

# HOLLAND HERALD



*In Kuala Lumpur, various cultural expressions live harmoniously side by side*

**Life tastes  
better outside.**



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# Welcome

Marjan Rintel

## BROADENING YOUR HORIZONS



### Cover Story

Malaysia's capital, Kuala Lumpur, is a city with a unique blend of historical, architectural, and cultural expressions. Local photographer Patrick Heart captured it perfectly in this month's cover image of a busy street scene in the Bukit Bintang shopping district during the evening rush hour. Read more about Kuala Lumpur's undeniable appeal on page 38.

**T**ravel is about more than simply reaching a destination; a new, unfamiliar environment stimulates all our senses. It's an experience fueled by other people, unknown rituals, breathtaking landscapes, vibrant colors, and intriguing scents. You get a glimpse into another world, and you always bring something from that experience back into your own life.

This edition of *Holland Herald* is filled with stories about surprising destinations that can lead to a refreshed and inspired outlook on life. A beautiful example of this is Dutch photographer Paul Cupido (p. 26). He grew up on the Dutch Wadden Island of Terschelling and built a successful career as a sound designer in advertising. But as the years went by and the pressure increased, Cupido lost his enthusiasm and he decided to sell his company. His transformation took place in Japan, where he unexpectedly found an outlet in photography. Japan became the source of inspiration for his artworks, for which he has quickly gained international recognition.

Just as an artwork is only truly complete when you're emotionally connected to it, a journey is only finished once the experience finds its place in your own life. That's the power of travel – a belief we hold deeply at KLM. That's why it's our mission to bring you safely and comfortably to all these inspiring places and

**“A journey is only finished  
once the experience finds its  
place in your life”**

to offer you a memorable experience, whether it's the serene landscapes that inspired Paul Cupido, the vibrant cities of Tokyo (p. 36), or Wrocław (p. 24) – if you prefer to stay in Europe.

In the Netherlands, I'm involved with the Reading and Writing Foundation, which focuses on reducing low literacy. Globally, it's an issue

that deserves attention. Language is essential – it allows you to express yourself, expand your world, participate economically, and connect with others. That's why I'm delighted that in this edition we take you to some of the world's most beautiful libraries (p. 52) – in cities from Rio de Janeiro to Beijing and Prague – where language plays a leading role and serves as a means to share knowledge and broaden horizons.

At KLM, we hope that your journey will inspire you – and that your world becomes bigger because of it.

Welcome aboard.

**Marjan Rintel**  
KLM President & CEO





# BENNETT WINCH

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*Military grade  
cotton parachute webbing*

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bonded canvas outer*

*Solid brass hardware*

*Magnetic connectors*

*Detachable garment bag*

*Tuscan leather trim*



## The smartest bag on board

Gone are the days of taming unruly suit bags in high winds held only by an exposed hanger, while your wheelee case goes for a wander down the airport ramp. The Bennett Winch Suit Carrier Holdall combines a garment bag and a duffle into a single piece of luggage for those who seek a smarter way to travel.



April 2026

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

## Contributors

## MEET THE TEAM



*Suzanne Stougie*

As a freelance journalist and editor, Suzanne gets to spend her days writing about the good things in life: food, travel, culture, art, books, and often the subjects of *Holland Herald's* Happy Places feature. For this issue, she wrote about some of the world's most spectacular libraries (p. 52).

**Suzanne's travel tip:** "Finland is the birthplace of sauna culture, so I had to visit one of Helsinki's public saunas when I visited. At Löyly, named "One of the 100 Greatest Places in the World" by *Time* magazine, I enjoyed a smoke sauna followed by a dip in the Baltic Sea. It was divine."



*Brenda van Leeuwen*

Based in The Hague, Brenda is a photographer who specializes in portraits and travel reports. Her work appears in national and international magazines. Brenda took the photos for the Coffee Break article (p. 48), featuring Laurien Meuter, the founder of the Tiny Miracles organization.

**Brenda's travel tip:** "Rent a bike in Copenhagen and explore the green suburbs and the city's coolest swimming pier, La Banchina. A creative hub with a floating container village for students, it's the best place to have a dip and then enjoy dinner in the last rays of the evening sun."



*Anna Ciepiela*

Anna, an editorial designer with a passion for the printed page, is responsible for the layout of various features at *Holland Herald*. For this issue, she worked on the insider guide to Wrocław (p. 24), among other articles. "I love it when I get a chance to show the beauty of my native Poland to our readers."

**Anna's travel tip:** "If a country has ever stolen my heart, it's Romania. I love it so much that I've even learned the language. From Bucharest's exciting nightlife to Transylvania's glorious mountains and castles – and the idyllic hills and rich folklore of Maramureş – there's something for everyone."

## Colophon

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# THROUGH *your lens*

Dhaka  
Bangladesh



## ON THE RIGHT TRACK

ANWAR EHTESHAM'S HOMETOWN, DHAKA IN BANGLADESH, PROVIDES ENDLESS INSPIRATION FOR HIS STREET PHOTOGRAPHY.



At the beginning of 2019, before the onset of the pandemic, I began to

develop an interest in street photography. I started watching instructional videos on YouTube and then purchased a camera. There was only one problem: when I was taking photos in my

hometown of Dhaka, people would look at me, which made me feel uncomfortable. A few weeks later, everyone was urged to wear masks, and through my newfound anonymity, I became confident enough to take to the streets to dive into photography properly. Now, a few years later, I'm still taking photos in Dhaka, and I feel more at ease. I hope to share the beauty that I see in my city with the rest of the world. I get up very early, around 6 a.m., and simply wander around. That's how this photo came to be. During the autumn of 2023, I visited Kamalapur Railway Station, one of the busiest places in Dhaka. I'd been walking around for a while, and at about 8 a.m. I spotted this boy on a train. The beautiful contrast of his yellow-orange clothing against the backdrop of the green train immediately grabbed my attention. I'm happy I shot this photo because it encapsulates exactly what I love about Dhaka and Bangladesh: our beautiful, friendly people.

