days in the Netherlands. Many of these cases remain in the dark; only the most extreme cases make the news. I launched the Femicide Monitor with my team at Leiden University last year as a public database to shed more light on these cases and gain more insights into the events leading up to the tragic outcome. Contrary to police logs or general statistics that mostly deal with hard facts, our monitor brings together all the details of a case to paint a complete picture; in large part thanks to contributions from the victim's relatives. We currently have around 400 cases of femicide from the past 10 years on file. We also work with European partners and monitor cases in other countries

around the world. This allows us to see how other countries approach prevention and the sentencing of the perpetrators.

Is femicide happening more often now than in the past? No, it only seems that way because of the increased attention it's getting. In the Netherlands, the number of female homicide victims has actually seen a steady decline and has halved since the 1990s. We're not 100% sure, but we think that women have more confidence, a larger network and more ways to seek help than in the past. That's the positive news. That decline has now levelled off, partly because the remaining cases often involve severe psychopathology, which will always exist in certain people, and partly due to what we call the backlash effect. As

women have been gaining more rights and status over the past few decades, some men respond with violence to reassert dominance. I believe it's a temporary effect, but we're still in that transition phase towards a more balanced society.

Do you see a pattern in perpetrators' motives? It's important to point out that femicide happens in all layers of society and among all cultures and religions. In the past 10 years, all women killed by an intimate partner were killed by a male intimate partner. Femicides in Queer relationships are rare. Trans people are mainly vulnerable to violence in public spaces, not necessarily in intimate relationships. Six out of ten women are killed by a partner or »



coffee break

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ex-partner. The rest are victims of other crimes, such as robbery or sexual violence. Of those partner killings, about half involve patterns of coercive control, while the other half relate more to addiction or psychiatric problems. Some involve mutual violence, others involve older couples where one refuses separation, or psychotic offenders with delusional behaviour. Some relationships start in an idealised way: the woman is put on a pedestal and then there's a gradual shift towards humiliation and violence. Many women use what we call 'neutralisations': they minimise the abuse, excuse their partner's behaviour or blame themselves. On average, 33 to 35 violent incidents occur before someone goes to the police. That's a staggering number, and prevention starts by talking about it.

What can a victim's friends and family do if they suspect violence?

It's hard because, if you notice something is wrong, you can't force a change in behaviour. What you can do is stay involved, ask questions and keep the door open. Don't isolate the victim by staying away. Isolation increases if someone



stops meeting friends or family, and that's exactly what the perpetrator wants. Violence against women often grows in secrecy. The perpetrator believes no one knows and that it's their shared secret. But once someone becomes aware and can give the victim a reality check, it becomes much harder to hide. In a practical sense, in the case of imminent danger, the first thing a victim, or loved one, should do is call the police. In the Netherlands, the Veilig Thuis anonymous caller service offers a 24/7 chat. There are also integrated initiatives, such as Filomena in Rotterdam, where victims and children have one point of contact with a doctor, lawyer, social worker and psychologist. Such one-stop shops should be implemented nationwide because help organisations are still far too scattered, and there's insufficient information exchange between them.

Where does your drive to study such a heavy subject come from?

I was brought up in a loving family and I'm happily married with two daughters, so I haven't experienced unhealthy or dangerous relationship dynamics. Perhaps this also makes it easier for me to remain objective. Following my master's degrees at Utrecht University and the University of Cambridge, and my PhD at Utrecht, I was a Marie Curie Fellow at Harvard University. My research initially focused on homicide in general: why people kill and why it happens more often in some countries than in others. What fascinates me most is the extremity of homicide and femicide in particular: taking someone's life – often a romantic partner – because you don't see any other way. As a society, we like to label these perpetrators as 'monsters' or 'psychopaths' to, in a way, distance ourselves from that horrific behaviour. But that's too simplistic. The real question is whether their acts are solely examples of extreme individual

“
**THE WAY
PARENTS HANDLE
GENDER ROLES
INFLUENCES
THEIR CHILD'S
BEHAVIOUR**
”

violence, or whether they also say something about a society. Can we look at a case in its totality and understand why someone does this?

A lot of ideas about gender relations start in childhood. What advice do you have for parents?

Unfortunately, children get a lot of their information from social media these days, and the online 'manosphere' that promotes extreme masculine behaviour is strong. So it's important for parents to be positive role models. It's not about online monitoring; it's about having a balanced, healthy relationship and using peaceful ways to resolve conflict. The way parents handle conflict and gender roles greatly influences their child's behaviour later in life. «





Painting what's beneath the surface

AT MUSEUM VOORLINDEN



Director at Museum Voorlinden Suzanne Swarts on the new solo exhibition by Claire Tabouret.

“The human face is like the surface of water – always shifting, always elusive, never still,” says Claire Tabouret. The French artist, who designed the new stained-glass windows for Notre-Dame

Cathedral in Paris, explores the complexity of human emotions and relationships. Working with a colourful, often almost fluorescent palette and sometimes painting on unconventional materials, she creates portraits of herself, others and groups. “The way we stand together shapes the space our bodies occupy,” she explains, “but it also mirrors the interplay of power, posture and group

dynamics.” At Voorlinden, you can trace Tabouret’s artistic evolution and see how she continually reinvents herself while expanding the possibilities of painting.

Where and when?

Exhibition: until 25 May 2026

Address: Buurtweg 90, 2244AG Wassenaar

Opening times: museum (11am-5pm);

restaurant (10.30am-6pm)

From Wassenaar by car: The Hague (20 mins);

Schiphol (25 mins); Amsterdam (45 mins)

Buy your ticket at the museum or online:

tickets.voorlinden.nl

FLOWER POWER

From the rolling hills of blue nemophila in Japan to a landscape resplendent with lavender fields in France and spontaneous desert blooms in Chile, we celebrate the influence of flowers.

Text Gina Miroula



Japan

HITACHI SEASIDE PARK

Each spring, gentle blue nemophila, or 'baby blue eyes', sweep across the rolling hills of Hitachi Seaside Park north of Tokyo, creating a soft ocean of petals on Miharashi Hill.

Understood to have been introduced during the Meiji era (1868-1912) as an imported wildflower, the blue nemophila quickly became a symbol of purity and fleeting beauty. Planted in the 1990s on former military grounds, the blooms now mix with tulips and fiery kochia. **Top tip:** Cycling is a great way to get around the park, and you can rent a bike from one of several bike-rental companies in the area. During your ride, stop at the Glass House Sea Side Café, where you can take in fantastic views of the Pacific Ocean.





Chile

ATACAMA DESERT

After rare, heavy winter rains – occurring once every five to seven years – the Atacama Desert bursts into colour with hundreds of flower species, a phenomenon locals call *Desierto Florido* ('Flowering Desert'). The arid landscape also preserves ancient petroglyphs: rock art by the Atacameños depicting animals and rituals. Even in dry years, the desert enchants visitors with its Valley of the Moon, where you can experience glittering, starry night skies (it's no coincidence that the ALMA Observatory is in this region). Visitors are also attracted by the flamingo-filled salt flats and the steaming El Tatio geysers. **Good to know:** Stay at Tierra Atacama in San Pedro. It's the perfect base for exploring the desert and its wonders.



The Netherlands

BULB FIELDS

Tulips were brought to the Netherlands from the Ottoman Empire in the late 16th century and quickly became a symbol of wealth, sparking the tulip mania of 1634-1637, when bulbs were sometimes traded for vast sums. In one instance, a bulb was sold for 20 times the yearly income of a skilled worker. Today, during the spring, several key areas in the Netherlands – especially in North and South Holland – are carpeted with neat rows of tulips, daffodils and hyacinths, framed by waterways. Cycling is a nice way to explore the bulb fields, stopping to admire the colours and breathe in the fragrance. **Top tip:** Visit the spectacular Keukenhof – open from mid-March to mid-May – in the town of Lisse to see millions of flowering bulbs.

Italy

CASTELLUCCIO DI NORCIA

From late May to mid-July, the Piano Grande plateau near Castelluccio di Norcia in central Italy's Umbria region transforms into a flaming sea of red poppies, complemented by striking cornflowers, pink dog roses, purple alfalfa, orange marigolds and golden gentians. Castelluccio di Norcia, a small village perched in the Apennine Mountains, is famed for its high plains and centuries-old farming traditions.

The plateau produces Castelluccio lentils, which are prized for their delicate flavour and firm texture.

Each year, the Infiorata festival (in the Umbrian hill town of Spello, and other places in Italy, in June) attracts international visitors who enjoy music, local food and customs amid this spectacular scenery. **Top tip:** Stay at Agriturismo Casale nel Parco, where you can try tasty regional dishes.







France

LUBERON MOUNTAIN RANGE

Lavender, long used for perfume, medicinal remedies and culinary flavour, covers parts of the Luberon mountain range in Provence in fragrant purple waves. Each summer, the violet fields shimmer in the morning and evening light, while gentle mountain winds carry the calming aroma across hilltop villages such as Gordes and Roussillon. Cistercian monks at the 12th-century Sénanque Abbey – a Romanesque masterpiece near Gordes – have cultivated lavender for several decades. You can purchase various lavender-based products at the abbey's shop. **Top tip:** Château Val Joanis, near the village of Pertuis, offers a full Provençal experience: scented gardens, vineyards and wine tastings.