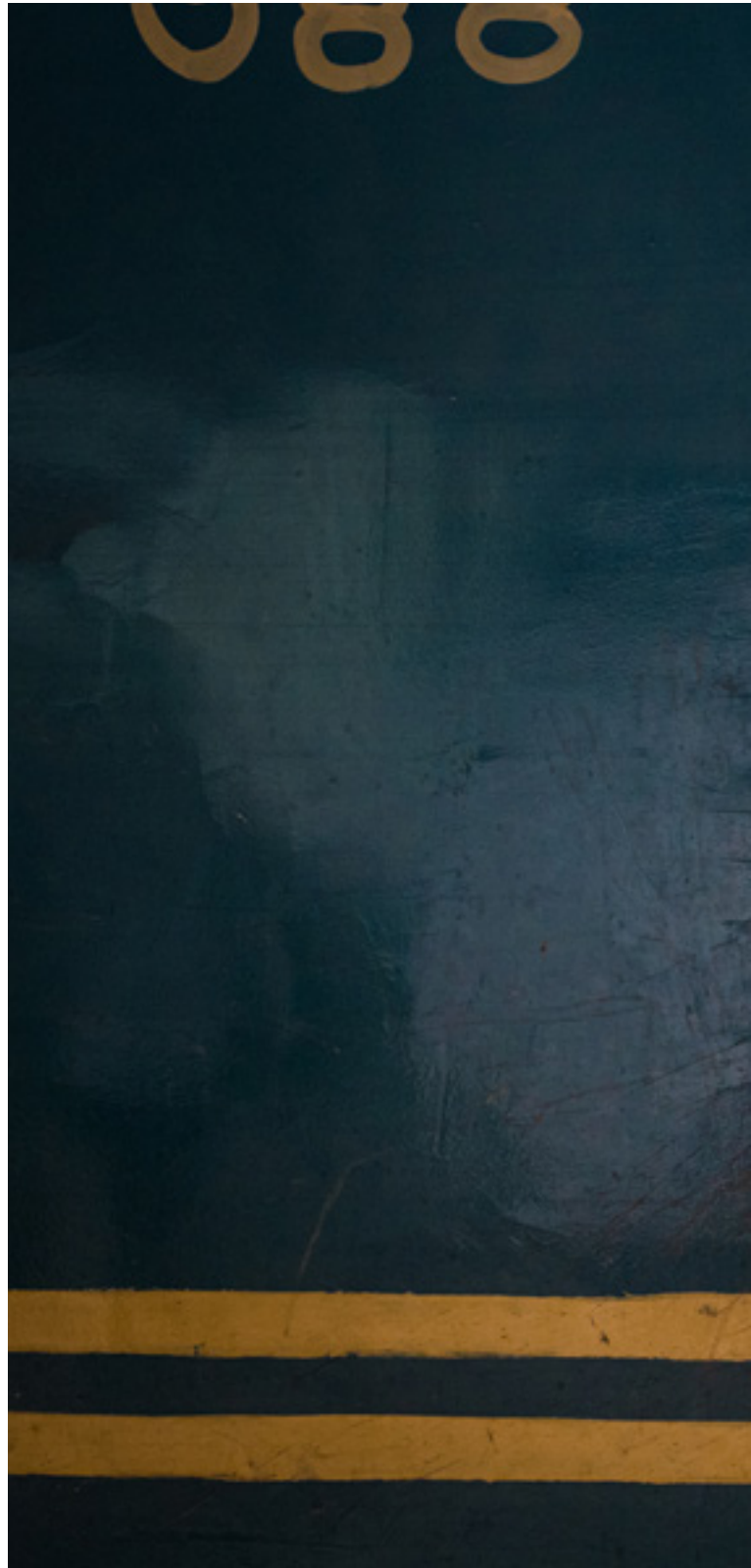
### Your Photo

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



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The Joe Travel Collection strikes the exact right balance: elegant, easy to wear and fit for purpose. Designed specifically for the man on the move, no matter how long the trip. From going to the shop around the corner to long-haul flights. Made of our new tech wool, which is a one-of-a-kind blend of 61% Merino wool, 34% econyl (100% regenerated nylon) and 5% elastane. Merino wool is breathable and super comfortable. Add to that the econyl and elastane and you get a strong, stretchy fabric with a subtle shine. Fading? No way! Machine-washable? Of course. Available in 2 colours and 5 styles. All perfect for mixing and matching.

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# The SELECTION

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



Milan

## MODERN MASTERS

Not to be mistaken with Milan's design and furniture fair Salone del Mobile, which takes place in the same week, miart is the city's leading modern and contemporary art fair. Attracting more than 100 galleries from around the world, with exhibitions ranging from historical modernism to dynamic contemporary projects, it aims to inspire professional and private art enthusiasts alike. Apr 17-19; [miart.it](http://miart.it)

# TO *see*

Q&A Claire Tabouret



## ALWAYS IN MOTION

FRENCH FIGURATIVE  
PAINTER CLAIRE TABOURET  
PRESENTS HER FIRST MAJOR  
RETROSPECTIVE AT MUSEUM  
VOORLINDEN IN THE HAGUE.

**When and how did you know you wanted to become a painter?** I was only four years old when I knew that becoming a painter was my calling. It happened when I saw Monet's *Water Lilies* paintings – they made such a profound impression on me. My mom remembers me saying, “I need paint right now.” It was that urgent.

**Now you're obsessed with painting portraits. Why?** Like water, the human face is always in motion, elusive, never still. And like water, a portrait offers a mirror of ourselves: how do we see our strength or our vulnerability? That's what my exhibition *Weaving Waters, Weaving Gestures* at Museum Voorlinden is about.

**You also like to stretch the boundaries of painting, correct?** Yes. I like to challenge myself, collaborate with others, and see how I can find my way through different forms, by painting on ceramics, bronze, or faux fur. I'm curious to see how I can leave my mark in multiple materials. Until May 25; [voorlinden.nl](http://voorlinden.nl)



Paris

## MADE BY MATISSE

French painter Henri Matisse was arguably one of the most influential artists of the 20th century and kept reinventing himself. He was nearly 80 years old when he developed and fine-tuned his signature cut-out gouache technique. The exhibition *Matisse. 1941–1954* at Paris' Grand Palais sheds light on his final years through more than 230 works, including paintings, drawings, cut-outs, books, and more. Until Jul 26; [grandpalais.fr](http://grandpalais.fr)

Delft

## CREATIVE CROSSOVER

What do contemporary street artists and the centuries-old Delft Blue ceramics industry have in common? Perhaps not much at first sight, but the exhibition *Urban Blue – from Bricks to Tiles* at the Royal Delft Museum and Amsterdam's street art museum STRAAT aims to bridge that gap. Six international street artists were invited to reinterpret Delft's ceramics tradition and create their unique version of it using contemporary, urban visual language. Until Aug 23; [museum.royaldelft.com](http://museum.royaldelft.com)



The blue in Delft Blue tiles and pottery originates from **cobalt oxide**, a naturally occurring mineral

London

## THE ART OF STYLE

Fashion designers have traditionally been inspired by art, and in some cases, fashion garments become works of art in their own right. Italian couturier Elsa Schiaparelli (1890–1973) is one of those designers whose creations rightfully belong in a museum. The exhibition of her work at London's V&A museum, *Schiaparelli: Fashion Becomes Art*, dives into the designer's fascinating inner and outer world. Until Nov 8; [vam.ac.uk](http://vam.ac.uk)





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# TO *taste*

Amsterdam

## HISTORICAL CITY OASIS

Located within West-Indisch Huis, a building with a long and fascinating history, Café Nieuw Amsterdam is a bar-restaurant that serves brunch and lunch, drinks, and an extensive dinner. It blends heritage with a warm, contemporary atmosphere, while its private courtyard offers a tranquil escape. [cafenieuwamsterdam.nl](http://cafenieuwamsterdam.nl)



Matcha is rich in **L-theanine, an amino acid** that promotes a state of relaxation and well-being



Matcha

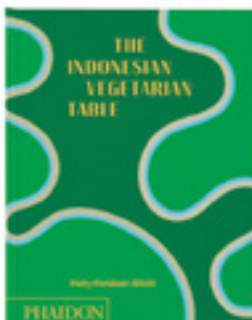
## GREEN GOODNESS

Sourcing products directly from farmers, producers, and artisans across Japan, the owners of Amsterdam-based speciality matcha brand Michi are passionate about the “green fuel”, which offers a more sustained energy boost. Not only do they sell a wide variety of matchas from different regions in Japan that are 100% traceable, but Michi also stocks the necessary tools to prepare matcha in the correct way; these include *chasen* (matcha whisks), sieves, and ceramics. [michtea.nl](http://michtea.nl)

Cookbook

## VEGETARIAN TABLE

INDONESIAN CUISINE OFFERS PLENTY OF OPTIONS FOR VEGETARIANS AND VEGANS. THIS COOKBOOK IS FULL OF EASY AND TASTY RECIPES.