New Zealand

CRAIGIEBURN RANGE

Every summer, lupines appear in the valleys of the Craigieburn Range in New Zealand in shades of pink, purple and blue. These dramatic mountains – part of the Southern Alps on the South Island – feature glacial valleys and jagged peaks. To the south lies the Mackenzie Basin, a high plateau of tussock plains and turquoise lakes, including Lakes Tekapo and Pukaki, which are known for having some of the world's clearest night skies. **Good to know:** The Castle Hill Village Track, situated between the mountains and the plateau, offers an easy walk to viewpoints over lupine-filled valleys; ideal for photography and soaking up the alpine colours.

Welcome on board



KLM NEWS

KLM House

NO. 61: HOUSE IN AMSTERDAM



Located at Keizersgracht 439 in Amsterdam, this house features a narrow, enclosed garden at the back.

Both the house and its garden are part of a *keurblok* ('protected block'); this means they're protected by a law passed in 1615 that sought to ensure that the gardens (*keurgardens*) of the houses remained in their original state. There are 27 of these protected blocks in Amsterdam. The building was originally part of a triplet and dates back to 1684, when it was built in the Dutch Renaissance style. The current look of the house, however, dates to 1895. In the early 1930s, the building belonged to the Arondeus family, who ran a business renting out theatre costumes until 1991.

New destinations

A SUMMER OF DISCOVERY

KLM HAS EXPANDED ITS NETWORK WITH NEW SERVICES FROM AMSTERDAM TO JERSEY, OVIEDO AND SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA.

Jersey

Jersey – known as the 'Flower Island' for its long flower season – lies just off the French coast. With its wide beaches and gentle climate, this Channel Island is well worth a visit. From 4 April, flight KL1097 will depart from Amsterdam Airport Schiphol on Saturdays, and daily flights will be available from 4 July.

Oviedo

Travellers who love outdoor sports are sure to relish the majestic landscapes of the Spanish region of Asturias. From 29 March, flight KL1557 will depart weekly on Saturdays and Sundays for the region's capital, Oviedo. Daily flights will be available from 4 July.

Santiago de Compostela

Thanks to its famous walking trails and Old Town's UNESCO World Heritage designation, Santiago de Compostela has long been a favourite destination. From 30 May, flight KL1565 will take passengers there on Saturdays and Sundays, with daily flights available from 4 July.



Ask the expert



What affects a plane's maximum altitude



SECOND OFFICER JORIS KUIJPER ANSWERS YOUR BURNING QUESTION.

A plane's maximum altitude is affected by factors such as aircraft and engine type, and wing and cabin design. As the altitude increases, the lower air density requires increased wing speed for lift, eventually reaching a limit. Decaying engine thrust sets another altitude limit. Cabin design also influences maximum altitude as the required pressure differentials must be maintained for passenger comfort.

Do you have a burning question for the experts at KLM? Email us at hollandheraldhome@hearst.nl and your question might be featured in the next issue of *Holland Herald*.

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Travelling well is not about travelling more, but making the most of every experience. So more than just a business trip, your ticket can take you to unexpected ways to bond with your colleagues from abroad. It all starts with a KLM flight.

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 **KLM** Royal Dutch Airlines
Travel Well

KLM NEWS

Memorable flight

“The cabin crew was incredibly hospitable”

JUST BEFORE FLYING TO SERBIA, CELLIST MAJA BOGDANOVIC AND VIOLINIST DANIEL ROWLAND ENCOUNTERED A TECHNICAL GLITCH.

At the beginning of October last year, we were planning on flying with our two daughters and a cello to Belgrade, Serbia, to attend the annual Belgrade Music Festival (BEMUS). We often perform together but this time it was Maja’s turn. We had flown with our instruments and our children many times before, so we didn’t foresee any problems. Unfortunately, by accident, the system hadn’t registered the cello. This caused a lot of stress, but thanks

to the care and quick action of several KLM staff members, we were made comfortable in the lounge while they tried to sort out the error. Maja was even allowed to make use of the special ‘wine tasting area’ for a bit of cello practice. In the end, everything was in order and we were able to board that same evening with our instrument and children, without further problems. The cabin crew was incredibly hospitable, and we received special

attention. In fact, this happened more than once, as we were recognised by KLM staff members several times. They would come over to chat about their love of music and they showed us kindness with sweet gestures months after this incident occurred.

Have you had a special flight? Share it at hollandheraldhome@hearst.nl and your story might be featured in the next issue of *Holland Herald*.



KLM x Gérard Bertrand

A JOURNEY TO TASTE

TOGETHER WITH MASTER WINEMAKER GÉRARD BERTRAND, KLM CREATED THE FIRST PRIVATE WINE LABEL FOR ITS WORLD BUSINESS CLASS.

The result is a Chardonnay-Sauvignon Blanc blend with the strength and body of an oak-matured Chardonnay, subtle notes of vanilla, and the freshness and vibrancy of the fruity aromas of a Sauvignon Blanc. The blend captures the magic of travel in a glass: elegant, layered and full of character. Each sip is a reminder of new destinations, special encounters and the connections that make each journey unique.



Health

FIT FOR FLYING

DURING THE FLIGHT, IT’S IMPORTANT TO MOVE REGULARLY. HERE ARE A FEW TIPS:

Walk around: To promote healthy blood flow in the legs and feet, go for a walk at least every two hours.

Knee lifts: While seated, alternate lifting your knees so each foot comes up from the floor.

Heel/toe rotations: While seated, lift and rotate your heels while keeping your toes on the floor.

Then, lift and rotate your toes while keeping your heels on the floor.

Blood circulation is essential for good health, supplying oxygen and nutrients throughout the body. During long-haul flights, sitting still for extended periods can slow blood flow in the legs, slightly increasing the risk of thrombosis, a condition caused by a blood clot in a vein. Although rare among healthy travellers, thrombosis can be serious if a clot travels to the lungs and causes a pulmonary embolism. Symptoms may appear during or after travel, and include leg pain, swelling, chest pain or shortness of breath. Staying active, moving regularly and understanding personal risk factors can help reduce the risk while flying.

TRAVEL WELL



**“De-icing keeps the wings
as smooth and
aerodynamic as possible”**



De-icing

NO TO SNOW

EVER WONDERED HOW A PLANE IS 'THAWED OUT' BEFORE TAKE-OFF? ERIC VAN DEN NIEUWENHOFF AND PACO BEULINK EXPLAIN HOW THEY KEEP AIRCRAFT AT SCHIPHOL AIRPORT PRECIPITATION-FREE DURING COLD SNAPS.

For some, the arrival of winter is usually accompanied by the sight of frost on our car windows. For Eric van den Nieuwenhoff, Operational Specialist De-icing at KLM, it means the main topic of conversation for the day has been decided. "Many colleagues start asking me how many aircraft we'll have to de-ice," he says. "However, frost on car windows doesn't automatically mean it's the start of the aviation industry's de-icing season."

De-icing refers to the process of removing snow, ice or frost from aircraft surfaces by spraying them with a special chemical before take-off, Van den Nieuwenhoff explains. "It's necessary to keep the wings as smooth and aerodynamic as possible so that they generate enough lift for take-off. Even a thin layer of frost or de-icing liquid could disrupt this."

So what *does* indicate the start of the de-icing process at Schiphol? "That depends on several figures, which we, along with our control centre, receive from a meteorological weather station at Schiphol," says Paco Beulink, Unit Manager Aircraft Handling & Support De-icing. "These figures indicate the temperature outside, the type of precipitation and the amount of humidity in the air."

One-step or two-step method?

"There are two ways to de-ice aircraft," Beulink says. "For the first, called the one-step method, we spray off snow or ice with a mixture of warm water and a bit of anti-freeze. It's used when the precipitation isn't as heavy or the temperature outside isn't that low. For the second method, the two-step method, we add a gel-like substance called glycol to the same mixture and apply it to the plane." This increases the hold-over time [how long it will prevent ice, snow or frost from

accumulating on the plane]. "If the weather conditions are severe, it's sometimes necessary to apply this layer so that the plane can take off and not have to return to the hangar after hitting the runway," Beulink adds. "The amount of glycol used is determined by a system that measures the outside air temperature and the type and rate of precipitation. We add only what's necessary." There are also designated de-icing areas at Schiphol Airport to ensure that de-icing operations are carried out in an environmentally responsible way.

Volunteers

A team of KLM colleagues assists Beulink and Van den Nieuwenhoff with these processes. "It isn't possible to hire 100 staff members for only eight weeks a year," Beulink says. "So we work with a team of about 100 colleagues from several departments, such as luggage or management, who volunteer their time. During those eight weeks, we can request their help 24 hours in advance. They come for the day or for an afternoon shift to our 'icehouse' – behind gate 60 at Schiphol Airport – where we de-ice planes using special vehicles equipped with arms that spray de-icing fluid and can reach 14 metres."

And it's a fast process. "If we're working with four trucks, we can de-ice a Cityhopper aircraft in three minutes," Van den Nieuwenhoff says. "A big plane like a Boeing 777 will take us about 12 minutes to de-ice. If we're on a roll and only have to use the one-step method, we can do about 22 aircraft an hour." But that isn't the best part, adds Beulink. "Sometimes we don't have to clear the ice after all. Then the volunteers usually exchange experiences with one another at the icehouse. It's great to see colleagues from all departments coming together."



Above: Paco Beulink, Unit Manager Aircraft Handling & Support De-icing (left), Erik van den Nieuwenhoff, Operational Specialist De-icing.

Left page: De-icing in progress at Schiphol Airport

KLM FLEET

Specifications

IN THE BOX SEAT



Catching a flight to Bilbao, Nice or Stuttgart? Chances are you're flying in an Embraer 175. And that's good news if you like looking out of the window because, as the aircraft doesn't have middle seats or a middle row of seats, everyone can enjoy the views.



Boeing 777-300ER/200ER

Number of aircraft: **16/15**
 Cruising speed (km/h): **920/900**
 Range (km): **12,000/11,800**
 Max. take-off weight (kg): **351,543/297,500**
 Maximum passengers: **381/288**
 Total length (m): **73.86/63.80**
 Wingspan (m): **64.80/60.90**
 Personal inflight entertainment
 Wi-Fi on board



Boeing 747-400ER Freighter

Number of aircraft: **3**
 Cruising speed (km/h): **920**
 Range (km): **11,500**
 Max. take-off weight (kg): **412,800**
 Max. freight (kg): **112,000**
 Total length (m): **70.67**
 Wingspan (m): **64.44**



Airbus A330-300/200

Number of aircraft: **5/6**
 Cruising speed (km/h): **880/880**
 Range (km): **8,200/8,800**
 Max. take-off weight (kg): **233,000/233,000**
 Maximum passengers: **292/264**
 Total length (m): **63.69/58.37**
 Wingspan (m): **60.30/60.30**
 Personal inflight entertainment
 Wi-Fi on board

Embraer 190/175

Number of aircraft:
19/17
 Cruising speed (km/h):
850/850
 Range (km):
3,300/3,180
 Max. take-off weight (kg):
45,000/36,500
 Maximum passengers:
100/88
 Total length (m):
36.25/31.68
 Wingspan (m):
28.72/26.00



Boeing 737-800/700

Number of aircraft: **29/6**
 Cruising speed (km/h): **850/850**
 Range (km): **4,200/3,500**
 Max. take-off weight (kg): **73,700/65,317**
 Maximum passengers: **186/142**
 Total length (m): **39.47/33.62**
 Wingspan (m): **35.80/35.80**
 Wi-Fi on board



Airbus A321neo

Number of aircraft: **13**
 Cruising speed (km/h): **876**
 Range (km): **7,400**
 Max. take-off weight (kg): **89,000**
 Maximum passengers: **227**
 Total length (m): **44.51**
 Wingspan (m): **35.80**
 Personal inflight entertainment
 Wi-Fi on board



Boeing 787-10/9 Dreamliner

Number of aircraft: **15/13**
 Cruising speed (km/h): **920/920**
 Range (km): **9,900/11,500**
 Max. take-off weight (kg):
254,000/252,650
 Maximum passengers: **318/275**
 Total length (m): **68.30/62.80**
 Wingspan (m): **60.10/60.10**
 Personal inflight entertainment
 Wi-Fi on board



Boeing 737-900

Number of aircraft: **5**
 Cruising speed (km/h): **850**
 Range (km): **4,300**
 Max. take-off weight (kg): **76,900**
 Maximum passengers: **188**
 Total length (m): **42.12**
 Wingspan (m): **35.80**



Embraer 195-E2

Number of aircraft: **25**
 Cruising speed (km/h): **876**
 Range (km): **4,815**
 Max. take-off weight (kg): **56,700**
 Maximum passengers: **136**
 Total length (m): **41.5**
 Wingspan (m): **35.12**



KLM

Navigation lights

IN PLANE SIGHT

“A beautiful example of a navigation light has been captured in this photo,” explains Hans Dijkstra, Groundengineer B1 B737/777/787/A321neo. “Navigation lights are placed at the end of the wings and are used to determine in which direction a plane is facing. The left wing has a red navigation light, and the right wing has a green one. In this photo, we can see the right wing. The navigation lights are used as an indication in the ‘right of way’ procedure. This means that if you approach an aircraft and the green navigation light is visible, you have ‘priority’ and the other aircraft must adjust its course. If the red light is visible, evasive action will be needed.”

TRAVELLERS



Madhu, Minke & Ari

“There were a lot of cows by my grandparents’ house”

MADHU, MINKE AND ARI KUTTUVA TRAVELLING TO BENGALURU ON FLIGHT KL879

Reason for travel? Madhu: “We’re off to visit my parents for three weeks. And we’ll go on some day trips to see other relatives, and to places where I grew up.”

Minke: “I was five the last time we went, so I’m excited to go again. There were a lot of cows by my grandparents’ house and a lot of orange and red.”

Ari: “I’ve never been before.”

Still on your travel bucket list?

Minke: “I want to take my mum to Mexico. She’s never been there, but I have. It was good.”

Madhu: “I’d love to visit Egypt, and experience the history, the pyramids and the culture for myself. We’ve been to the Mayan pyramids in Mexico, so I’d like to see other pyramids for comparison.”

Who’s your dream passenger to sit next to? Madhu: “My grandfather. He died before I got to meet him, and my mother says we’re quite similar. I’d love to get to know him and see what life

Quinty

QUINTY COK
TRAVELLING TO MEXICO
CITY ON FLIGHT KL685

Reason for travel? “I work in the financial sector for a company that has offices worldwide, so I’m flying to Mexico City with some colleagues to visit our associates there. We’ll be at their office for two days, before taking another two days to explore the city. I’m really looking forward to the hot air balloon ride that we’ve booked.”

Still on your travel bucket list?

“Argentina. From what I’ve seen online, it has very diverse landscapes and cultures, something that I find important when travelling. I’ve been fortunate enough to see quite a bit of the world, and I’ve noticed that I prefer countries that are a little diverse. After a few days at the beach, I always crave something else.”

Who’s your dream passenger to sit next to? “My mum. I’d love the chance to meet a celebrity, but during a long flight, I just want to be comfortable and she knows exactly what I need. I’d be happy to spend that time with her.”



Nathalie & Steve

NATHALIE RYAN TRAVELLING TO SHANGHAI ON FLIGHT KL895, AND STEVE IMHOFF TRAVELLING TO CALGARY ON FLIGHT KL677

Reason for travel? Nathalie: “I’m heading to China for work. We’ll be travelling through seven Chinese cities in fourteen days – I’m looking forward to it.”

Steve: “I’m returning home to Minnesota from a road trip through Europe in old Porsches. That was an adventure, for sure.”

Still on your travel bucket list?

Nathalie: “I’d love to go back to Indonesia, to the Raja Ampat Islands, one of the most biodiverse places on Earth, to do some diving. I didn’t get to explore enough last time I was there.”

Steve: “Antarctica, before it’s gone. I’ve always been fond of cold places; it might be the Minnesotan blood.”

Who’s your dream passenger to sit next to?

Nathalie: “The Dalai Lama. He’s so enlightened.”

Steve: “Bob Dylan. He’s from Minnesota. I’d love to ask him what it’s been like living his life in the spotlight continuously.”

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With more than 28 million listings, from hotels, apartments and vacation homes to B&Bs and luxury resorts, you're sure to find the perfect place to stay on Booking.com. Head over to the Booking.com Flying Blue portal to

make your reservation, and earn two Flying Blue Miles for every €1 spent – plus, get up to 15% off bookings on selected properties. Remember to fill in your Flying Blue number just before checkout, as Miles cannot be claimed at

a later stage. Your Miles will be automatically credited after your stay.



For more information: [booking.com](https://www.booking.com)

My Miles



“Sometimes my idea of relaxation is to travel”

RAOUL SCHIPPER FLIES AROUND THE WORLD FOR WORK – THAT’S WHY HE SPENDS HIS MILES ON UPGRADES.

I work in the fintech industry and my job requires me to travel two to three times a month to other branches of our company and to meet with clients, so I’m able to accumulate Miles. Then there are annual conferences that I attend in Asia, which take me to places such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Seoul and Tokyo. Recently, I was fortunate enough to travel to New York, Turkey and Buenos Aires for business. I’d never been to Argentina



Llamas in the Jujuy province, Argentina

before, and I thoroughly enjoyed the steak! Apart from travelling for work, I also earn Miles by flying to Colombia and Thailand to visit family there. However, I’m terrible at saving my Miles because I prefer using them for upgrades. It’s essential that I arrive at a destination well rested, and I’ve noticed that I work or sleep a lot better when I travel in Premium Comfort or Business Class. I value the better food and extra legroom. In fact, I travel so

much that sometimes my idea of relaxation is to travel, so I try to make it as comfortable as possible. If I’m ever able to save up Miles over a longer period, I’d love to return to Argentina and plan a trip throughout South America.

Do you have a Miles-related story to tell? Send it to hollandheraldhome@hearst.nl and your story might be featured in the next issue of *Holland Herald*.



Sign up now! Earning Miles with Booking.com means there’s never been a better time to sign up with Flying Blue for free. Flying Blue is, in fact, your ideal travel companion: earn Miles and spend them on flights, hotel stays, car rentals and more. For more info, please check flyingblue.com.

ONBOARD ENTERTAINMENT



**All's well until Phillip
forms emotional bonds
with his clients**

Watch, listen or play

LET US ENTERTAIN YOU

Dive into a world of cinematic wonder with more than 300 films from around the globe. Enjoy 400 TV programmes spanning various genres to suit every taste, and immerse yourself in our vast audio library, featuring more than 1,000 albums, playlists, podcasts and audiobooks. Challenge yourself with our selection of games and set Parental Controls for the Kids Only section. Stay ahead of the curve with our constantly updated catalogue. Each month, we refresh almost 20% of our video content. Check entertainment.klm.com for the full listing before your next trip. For now, sit back, relax and enjoy your journey.