From *gado-gado* and *tempeh laksas* to jackfruit *rendang*, Phaidon's cookbook *The Indonesian Vegetarian Table* by acclaimed chef Petty Pandean-Elliott features 80 delicious plant-based recipes for home cooks who'd like to explore Indonesian cuisine. The diverse recipes are organized by ingredient type, and blend authentic techniques and easy-to-source ingredients with clear instructions. €34.95; [phaidon.com](http://phaidon.com)

# TO wish for

Interior design

## **BOLD AND ECLECTIC**

From Senegalese hardwood to Chinese porcelain, for its latest collection, Dutch interior design brand Polspotten presents a range of items that celebrate textures and techniques from around the globe. This season also features collaborations with four Dutch designers; pieces include Studio Verbaan's metal Kombo side tables and Norman Trapman's playful VASES. [polspotten.com](http://polspotten.com)



Floor-standing speakers generally deliver **fuller, more dynamic sound** than bookshelf speakers

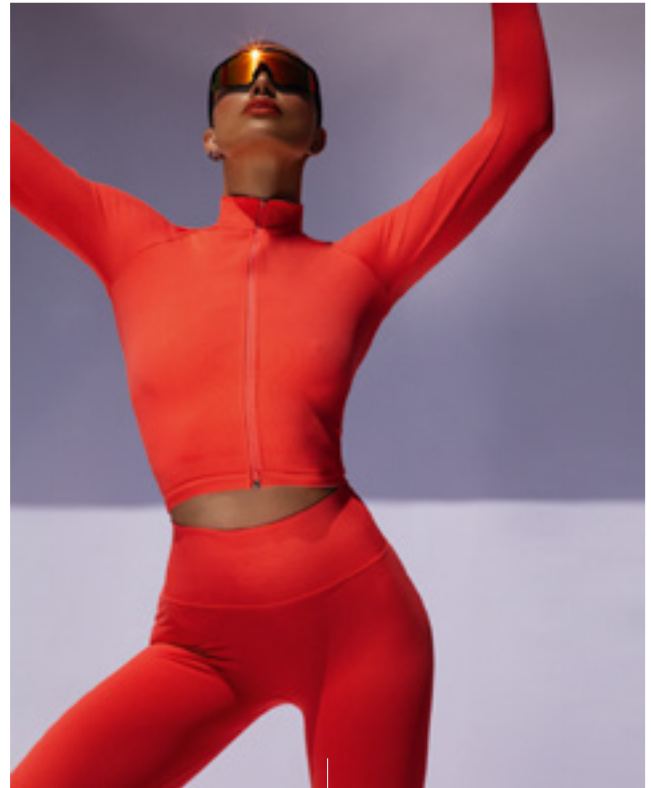


#### Beach towels

### MAKE A SPLASH

Made from recycled plastic bottles and weighing half as much as an average beach towel, Buvanha's microfiber travel towel is a colorful companion for anyone looking to travel light. It dries 50% faster than a normal towel, and for every item sold, a tree is planted via non-profit organization One Tree Planted.

€49.95; [buvanha.nl](http://buvanha.nl)



#### Sportswear

### IN FIT FORM

Founded in 2013 by childhood friends Tekla Acs and Helen Van, aim'n is a Swedish brand with a strong focus on innovative, multifunctional designs that combine fashion and function. In addition to its fitness and winter sport lines, aim'n also has an Atelier collection with timeless essentials. [aimn.eu](http://aimn.eu)

#### Speakers

### SOUNDS INSANE

WHILE ITS SOUND MIGHT BE THE FOCUS, THE BEOLAB 90 MIRAGE BY BANG & OLUFSEN IS ALSO AN EYE-CATCHER.

For its 100-year anniversary, Danish luxury audio brand Bang & Olufsen released several limited editions of its Beolab 90 floor-standing speakers. One of these, the Beolab 90 Mirage, pairs the brand's industry-leading audio technology with an aluminum body that features a hand-finished anodized-gradient and an iridescent fabric cover that appears to change color as you move around it. Price available upon request; [bang-olufsen.com](http://bang-olufsen.com)



#### Sneakers

### Updated classic

French sustainable footwear brand Veja teamed up with Italian fashion brand Magliano for a reinterpretation of its Panenka shoe. Inspired by vintage football, the Veja x Magliano Panenka has a foldover tongue and comes in three colors. [veja-store.com](http://veja-store.com)



# TO meet

*Metropolis* works with correspondents in **more than 40 countries** around the world

Q&A Stef Biemans

## TELLING UNIVERSAL STORIES

WITH HIS TV SHOW, *METROPOLIS*, DUTCH PRESENTER STEF BIEMANS AND A TEAM OF INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS REPORT ON TOPICS THAT UNITE US AROUND THE WORLD.

**What is *Metropolis* and how did you come up with the idea?** *Metropolis* is a weekly international program that shows everyday life through the eyes of local journalists, who search for remarkable stories in their own countries, each time guided by an overarching theme, such as dating, superstition, or dieting. The program was created in 2007 out of a personal desire to open a window onto the world that isn't presented by Western correspondents. The result is raw, personal storytelling that is often surprisingly relatable.

**The show has been running for almost 20 years. Why do you think it resonates with viewers?** I think viewers feel that the correspondents genuinely want to tell them something about their country. We get a sense of the world from their perspective, infused with emotion, humor, and sometimes self-mockery. We see how they communicate, which questions are sensitive, what makes them laugh, and even a certain filmmaking style that differs from continent to continent. One of the first episodes was about obesity. The correspondent from Burkina Faso wanted to show that there were few overweight people in his neighborhood in Ouagadougou, and did so by pointing the camera down the street and saying, "As you can see, there are no men with beer bellies walking here." I thought that was brilliant, funny, and creative.

**You're a Dutchman who lived in Nicaragua for many years and now resides in Spain. How do you navigate these different cultures?**

In Nicaragua, I learned how to dance and speak Spanish. I also became more flexible, although my teenage kids say I can be "Nicaraguan strict" when it comes to coming home late and staying safe. As someone from the Netherlands, I've maintained this persistent and annoying punctuality. So I guess I've taken a bit of everything. I feel most at home when I don't quite belong anywhere. After living abroad for so

long, I've come to embrace the role of the outsider.

**Who would you like to sit next to on a long-haul flight?** I learned a lot from Dutch documentary filmmaker and journalist Frans Bromet, including the power of staying silent as an interviewer. I'd love to catch up with him to talk about journalism and TV.  
[human.nl/metropolis](http://human.nl/metropolis)



“  
I’VE COME TO  
EMBRACE THE  
ROLE OF THE  
OUTSIDER  
”

# TO do

Gadget

## STAYING ON TRACK

Sure, your smartphone is perfectly capable of navigating you to your desired destination. But for long, adventurous treks, Garmin's eTrex Touch might be a more reliable option. This compact GPS device offers up to 130 hours of battery life, preloaded maps, and a sun-readable touchscreen.

€449.99; [garmin.com](http://garmin.com)



There are at least **31 GPS satellites** orbiting Earth at speeds of about 14,000 km per hour



South Africa

## LION LODGING

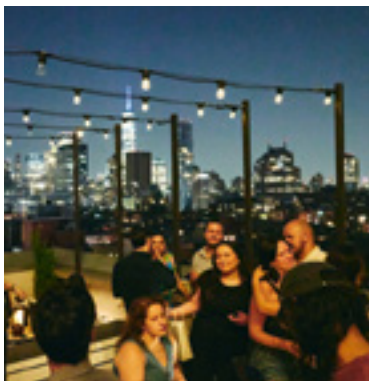
Located in the untouched wilderness of South Africa's Limpopo region, The Schrikkloof private nature reserve combines luxury lodging with nature conservation. Working closely with The Lions Foundation, it provides a safe haven for lions and other big cats that have been rescued from circuses, private ownership, or conflict areas. Guests can book curated safari trips.