Our pick



RENTAL FAMILY

Japanese director Hikari's second feature, *Rental Family*, is an old-fashioned feel-good film that's boosted by resurgent actor Brendan Fraser – awarded an Oscar for *The Whale* in 2023 – who's in the lead role. Fraser, whom you can't help but root for, plays Tokyo-based American actor Phillip, who works for an agency that rents out its staff to play stand-ins for strangers. All's well until Phillip forms emotional bonds with his clients. Things then become complicated, causing his moral compass to whirl in different directions.

Comedy, 1h49min

Films

WATCH IT NOW



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The Family McMullen

Comedy, 1h50min
This sequel to *The Brothers McMullen* (1995) revisits the Irish-American McMullen family. Thirty years have passed and Molly (Connie Britton), Barry (Edward Burns) and Patrick (Michael McGlone) are navigating life and love as best they can.



The Lychee Road

Drama, 2h2min
This historical drama – directed by Da Peng who also plays the lead role – focuses on the tale of the middle-aged, struggling Tang Dynasty minor official Li Shande (Da Peng), who risks life and limb to deliver lychees thousands of miles across Mainland China.



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Hidden Figures

Drama, 2h7min
This film tells the tale of the three African-American mathematicians, Katherine Johnson (Taraji P. Henson), Dorothy Vaughn (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe), who helped launch US astronaut John Glenn safely into orbit in the early 1960s.

Games

CHOOSE YOUR PLAYER

Angry Birds World Tour

The birds are back! Much of the new gameplay is based on the Angry Birds Classic game. There are 30 available levels, which are split into five episodes of six.

Trivia Tournament

Test your general knowledge by answering questions from a wide range of topics. You can play alone or compete against other players. Challenge yourself and learn something new.

Golf Open

Live all the excitement of a professional golf game. With its accurate physics and stunning 3-D graphics, this golf version will give you all the thrills of the game in the comfort of your own seat.

TV

IN CASE YOU MISSED THEM...



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Raven's Home

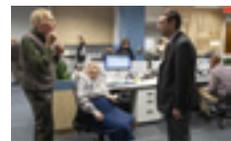
Comedy, 22min
This spinoff from the *That's So Raven* series focuses on the life of divorcée Raven Baxter (Raven-Symoné) and her twins, Booker (Issac Ryan Brown) and Nia (Navia Robinson). In Season 6, an opportunity arises for Baxter to take her fashion career to the next level.



© 2024 National Geographic

Girl Climber

Documentary, 1h23min
Viewers will be on the edge of their seats for this film, which follows free climber Emily Harrington as she attempts to become the first woman to free climb El Capitan's Golden Gate route – in Yosemite National Park – in less than 24 hours.



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The Chair Company

Thriller, 30min
After an embarrassing workplace incident, William Ron Trosper (Tim Robinson), a recently promoted project manager at a property development firm, becomes obsessed with uncovering an apparent conspiracy involving a chair-manufacturing firm.

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SKYTEAM

International Women's Day

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AVIATION

EACH YEAR, SKYTEAM SUPPORTS WOMEN LEADERS ACROSS ITS ALLIANCE THROUGH ITS RISE (REACH, INSPIRE, SOAR, EMPOWER) WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.



At SkyTeam, we understand that travellers expect more than just a smooth journey. As a global alliance of 18 member airlines, connecting over 945 destinations in 145+ countries, we recognise our responsibility to help make aviation more sustainable and inclusive. One of our core initiatives focuses on advancing women's leadership and strengthening representation across our network.

Rising together

In 2022, we launched our RISE Women's Leadership Development Program, which is designed to take women's leadership to new heights across SkyTeam and our member airlines. The annual programme brings together our

women leaders for a series of training sessions, development opportunities and practical assignments. Participants strengthen their communication, leadership and management skills while gaining the confidence to take on greater responsibilities. RISE also allows participants to build a global network of peers and encourages them to serve as role models for future generations of women in aviation. Each year, the programme concludes with a development project that supports continued growth and advancement beyond its completion.

Our commitment

In 2021, SkyTeam became the first airline alliance to unanimously commit

to IATA's 25by2025 initiative, a global effort encouraging aviation organisations to accelerate gender equality. RISE was established to support our member airlines in advancing this commitment. In the years ahead, we will continue collaborating with our members to strengthen representation and empower women leaders. Through RISE, we also align with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, reinforcing a shared commitment to a more equitable future.

As SkyTeam CEO Patrick Roux notes, "No one can drive change alone: that's why alliances are so important. Advancing gender equity in aviation, especially for women in leadership, requires collective effort, and at SkyTeam we consider this an important responsibility. Together with our member airlines and through initiatives like RISE, we can transform the industry – one step at a time."

Moving forward, SkyTeam will continue helping to build a more responsible and inclusive future for the aviation industry. Visit skyteam.com to learn more about our RISE Women's Leadership Development Program.

SkyTeam is the 18-member airline alliance. Find out more about news, services and upcoming events at skyteam.com.

HOUSE RULES

Electronics on board

On board the aircraft, electronic devices, such as smartphones, tablets and e-readers, may be used at all times. If they include wireless functionality, they must be set to **airplane mode** before the aircraft doors are closed and remain so throughout the flight. You may use an electronic device's Bluetooth mode (e.g. a Bluetooth headset) at all times as long as you enable **airplane mode** before you switch on Bluetooth. If the aircraft offers Internet onboard, Wi-Fi mode may be used at all times as long as **airplane mode** is enabled first. Before connecting to the onboard Wi-Fi, switch off any VPN services on your device. Larger electronic devices (e.g. laptops) must be stowed during taxiing, take-off and landing. If in doubt, check with the cabin crew.

Cabin crew may request that all electronic devices are switched off completely if it is deemed necessary.

Drinks and smoking

Alcoholic drinks are served **one** at a time to passengers seated in their assigned seats. For safety reasons, the purser may close the bar. Passengers are not permitted to drink alcoholic beverages brought

on board with them. **Smoking**, including artificial cigarettes such as 'SuperSmokers', **is strictly forbidden** at all times on KLM flights.

Privacy

KLM respects the privacy of its customers and staff. Taking a **photo** or making a **film recording** of any person on board without their explicit consent is not allowed.

Lithium batteries

Mobile phones, laptops and other **electronic devices** contain lithium batteries, which can catch fire if they are damaged or if they short-circuit. Please make sure that you keep an eye on your device while it is charging, and do not charge it while sleeping. Please check 'restricted articles' on klm.com for more information.

Hand luggage at EU airports

To increase passenger safety, security rules for hand luggage are in place for all flights in accordance with European Union regulations. When passing through security control, you are required to present liquids, gels, pastes, lotions and aerosols separately, and in individual containers of no more than 100ml

and packaged in a resealable, transparent plastic bag (maximum volume 1 litre, 1 bag per person).

Animal products

To prevent the spread of animal diseases, you are prohibited from entering the EU with meat, meat products, milk and milk products. Small quantities for personal use are permitted on arrival from Andorra, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, San Marino and Switzerland. For further information, visit europa.eu.

Airport shopping

In the EU: Within Europe, you can travel with your tax-free liquid purchases. They will be packed and sealed for you. The seal is valid for 24 hours. You may not break the seal until you have reached your final destination, even if your journey includes a transfer.

Outside the EU: Transfer at an EU airport? You may bring liquids and gels from non-EU airports. They will be checked at Schiphol. Travelling to the US? Only bring liquids on board bought and sealed at Schiphol. Transfer in the US or Canada? Pack your liquids in your check-in luggage.

Wi-Fi & free messaging

STAY IN TOUCH ON BOARD

Our ICA fleet has Wi-Fi and more and more of our European aircraft are being equipped with it. If your aircraft has a Wi-Fi logo on it, you can use Wi-Fi. Follow the instructions to the right. **Fast Wi-Fi is available to Flying Blue members for free on our Wi-Fi-enabled European aircraft.** On ICA as a Flying Blue member, you can send basic texts with our free message package. Non-members can enrol for free during the flight via the Onboard Portal. If you'd like to surf the Internet, send & receive emails, listen to music, use social media or stream a film, you can buy a Wi-Fi pass for the full flight or 1 hour on ICA.



1

Switch off any VPN services and then set your device to airplane mode



2

Go to Wi-Fi settings and choose **KLM_WiFi** from the network list



3

Follow the steps on your device Or go to connect.klm.com Or scan the QR code

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EUROPE



European routes, including SkyTeam and KLM code-share partners.

- KLM
- airBaltic
- Air Europa
- Air France
- Air Serbia
- Air Malta
- Atlantic Airways
- Bulgaria Air
- Croatia Airlines
- Georgian Airways
- Loganair
- Scandinavian Airlines
- TAROM
- Transavia
- Widerøe

SkyTeam member

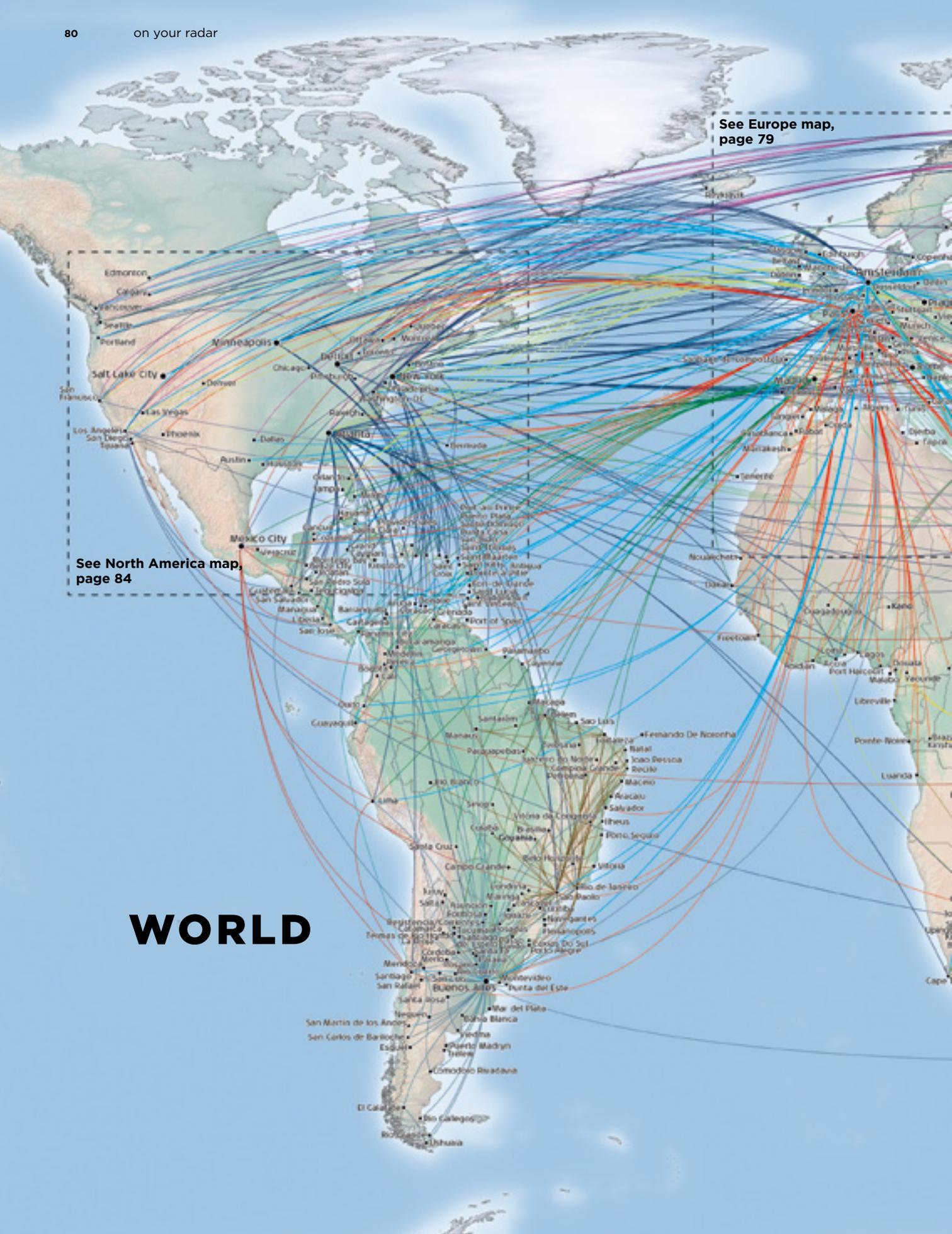
See World Map for intercontinental flights, page 80

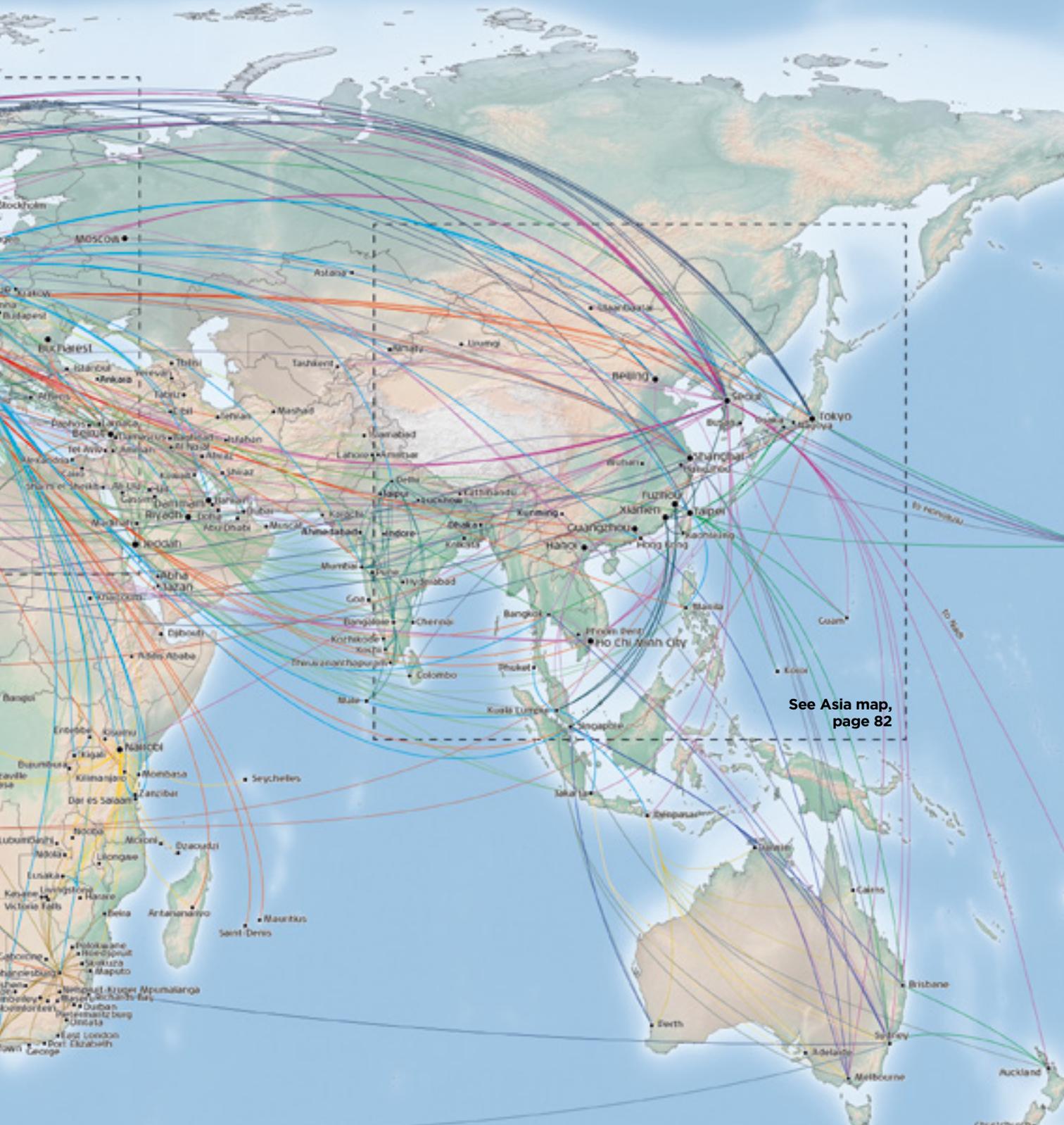
The lines are illustrative and do not represent the actual routes taken by the aircraft. We do not currently fly over Russia or Ukraine.

See Europe map,
page 79

See North America map,
page 84

WORLD





See Asia map, page 82

KLM, SkyTeam and select code-share partner routes

- KLM
- Aerolíneas Argentinas
- Aeroméxico
- Air Europa
- Air France
- Air Link
- China Airlines
- China Eastern
- COPA Airlines
- Delta Air Lines
- Garuda Indonesia
- Indigo
- Jetstar Airways
- Kenya Airways
- Korean Air
- GOL
- Malaysia Airlines
- Middle East Airlines
- Qantas
- Saudia
- TAROM
- Transavia
- Wainair
- Vietnam Airlines
- Virgin Atlantic
- XiamenAir

SkyTeam member

The lines are illustrative and do not represent the actual routes taken by the aircraft. We do not currently fly over Russia or Ukraine.

We continuously adapt our network to changing circumstances, such as geopolitical developments. Please check klm.com for the current schedule and routes.



ASIA

- Taipei
- Chengde
- Wanzhou
- Chongqing
- Zhuji
- Cuiyang
- Kunming
- Guangzhou
- Chang
- Lanzhou
- Mandalay
- Hanoi
- Luang Prabang
- Chiang Mai
- Yangon
- Chiang Mai
- Yangon
- Sukhothai
- Bangkok
- Sam Riep
- Phnom Penh
- Da Nang
- Phnom
- Hanoi
- Hồ Chí Minh City
- Koh Samui
- Phuket
- Krabi
- Lombok
- Denpasar
- Medan
- Kuala Lumpur
- Singapore
- Riwebo