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

New York City

## TOP OF THE CITY

NEW YORK CITY IS BEST EXPERIENCED FROM A ROOFTOP, AND UNTITLED AT 3 FREEMAN ALLEY HAS THE IDEAL ONE.



Hidden in a small, graffiti-covered alley in the heart of Manhattan's Lower East Side, boutique hotel Untitled at 3 Freeman Alley is the perfect place to stay if you want to be close to the action but not in the midst of it. Its rooftop bar is open to non-guests, and often hosts DJ nights and events. There's also a Gallery Garden with varying art exhibitions.

[untitledat3freeman.com](http://untitledat3freeman.com)



Cycling

### Slick ride

With its sleek design, built-in GPS, removable battery, and smooth pedal support, the Raleigh One e-bike takes you from A to B in no time and in style. A monthly subscription includes theft insurance.

€2,699; [raleighbicycles.com](http://raleighbicycles.com)

# Column

Freek Vonk

## THE ELEPHANTS IN THE ROOM

FREEK, A DUTCH BIOLOGIST WHO STUDIES AND FILMS UNIQUE ANIMALS WORLDWIDE TO INSPIRE A LOVE FOR NATURE, TALKS ABOUT THE AFRICAN ELEPHANT.

**“Even the slightest swing of his trunk or tusks could kill me”**



**B**reathless, I stand beside a true giant in the golden light of the African savanna at Imire Game Park in Zimbabwe. He towers above me – almost 5 m tall and weighing around 7,000 kg – with 2 huge, elegantly curved tusks jutting from his upper jaw. This magnificent African elephant is called Mak, and he’s one of the few remaining big tuskers left in the world: an elite group of old bulls with long, heavy tusks.

I’ve scarcely felt smaller or more vulnerable. Even the slightest swing of his trunk or tusks could kill me. And Mak is not a trained animal. As a young calf, he lost his family to poachers – a trauma that could have defined his life. Instead, he was rescued and cared for by the people of Imire Game Park. Since then, he has lived freely and safely in this protected reserve, where his strength and spirit can remain fully intact. Mak greets me by lifting his trunk to my face, gently feeling and smelling me. As he slowly glides it along my cheeks, I feel the soft tickle of the tiny sensory hairs, as if he’s carefully reading me. His touch is gentle. It’s as though he understands how fragile I am.

When I run my hands along Mak’s enormous tusks, I can’t help but wonder whether he, too, understands just how vulnerable he has become. Because no matter how strong and seemingly indestructible those tusks feel, they’re precisely what makes him such a target in our modern world. Over the past decades, millions of

African elephants have been poached for their ivory, which is carved into piano keys, billiard balls, and other luxury items. As a result, the African elephant population has plummeted by an astonishing 70% in just the past 50 years. The consequences are profound. Scientists are observing that average tusk length is declining in many populations, and more and more females are being born without tusks at all. It’s also likely that big tuskers like Mak could soon die out.

This doesn’t only affect elephants, but it also reshapes whole ecosystems. Older males play a crucial role in guiding younger bulls and tempering their aggression. At the same time, elephants use their tusks to shape the landscape, breaking open dense forests and creating space and food for countless other species. If elephants lose their tusks, the landscape itself begins to change. It’s a stark reminder of how rapidly human exploitation of wildlife can alter the natural world.

Meeting Mak brings into sharp focus exactly why I do what I do. Through my foundation, No Wildlife Crime, I work every day – together with many others – to help ensure that wildlife is protected from poachers. As long as Mak continues to stride across this landscape, tusks gleaming in the sun and eyes full of quiet wisdom, hope remains alive. But if we fail to act now, giants like Mak will vanish forever, and with them an irreplaceable piece of the natural world.

# EAT *out*



London  
UK



## WHAT A TEAM

If there's one thing Emily Roux and Diego Ferrari, co-owners of the Michelin-starred Caractère restaurant in London, understand, it's this: working together is key. The husband-and-wife team has brought that concept to their kitchen, allowing guests to build their own five-course tasting menu by selecting a dish from each of their "character" profiles. This dish, consisting of sustainable Balfegó bluefin tuna with radish, yuzu, mandarin ponzu, and a chili condiment, is part of a duo. Its counterpart, the chutoro (marbled part of the tuna), is served as a tartlet with Imperial Oscietra caviar.

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

My

Poland



# WROCŁAW

ŁUKASZ MAJCHROWSKI IS A POLISH FOOD BLOGGER, AMATEUR CHEF, PHOTOGRAPHER, AND IT ENGINEER WITH AN EVERLASTING WANDERLUST. EVEN THOUGH HE'S ALWAYS ON THE MOVE, HIS HEART BELONGS TO HIS HOMETOWN OF WROCŁAW. @FOOD\_SQUARE



**What do you love about Wrocław?** It has so much to offer: lovely old architecture, the energy of a young and fast-developing city, friendly people, plenty of green areas, and countless places worth exploring. Even though I've lived here for most of my life, I'm still discovering new things to love about my city.

**What are the must-sees and dos?** Wrocław is known for its Market Square ❶, which is lined with charming tenement houses and has the Gothic Town Hall at its center. Cathedral Island ❷, the oldest part of Wrocław, is another must-see. Visit just before sunset when the lamplighter lights the gas streetlamps by hand. I also suggest renting a bike and riding along the embankments to admire how beautifully the rivers weave through the city. You'll see why Wrocław is nicknamed "the city of 100 bridges".

**Where should we eat?** If you fancy some modern

Polish cuisine, try Młoda Polska ❸ (Plac Solny 4). The food, including the famous *kotlet schabowy* (pork chop served with butter sauce), is outstanding. For a casual get-together with friends, I often head to Mercado (Bogusławskiego 15) – a tapas bar with a twist.

**Best coffee spots?** Some of my favorite coffee spots are Wuwa Café ❹ (Tramwajowa 2), located in the heart of a pre-war housing estate, and Cherubinowy Wędrowiec (Plac Nankiera 17a), a hidden gem next to the beautiful Baroque Ossolineum Garden.

**Any cultural venues worth visiting?** I'm a big fan of the Museum of Architecture (Bernardyńska 7), which showcases interesting exhibitions on historical and modern Polish architecture. At the Museum of the University of Wrocław (Plac Uniwersytecki 1), you can admire the Baroque Aula Leopoldina hall and climb

the Mathematical Tower, a historic astronomical observatory offering stunning views of the Old Town. The Wrocław Contemporary Museum (Plac Strzegomski 2a), located in a former air-raid shelter, is another gem to add to your itinerary.

**How do we get around?** Many places can easily be reached on foot. Alternatively, I suggest using the Wrocław City Bike bike-sharing service – stations are spread all over the city – and the reliable tram and bus network.

**Which hotels do you recommend?** I like Puro Wrocław (Pawła Włodkowica 6), which has stylish interiors inspired by Scandinavian design and is great value. If you desire a high-end stay, try the Art Deco Hotel Monopol (Modrzewskiej 2), where you'll enjoy luxurious rooms, an indoor pool and a rooftop bar. Monopol once hosted Spanish artist Pablo Picasso.