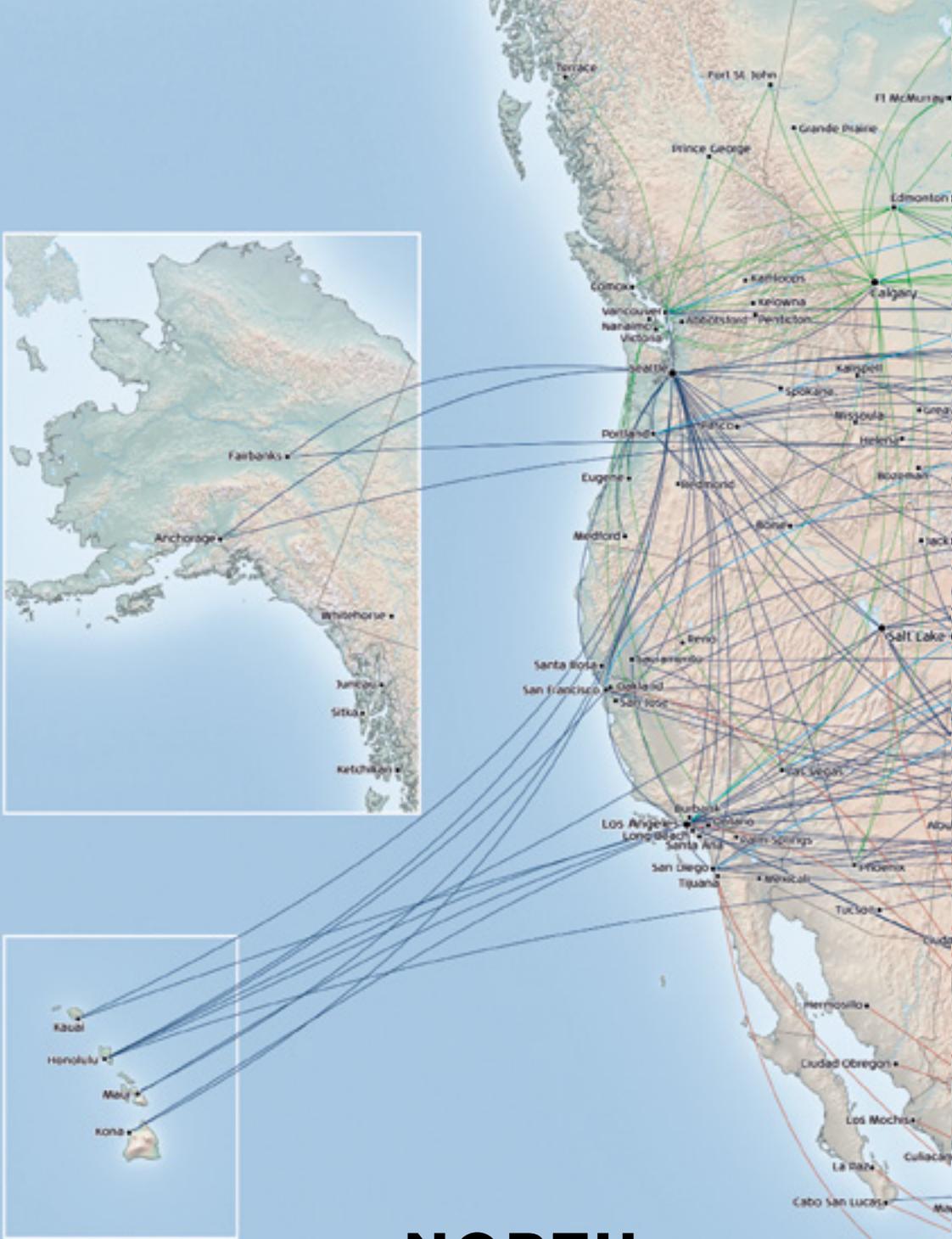


KLM routes, KLM code-share routes and other SkyTeam destinations in Asia.

- KLM
- Bangkok Airways
- China Airlines
- China Eastern
- Garuda Indonesia
- Jetstar
- Korean Air
- Malaysia Airlines
- Vietnam Airlines
- XiamenAir

SkyTeam member

The lines are illustrative and do not represent the actual routes taken by the aircraft. We do not currently fly over Russia or Ukraine.



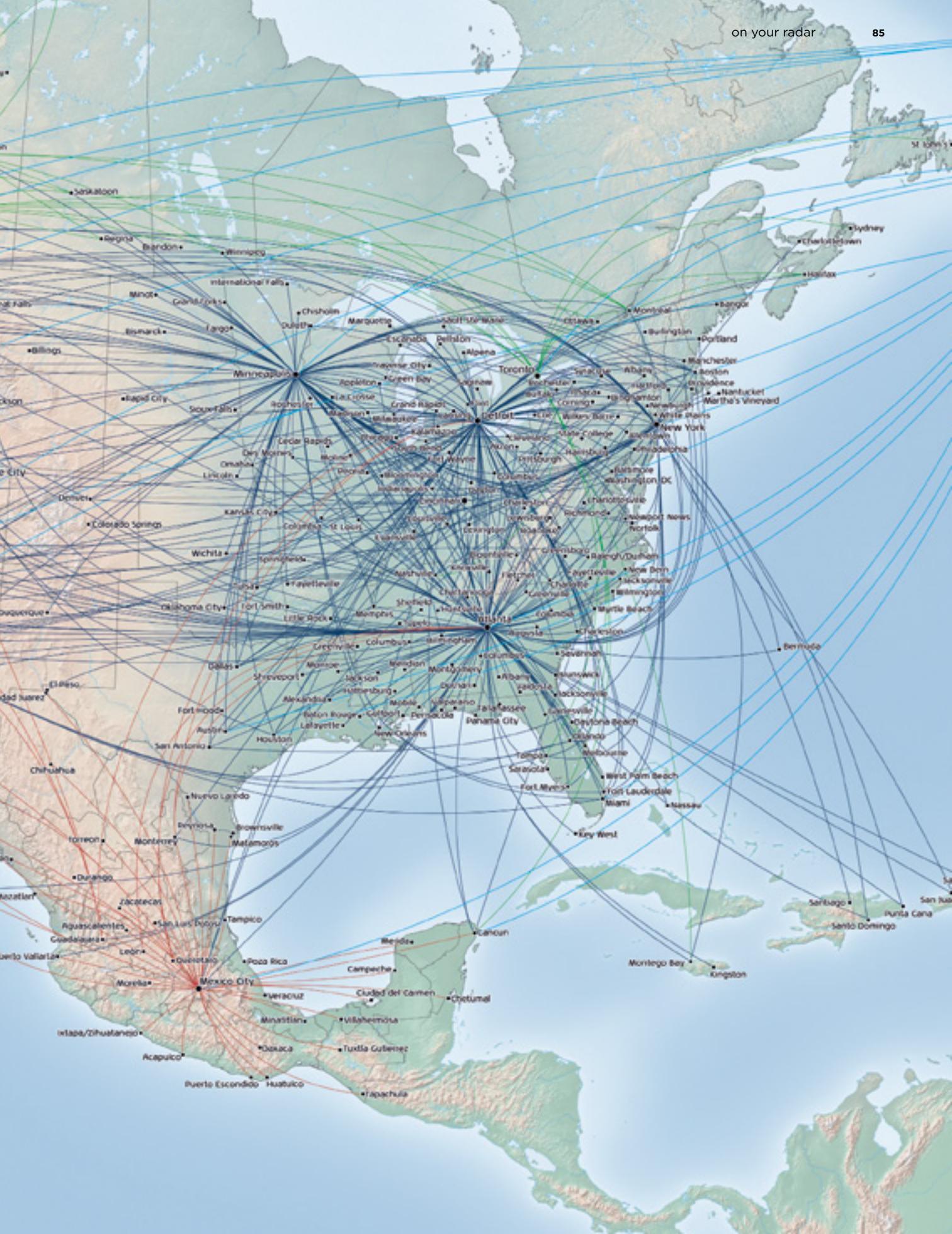
NORTH AMERICA

KLM routes, KLM code-share routes and other SkyTeam destinations in North America.

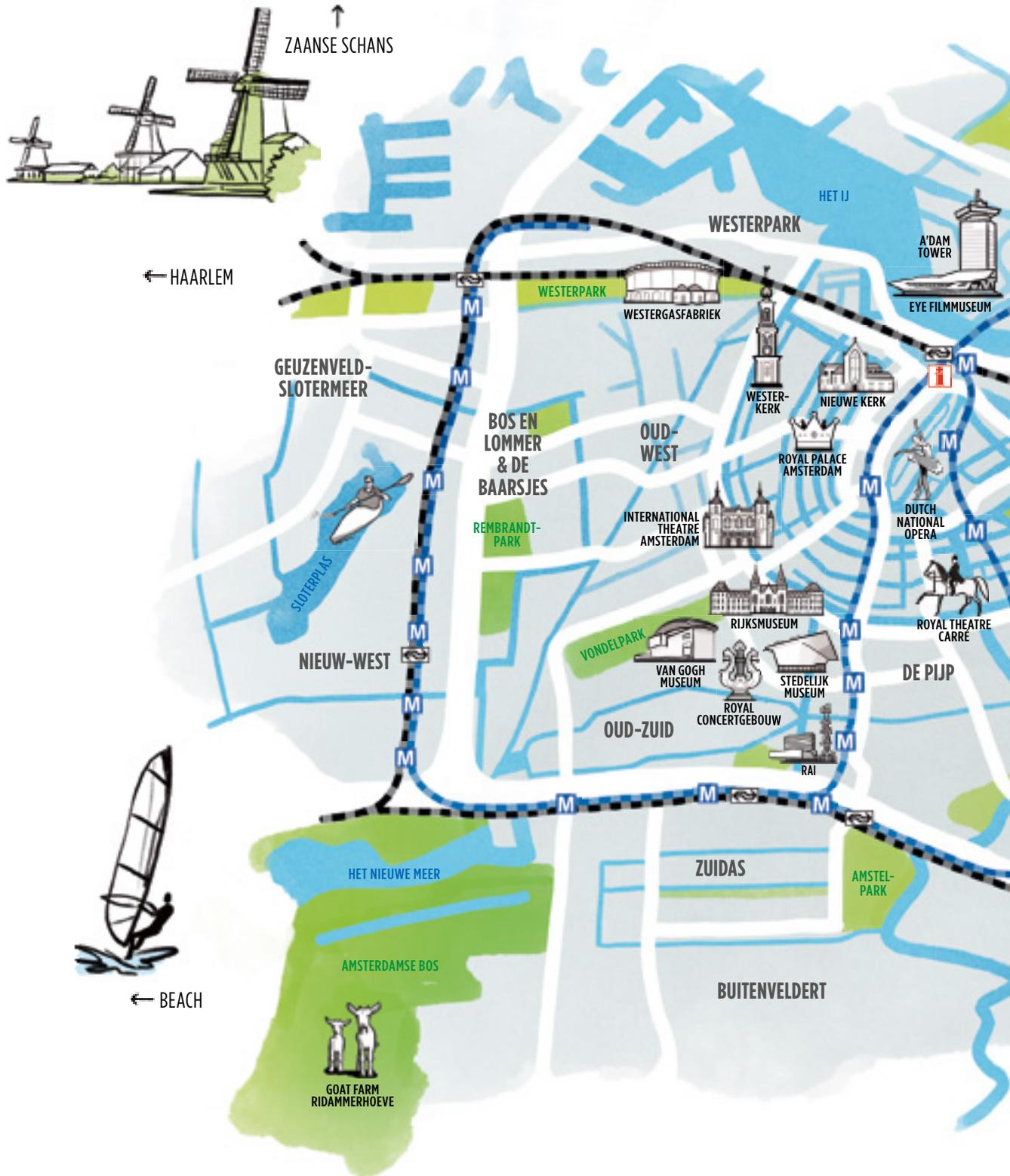
- KLM 
- Aeroméxico 
- Delta Air Lines 
- WestJet 

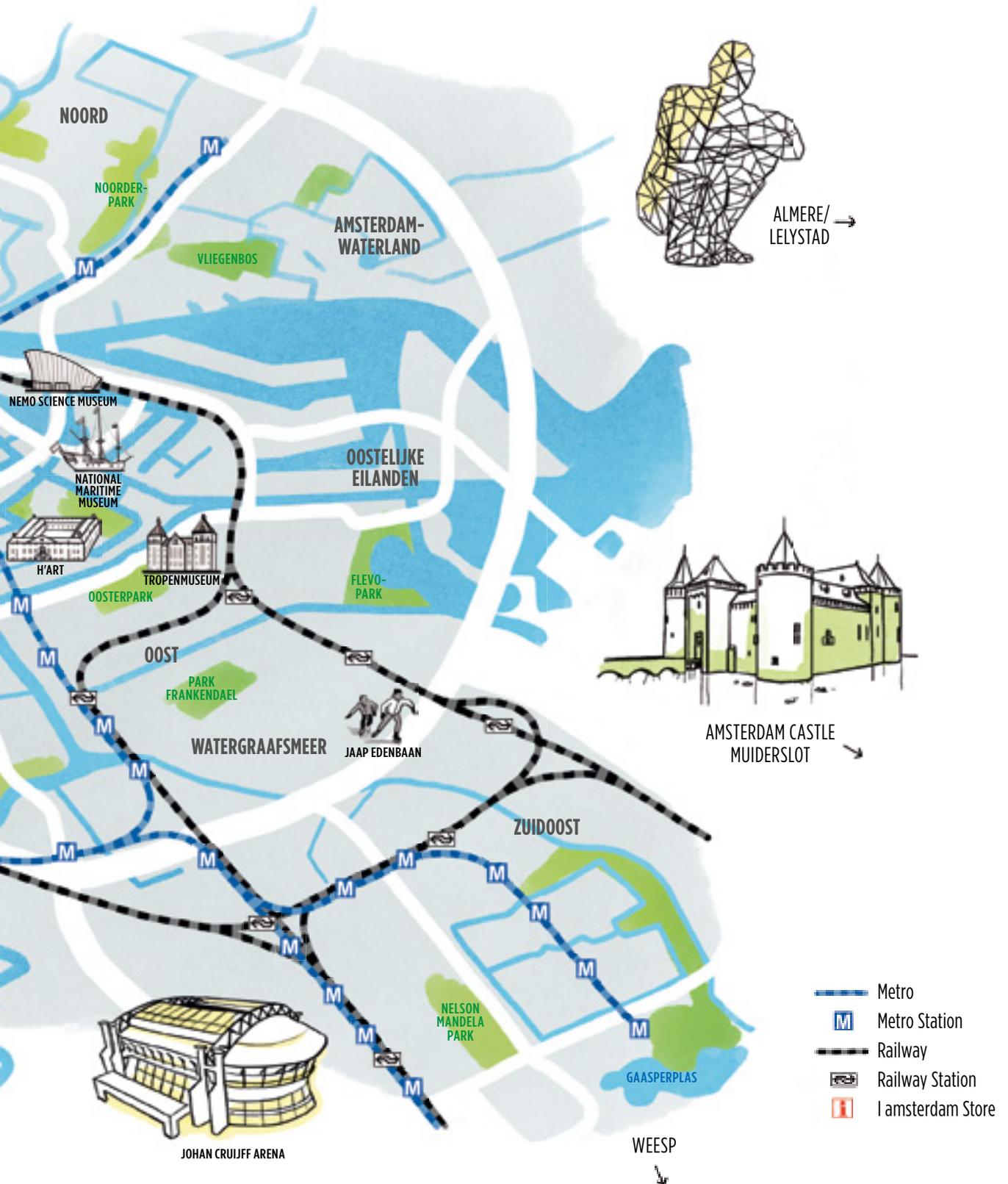
 SkyTeam member

The lines are illustrative and do not represent the actual routes taken by the aircraft.