## What about shopping?

Visit the Market Hall ❺, a neo-Gothic building with Art Nouveau details, where you'll find lots of fresh produce, including tasty baked goods and artisanal cheeses. As Poland is known for its poster-art tradition, I also recommend going to Galeria Polskiego Plakatu (Świętego Mikołaja 54/55), a small poster gallery and shop. Design lovers should check out the Good Good concept store ❻ (Piłsudskiego 52), which has the latest fashion, housewares, and great coffee.

## Book this story



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Good Good concept store ⑥



Market Square ①



View toward Cathedral Island ②

*Admire the city from the embankments along the river*



Wuwa Café ④



Młoda Polska ③ Market Hall ⑤





Paul Cupido

# VISUAL POETRY



Dutch photographer Paul Cupido (53) creates images that feel like poems. Rooted in travel, intuition, and the Japanese notion of *Mu*, his work invites contemplation rather than explanation.

Text Marieke Verhoeven

**W**hen I meet Paul Cupido on a chilly morning at the Bildhalle Amsterdam gallery on the Singel canal, he's just returned from the Paris Photo photography fair. Although it was a fruitful event, Cupido is happy to be home. "Big art fairs can be intense and stimulating at the same time," he reflects. "They create a rare concentration of encounters where people want to engage with the work and with you in person. But that's exactly why I think it's important to be there. For me, a work of art is only finished when someone connects with it emotionally. Moments of real connection remind me that it's all about the resonance between the work and the viewer." Studying Cupido's work on display here, I can see that his delicate use of shapes, textures, and colors do indeed evoke an emotional response. I tell him that there's something serene, comforting, and tender about his images, and there's a sense of balance that brings me a feeling of peace. "This is exactly why I believe in hands-on creation," says Cupido. "When you use AI, for example, you become a consumer. When you create something by living it through instinct and love, you're a creator. The viewer will always feel the difference."

### Two-stage rocket

Known for producing work that has emotional depth, material sensitivity, and meditative calm, Cupido has gained rapid international recognition. Informed by Japanese aesthetics and the notion of *Mu* – which he understands as "beauty through emptiness" – Cupido's work is often displayed in series of two or three images that tell a story. Beyond Paris Photo, his work is presented at major international photography fairs, such as AIPAD New York and Art Brussels, as well as more intimate events including the InCadaqués Photo Festival in Spain. Cupido won the Japanese Hariban Jury Award – which sits at the intersection of Japanese photographic tradition and international modern practice – for his graduation series and has held prestigious residencies, such as the inaugural Château Palmer & Leica Instants program in Bordeaux, followed by an exhibition in Paris.

Working slowly and instinctively – often taking quick snapshots while traveling – Cupido first gathers images through happenstance rather than planning, later layering them into sequences by hand. It's a long and meticulous process, which also involves using special printing paper

“  
A WORK OF  
ART IS ONLY  
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SOMEONE  
CONNECTS  
WITH IT  
”

– selected and sourced in Japan – and unique dyeing techniques. "I call it my two-stage rocket," Cupido explains. "After taking photos on the road, in digital and analog formats, I review them back in my atelier and start cutting and combining images, often diving into archive materials. I like laying the images down and sliding them around. Or overlapping two things on transparencies and then printing them. Eventually, a 'visual poem' emerges."

Born in 1972 on the Dutch island of Terschelling, Cupido enjoyed a childhood inspired by nature. He developed a particular interest in the sea and the changing tides. "I was surrounded by the sea and the beach was five minutes from our house," he recalls. "Twice a day, it was completely low tide and very high tide – so high that you would go under quickly. This tremendous power of the sea and the moon intrigued me immensely." He points to his photographs that currently grace the walls of the entire gallery space. "The moon and different shades of blue are often present in my work. It's a never-ending fascination."

Despite his love for the island life, Cupido felt a growing pull beyond Terschelling during his teenage years, and started dreaming of new horizons. "I developed a huge interest in music and electronics; I was always playing with different instruments and sound equipment in my room," he shares. "When house music became popular in the 1990s, I was captivated by it. I started DJing a bit at our local beach club, but performing on stage didn't suit me. »

Previous pages  
Left *Moon Addict*,  
2021  
Right *Homage*  
*Celeste*, 2022

Right page  
Top *Estudi*  
*Azuriet*, 2019  
Bottom left  
*Homage to*  
*Shoji no. 11*, 2024  
Bottom right *Four*  
*Hands and Half*  
*Moon*, 2022







**Above** *Near the River*, 2022  
**Left page** *Suave*, 2016



What I wanted was to make music. At some point, I borrowed my uncle's van, packed all my equipment into it, took the ferry to the mainland, and set up a sound studio space in Hilversum, the commercial and creative center for media and broadcasting.”

To his surprise, Cupido got assignments right away. “The late 1990s and early 2000s were a fertile period for sound production,” he recalls. “Budgets allowed for experimentation, and there was space to explore. It was an important and formative time for me.” But as the years passed, Cupido began to lose some of his excitement. “I was driven by a need to keep making something new; to work with the mindset of an artist,” he says. “Even though the studio was successful, the work gradually became more middle-of-the-road. Boundaries tightened; there was less room to be radical or daring, and over time, the joy simply faded.”

### Transformation in Tokyo

Cupido sold his company and took the time to reset and rediscover his spark. Photography became an unexpected outlet. “I had an old camera at home,” he says. “One day, I began taking it on my walks through the forest. Taking pictures of nature, I suddenly felt present. It had a therapeutic effect: I experienced everything more intensely. It was like seeing the world with childlike wonder. Photography became a way to live in the here and now.” Since he yearned to learn all about photography, Cupido decided to study at the Fotoacademie in Amsterdam. “It was tough,” he explains. “The teachers focus on technique in the smallest detail, and it requires a lot of discipline. But the technical part eventually becomes second nature. That’s when you can follow your impulse without having to think about the mechanics of the camera. That’s the most beautiful moment.”

While Cupido was still struggling to find his voice and signature style, a defining moment arrived on a trip to Japan during the final year of his studies. “My teacher told me about a prestigious photography course organized by the Magnum Photos agency in Tokyo. It sounded interesting, so I applied and got accepted. Initially, Tokyo was a shock; I was jet-lagged and had a total sensory overload. We only worked at night, so I was forced to shoot purely on instinct. And after a few days, I started getting into it. The work wasn’t technically perfect but it was honest. That’s when I understood what autonomous work is supposed to be.”

“  
**I UNDERSTAND  
 THE NOTION OF  
 MU AS ‘BEAUTY  
 THROUGH  
 EMPTINESS’**  
 ”

Cupido was so captivated by Japan that he decided to return for three months for his graduation project. “Japan is a country full of contrasts,” he explains. “This is visible in the diversity of the landscapes, but also in the culture, which is full of mystery and unspoken rules and traditions. I was particularly fascinated by the notion of *Mu*. In the West, we’re often afraid of emptiness; we like to fill in all the blanks. But think of it as an empty room, where the sun shines in, filling the space with its light. That’s the magic of emptiness; it opens potential for the light to come in.” Following in the footsteps of Japanese poet Bashō, whose book *Oku no Hosomichi* (“*The Narrow Road to the Deep North*”) made a deep impression on him, Cupido traveled from Tokyo to Abashiri, on the northeastern coast of the island of Hokkaido. His experiences resulted in an ongoing visual ode to Japan’s beauty, its mystery, and its diverse natural and cultural landscapes. “I went on that journey during a heavy and transformative time in my life,” he explains. “I was in my mid-40s, had become a father but had separated from my son’s mother, and a few good friends had passed away. The big questions came to the forefront. What’s the meaning of life? What’s my purpose?”