AMSTERDAM

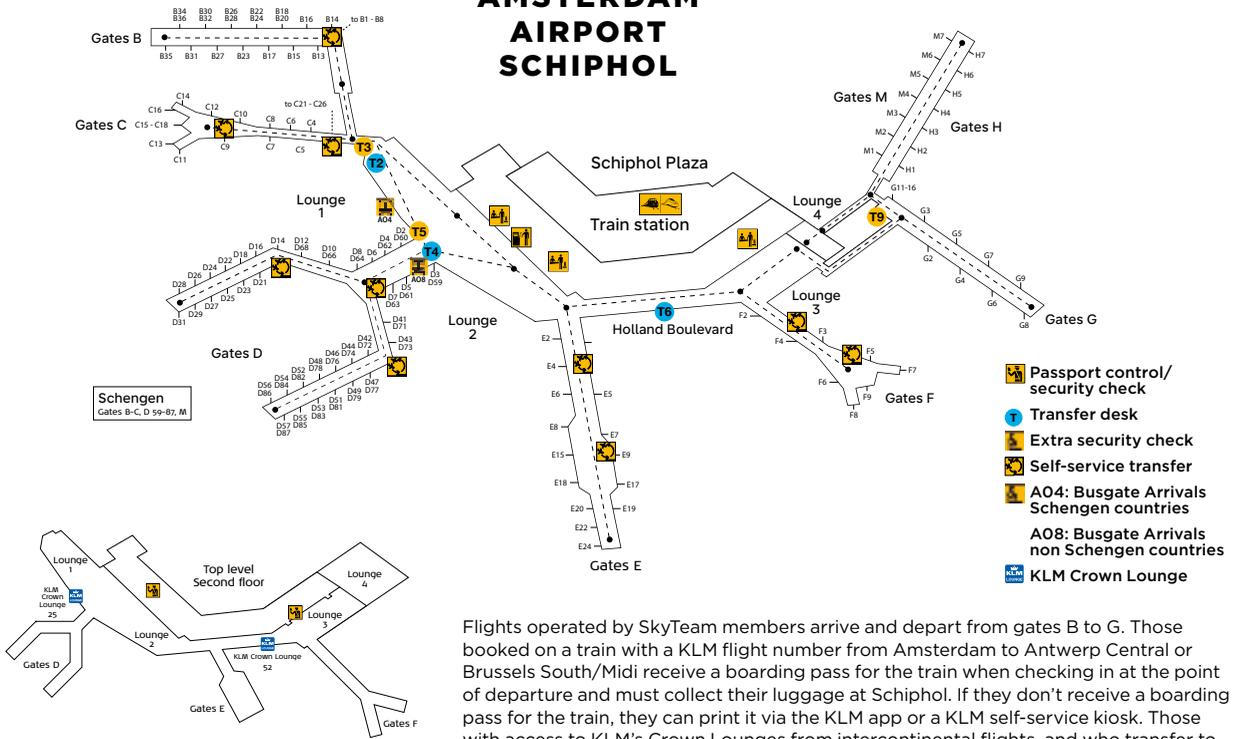




AIRPORT MAPS

The Netherlands

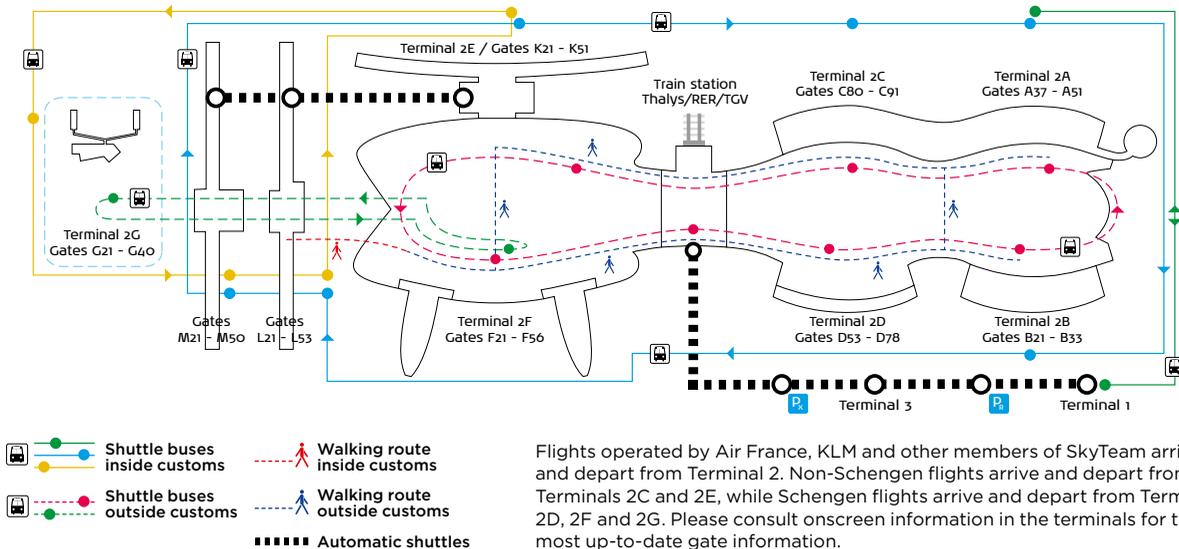
AMSTERDAM AIRPORT SCHIPHOL



Flights operated by SkyTeam members arrive and depart from gates B to G. Those booked on a train with a KLM flight number from Amsterdam to Antwerp Central or Brussels South/Midi receive a boarding pass for the train when checking in at the point of departure and must collect their luggage at Schiphol. If they don't receive a boarding pass for the train, they can print it via the KLM app or a KLM self-service kiosk. Those with access to KLM's Crown Lounges from intercontinental flights, and who transfer to European (Schengen) flights, can use Crown Lounge 25, beyond passport control.

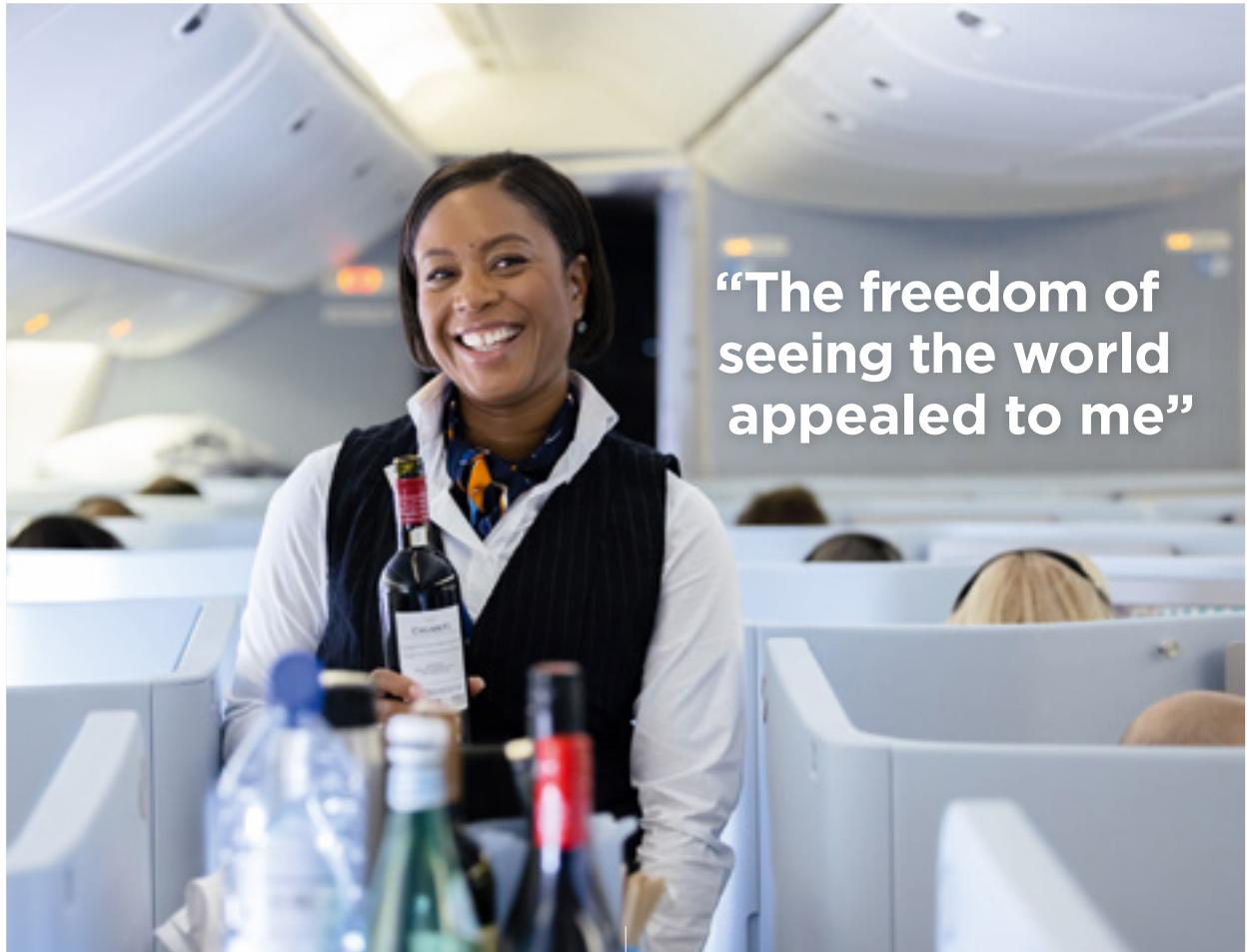
France

PARIS CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT, TERMINAL 2



Flights operated by Air France, KLM and other members of SkyTeam arrive and depart from Terminal 2. Non-Schengen flights arrive and depart from Terminals 2C and 2E, while Schengen flights arrive and depart from Terminals 2D, 2F and 2G. Please consult onscreen information in the terminals for the most up-to-date gate information.

OUT OF THE BLUE



“The freedom of seeing the world appealed to me”

Aubry Grauwde

AUBRY GRAUWDE, A CABIN CREW MEMBER IN KLM'S WORLD BUSINESS CLASS, DISCUSSES WHY SHE FINDS HER ROLE SO REWARDING AND THE DESTINATION SHE LOVES FLYING TO.

What does your job entail? As a World Business Class specialist, my job is similar to that of a cabin crew member in Economy. I keep an eye on passengers and safety measures, and I follow similar procedures. However, the difference is that the cabin environment is smaller, so the contact I have with passengers is a little more intimate. That's what I love about my job – because I look after only a few passengers on each flight, I have a lot more time to hear their stories and have meaningful conversations.

What is your favourite destination? I often fly to the same destinations, as World Business Class is only on board the Boeing 777-200, 777-300, 787-9 and 787-10, as well as the Airbus A330-300 and A330-200. I often request flights to Asian destinations. My favourite is Seoul, the capital of South Korea. The city feels incredibly liveable and safe; I enjoy walking through the streets and just getting lost. There's a lot about Korean culture that I appreciate, such as its skincare products and public transport, which is very easy to use.

Did you always want to work in the aviation industry? Yes. Whenever someone asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I'd say I wanted to “work in the sky”. The freedom of seeing the world appealed to me. After secondary school, I studied tourism at ROC Airport College and then got a degree in International Aviation Services. In 2006, at the age of 20, KLM hired me before I'd graduated. Then in 2022, I got the chance to work in World Business Class. Now, 19 years later, I have no regrets – and I still love to fly.

INVERNESS

United Kingdom



Castles

Less than two hours' drive from Inverness is Eilean Donan Castle, as seen below in the image. It's one of Scotland's most photographed castles, and stands at the confluence of three sea lochs (saltwater inlets). The castle is one of many near Inverness.

Highland fantasy

With its breathtaking natural surroundings, spooky castles and rich history, Inverness has served as a setting for many books, films, TV series and myths. While the legend of the Loch Ness monster has been a long-held fascination for many, a more contemporary association is the Glenfinnan Viaduct, a railway bridge where scenes for several *Harry Potter* films were shot.

On the menu

Scottish food is about more than haggis, a savoury dish made of sheep offal, oatmeal, onion and spices.

Battered, deep-fried Scottish haddock – a mild, flaky fish – paired with chips (French fries) is a favourite, as is a quality cut of Aberdeen Angus beef or a full Scottish breakfast, consisting of black pudding, bacon, eggs and fried toast.

Chill out

If you're visiting Inverness in March, you can expect a typically chilly Scottish climate. With temperatures reaching about 8°C during the day but dropping to 2°C at night, packing a thick coat and your winter woollies is advised. Thankfully, the UV index is very low.

Celtic culture

Whether you're interested in art or history, Inverness has something for everyone. The Inverness Museum and Art Gallery exhibits an array of local artists, or check out The Inverness Castle Experience, where an interactive, immersive self-guided tour takes visitors on a journey through the castle, giving them a taste of Highland culture and history.



Helping children in need at KLM destinations

Wings of Support is a non-profit initiative founded by KLM staff. Since 1998, we have supported over 1,000 local projects at KLM destinations worldwide, giving children in need access to education, shelter, and medical care. With overheads kept to a minimum, your support truly reaches the children who need it most.



Learn more, explore our projects, and support us at:
www.wingsofsupport.org

 [wingsofsupport](https://www.instagram.com/wingsofsupport)



Chronograaf

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is the result of well-balanced design in which no element dominates.
Precise manufacturing techniques are applied in combination
with the use of high-quality materials. Attention is devoted to every single detail.
Driven by perfection without compromise.”

Wybe van der Gang



VAN DER GANG
W A T C H E S