Without a fixed plan, Cupido traveled by foot and by train, staying in strangers’ homes and allowing chance to guide the journey. “I’m a perfectionist and I like to be in control,” he admits. “But when you’re traveling without a plan and are depending on the »

Top  
*Tonlé-Sap, 2025*

Bottom left *Cap  
 de Creus, 2023*  
 Bottom right *Mori  
 Moon I, 2025*



grace and kindness of others, you need to surrender. Bashō's spiritual book serves as a reminder that time is always moving, that life is moving through us, and that impermanence is natural. Taking that spiritual journey was exactly what I needed at that stage of my life."

Thanks to the images he made during his journey in Japan, Cupido graduated *cum laude* from the Fotoacademie in 2017, later publishing acclaimed photo books including *Searching for Mu* and *Continuum*. His work was quickly picked up by the press and buyers worldwide, and the esteemed Swiss gallery Bildhalle reached out to represent him right after graduation and promote his work at Photo London. This early attention was due to a combination of factors. "It was a moment when the zeitgeist opened up to smaller, poetic works that pull on your heartstrings. My experience in sound was also a great help because I knew how to make an impact with synchronized sound and image, and the film I showed for my graduation project created a buzz in the media."

### Frequency of love

The photographer's surname, which some may assume is a moniker, conveniently fits his vision for his work. "When I'm asked to describe my work, I say that there's a frequency of love in it and that it's intimate and personal." This frequency of love is also represented in a literal form by his girlfriend Anna, who's often the subject in Cupido's work. The couple met at the InCadaqués Photo Festival in 2022 and now divide their time between Paris, where Anna is from, and the Dutch city of Laren, where Cupido has his atelier. "We travel a lot and love spending time together," Cupido says with a smile. "Photography can be a solitary practice, so it's nice to share it with her." While some might assume that Anna is Cupido's muse, he prefers to rethink the term rather than reject it. "It's not a classic dynamic where one decides and the other executes," he says. "It's an interaction; we influence each other. Anna's also an artist and makes beautiful collages. Because we're in love, a certain intimacy naturally finds its way into the images. I think that sense of closeness, and through it, the work's ability to transcend itself, is what resonates with people."«

Left *Sakura*, 2023

Paul Cupido



## Cupido's Favorites

### Traveling

It's no surprise that Japan is one of my favorite destinations in the world; I travel there a few times a year. From Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa in the south, Japan never disappoints. I also love the Canary Island of Lanzarote because of the graphic contrast of black sand, blue sea, and white houses. Mexico also fascinates me – especially Mexico City, with its vibrant colors and makers' culture.

### Photo books

I've published about 10 photo books so far, and I love the process, although it's not lucrative. That's partly because I'm very particular about the type of paper and printing techniques I use. Books usually break even if you're lucky, but they do add layers to your practice because they allow you to tell a complete story. In my opinion, the photo book is the most beautiful way to show work.

### InCadaqués Photo Festival

Taking place every year in October, this festival in Spain is my favorite photo fair. Contrary to the bigger fairs in London, Paris, and Miami, it's low-key. There's a great atmosphere; it's still warm enough to swim; the light is amazing; and Salvador Dalí's house is nearby. What more do you need?

### Amsterdam

I now live in the town of Laren, but I lived in Amsterdam for many years and still love being in our capital city. One of my favorite things to do on a sunny day is head to the outdoor terrace of the IJ Brewery (Brouwerij 't IJ), order a craft beer, and watch city life go by. For art and design inspiration, I visit Time & Style, a gallery and a Japanese interior design store. With its subtle use of light and materials and its timeless aesthetic, Time & Style represents everything I love about Japan.

# TOKYO *by day*

Japan



HYPER-MODERN YET DEEPLY TRADITIONAL, TOKYO IS A CITY OF BEAUTIFUL CONTRADICTIONS. DISCOVER TRANQUIL TEMPLES, GREEN GARDENS AND MYRIAD TRENDY NEIGHBORHOODS.



Asakusa neighborhood ❶



Women in traditional kimonos at Sensō-ji temple ❷



Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden ❸



Souvenirs from Nakamise Street ❹

## Tradition & temples

Tokyo's history unfolds vividly in Asakusa ❶, an ancient and atmospheric neighborhood where you'll find Sensō-ji ❷ (2-3-1 Asakusa), the city's oldest Buddhist temple. Enter through the striking Kaminarimon Gate and then walk along Nakamise Street ❹, where stalls sell popular snacks such as *ningyō-yaki* ('sponge cake'). The nearby Kappabashi Street features dozens of stores that sell anything you might need in the kitchen. For a spiritual experience, try Meiji Jingu (1-1 Yoyogikamizonocho, Shibuya), a Shinto shrine hidden within a dense forest near the hip Harajuku neighborhood. The gravel paths and towering torii gateways create a sense of calm that feels worlds away from the hustle and bustle of the surrounding city.

## Neighborhood strolls

Tokyo has surprisingly walkable neighborhoods, and the city really shines when you explore it slowly. Just one subway stop from the busy Shibuya, you'll find the elegant Ebisu. Yebisu Garden Place (4-20 Ebisu) is worth a stop. Built on the former site of a beer brewery, this vibrant "city within a city" is full of restaurants and shops. Ebisu flows into the artsy Daikanyama, which is defined by good food and trendy shops. The streets are filled with small gallery cafés, such as the Lurf Gallery Café (8-13 Sarugakuchō), offering specialty drinks and art exhibitions. Another popular spot is Log Road Daikanyama (Daikanyamachō 13-1), where the tracks of the former Tokyu Line have been replaced by a strip of shops, bakeries, and

the laid-back Spring Valley Brewery, where you can try Japanese craft beers. A little further on, you'll find Daikanyama T-Site (17-5 Sarugakuchō), a stunning cultural complex devoted to books, music, and movies.

## Gardens & city views

Tokyo's green spaces are designed for contemplation. Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden ❸ (11 Naitomachi, Shinjuku) blends Japanese, English, and French garden styles. Closer to the water, Hamarikyū Gardens (1-1 Hamarikyūteien, Chuo) offers a unique mix of skyline views and landscaped ponds. Be sure to end your stroll with a visit to the tranquil Nakajima Tea House, where you can indulge in a cup of traditional matcha tea while seated on a tatami mat. For a

*Tokyo's green spaces are designed for contemplation*

panoramic view over Tokyo without the crowds, head to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government No.1 Building (2-8-1 Nishishinjuku, Shinjuku). Its observation decks offer sweeping views over the ever-sprawling metropolis. On clear days, you can even see Mount Fuji.

## Getting around

Tokyo's trains are spotless, fast, and reliable. Pick up an IC card (Suica or Pasma) for effortless travel on the subway. The city also has lots of bike-share services, such as Docomo Bike Share.

# TOKYO *by night*

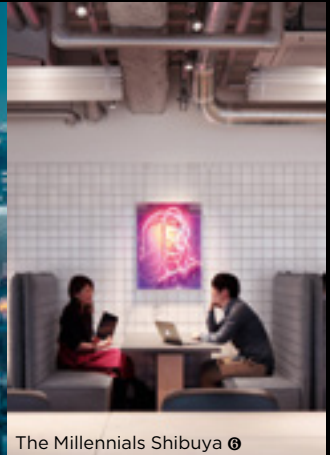
WHEN NIGHT FALLS, TOKYO DOESN'T SLOW DOWN. LANTERNS LIGHT UP SIDE STREETS, NEON LIGHTS BEG FOR YOUR ATTENTION AND LOCALS SOCIALIZE IN COZY *IZAKAYA* (PUBS).



Shinjuku neighborhood ⑥



Ramen



The Millennials Shibuya ⑥

## Exceptional food culture

With anything from tiny counters to refined eateries, Tokyo's dining scene is unmatched. For sushi with character, go to Sushi no Midori Ginza (Yamashita Bldg 1F, 8-3 Ginza), a high-quality favorite known for generous cuts and great value. Ramen lovers should check out Tokyo Ramen Street (1-9-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku) in Tokyo Station, a collection of renowned ramen shops all under one roof. You buy a ticket from the vending machine in front of your chosen shop and wait in line until called forward. For a mouthwatering *yakiniku* (Japanese BBQ) experience, go to Sumibi Yakiniku Nakahara (4-3 Rokubancho GEMS Ichigata 9F) and watch the best wagyu beef being prepared before your eyes.

Not a fan of meat? The Vegan Izakaya Masaka (Shibuya PARCO, B1F) restaurant serves meat-free traditional Japanese dishes.

## Akihabara & Shinjuku

If you'd like to see Tokyo's neon lights, head to the neighborhoods of Akihabara and Shinjuku ⑥. Akihabara offers a vibrant mix of electronics shops, anime culture, and arcades. A landmark stop is the Yodobashi Camera Multimedia Akiba (1-1 Kanda Hanaokacho), a six-floor hub selling everything from cameras to fully automated toilets. Consider sneaking into the multistory Super Potato Retro Arcade (1-11-2 Sotokanda; closes at 8 p.m.), where you can find retro video games such as *Super Mario Bros.* and *Zelda*.

Continue to Shinjuku, where neon lights and illuminated skyscrapers are interspersed with narrow, lantern-lit *yokocho* (alleyways). Slip into Omoide Yokocho (1-2 Nishishinjuku), a maze of tiny yakitori bars where local businessmen eat and drink the night away, or Golden Gai (1-1-6 Kabukicho), where dozens of micro-bars each have their own mood, music, and regulars.

## Hit the hay

Tokyo is a sprawling metropolis of 23 wards, each made up of several different districts. Base yourself in a central location along the JR Yamanote Loop Line, which circles through most areas in the city. Mimiru Tokyo Ikebukuro (2-61-1 Ikebukuro) offers comfy rooms and apartments a short walk

from this train line. Another great option is the Dormy Inn Akihabara (4-12-5 Sotokanda), which has its own open-air bath with a sauna on the top floor. If you'd like to try a Japanese capsule hotel, book a smart pod at The Millennials Shibuya ⑥ (1-20-13 Jinnan), where bed-sized sleeping pods are stacked in rows and shared spaces abound.

## Book this story



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# PERFECTLY BLENDED

Kuala Lumpur offers an exciting mix of historical neighborhoods and hyper-modern business districts where the streets, flavors, and rituals are shaped by Malay, Chinese, and Indian cultures.

Text Marieke Verhoeven





**T**he descent into Kuala Lumpur Airport is a slow reveal. As the aircraft dips through the clouds and into the humid air, Malaysia's capital city remains mostly hidden within a dense, ubiquitous, dark-green jungle. Beneath that compact canopy is where I find myself not long after landing. Once it glides out of the terminal, the KLIA Ekspres train passes through misty forests, low villages, and sudden clearings as it carries me to the city center in under 30 minutes. After we've cut through the greenery and limestone hills, Kuala Lumpur – or KL, as the locals call it – eventually announces itself with minarets and temples, and glassy high-rises shimmering in the heat.

### Kampungs and crown jewels

Founded in 1857 when Chinese tin miners settled at the confluence of two rivers, this city is young by Asian standards yet richly shaped by centuries of migration. Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities form its cultural backbone, alongside indigenous traditions and influences carried by Arab traders and British colonial rule. Mosques stand close to Hindu temples and Taoist shrines; Victorian-era facades share streets with modernist towers and Islamic architecture. I first visited Malaysia's capital about 15 years ago during a stopover and was surprised by its idiosyncratic blend of cultures. To be fair, aesthetically, it wasn't love at first sight. Since this city grew quickly and with many cultures shaping its streets and infrastructure, the result seemed like a patchwork of concrete flyovers, aging shophouses, glossy towers, and improvised street life. But there was something undeniably appealing about all those cultural expressions living harmoniously side by side – something that was most visible in the city's incredibly diverse and delicious food scene. But more about that later.

I decide to defy my jetlag by hopping on an early-morning bicycle tour with MikeBikes, a small tour operation founded by Mike Jansen, a Dutchman who fell in love with Malaysia during

a family trip in 2018 and decided to bring the cycling culture of his home country to KL. With his social enterprise, Jansen not only offers tourists the opportunity to experience the city at a slower pace and with the expertise of local tour guides, but also supports the city's underprivileged youth by providing them with free bicycles and cycling classes. Coincidentally and conveniently, the City Hall launched the Kuala Lumpur Pedestrian & Cycling Master Plan in 2019, a 10-year project to create a more connected network of walkways and bike paths that link residential areas, transit hubs, and key destinations. The aim is to expand to a total of almost 100 km of bike lanes by 2028.

"Welcome to KL!" my guide Ping exclaims with open arms when I arrive at MikeBikes' central meeting point in Kampung Baru, one of the city's oldest neighborhoods and a stronghold for Malay-Muslim life. With its narrow streets, lush fruit trees, and low wooden houses on stilts – once meant to protect its owners from regular floods and dangerous animals – this historical neighborhood has a pleasant village vibe, albeit with a dramatic skyscraper-strewn backdrop. "Many of these houses have been family-owned for more than 100 years," Ping explains when we make our first stop at one of the *kampung's* ('hamlet's') dwellings. "People are proud of their heritage and there's a strong sense of community here. Every *kampung* has a *Ketua Kampung*, a village head who looks out for everyone's needs and is the primary liaison between the locals and the government. Many locals in the *kampung* still grow and sell their own fruits and vegetables here as well."

We continue our tour and stop by the Saloma Link Bridge, a 69-meter-long pedestrian and bicycle bridge that opened in 2020 and connects Kampung Baru to the city center. "Before, the people in Kampung Baru had to make long detours to reach the center, where many of them work," Ping explains. "This saves a lot of time that would otherwise be spent stuck in traffic." The bridge also offers spectacular »

#### Previous pages

Pudu Market; Chinese decorations and mural in the Kwai Chai Hong alleyway in Chinatown

#### Right page, top

Thean Hou Temple

#### Bottom (from left

to right) Malaysian

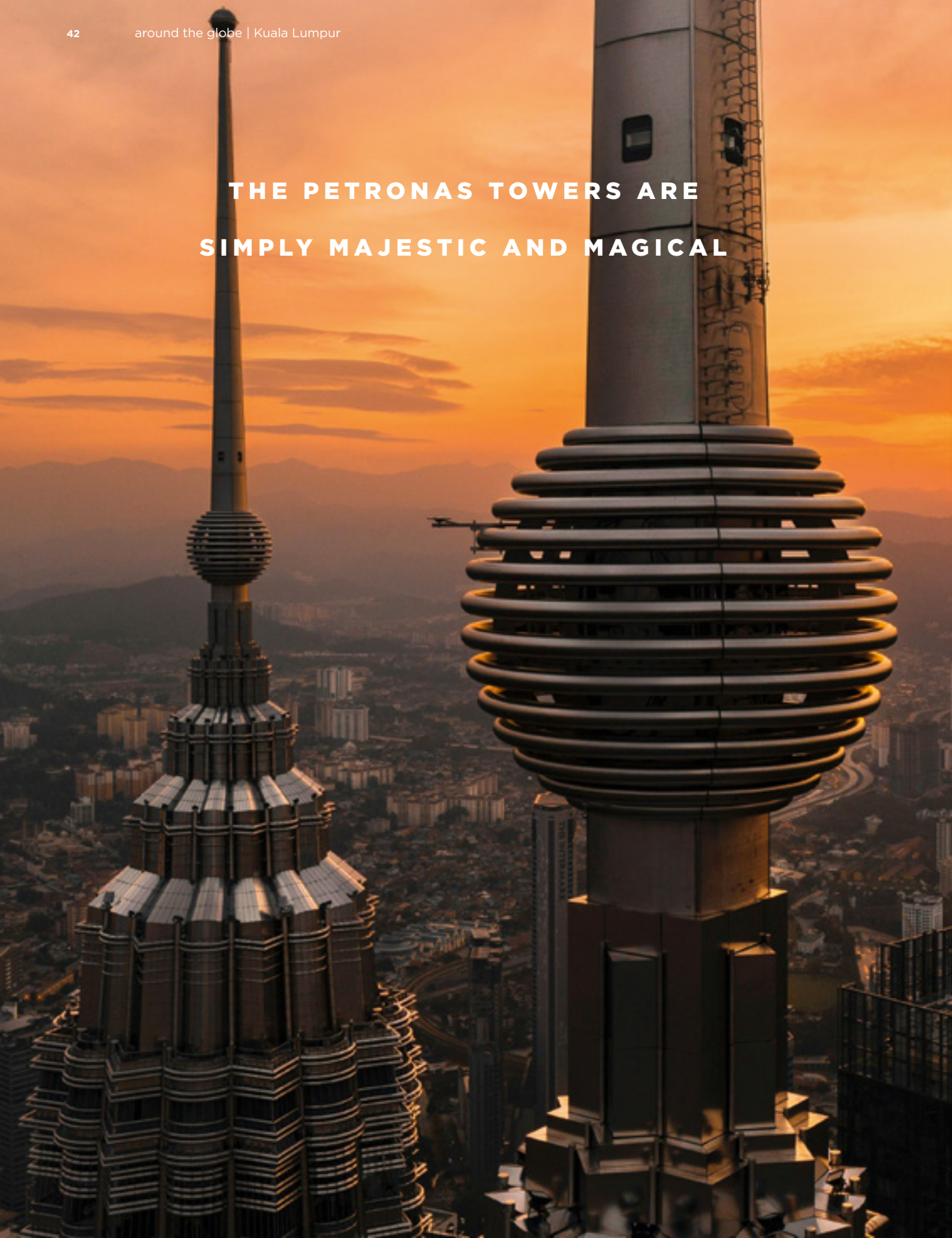
noodle soup; the

Saloma Bridge;

REXKL bookstore



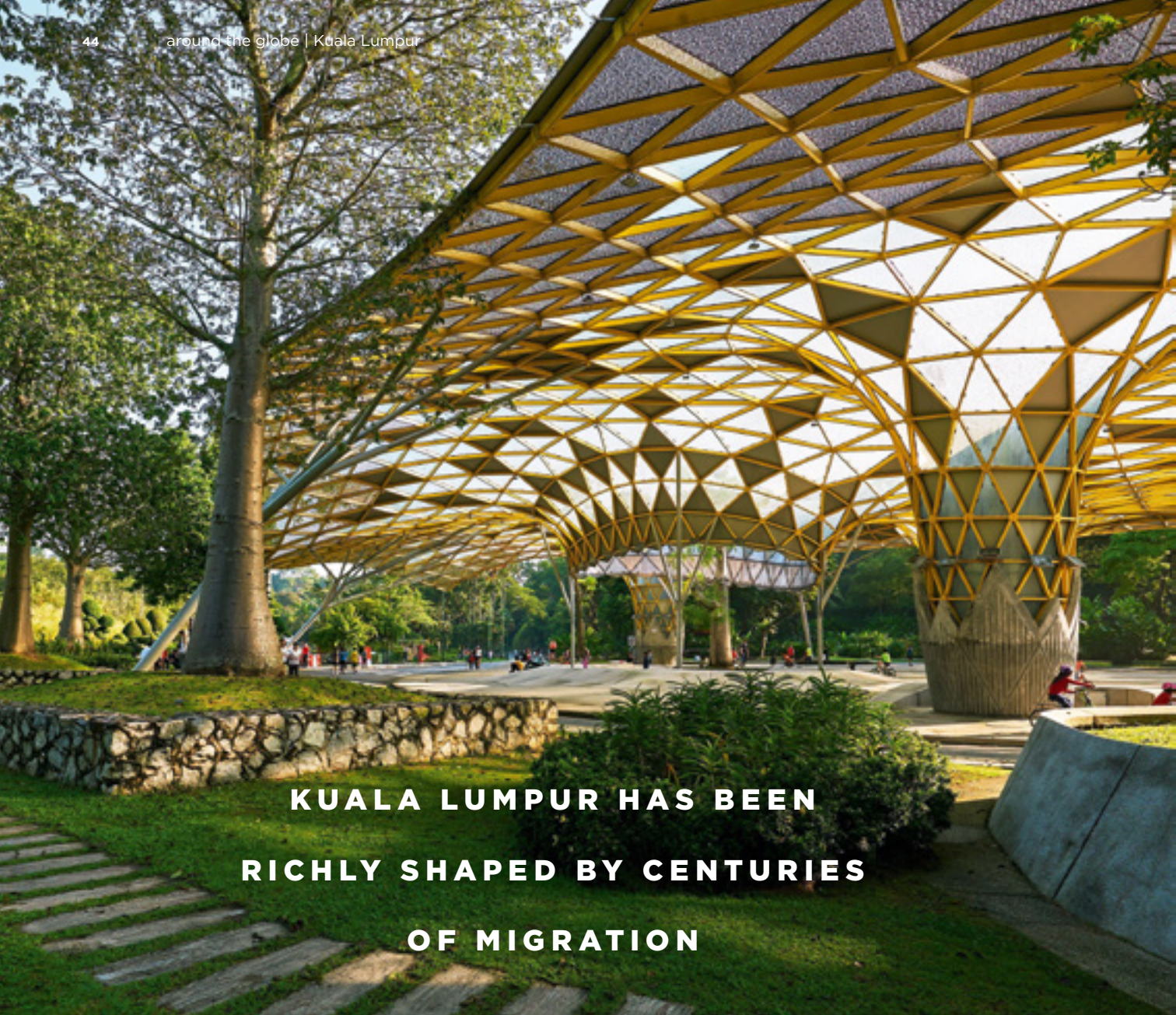
**THE PETRONAS TOWERS ARE  
SIMPLY MAJESTIC AND MAGICAL**





Lloyd Alozie / Unsplash (left), Salt in our Hair @SaltinourHair (right)

**Above** A man reading a newspaper in a shop in Chinatown  
**Left page** Drone shot of the Petronas Towers



**KUALA LUMPUR HAS BEEN  
RICHLY SHAPED BY CENTURIES  
OF MIGRATION**



views of the Petronas Towers, which Ping proudly describes as one of the city's most iconic landmarks. "They were once the world's tallest buildings and are still the world's tallest twin towers," he says before pointing to another noticeably taller and spiky-looking building. "And even though the Merdeka 118 now surpasses them, there's something about the Petronas that's simply majestic and magical. These towers are our crown jewels."

### Culture on a plate

As we make our way through parts of Chinatown and Little India, two of the city's historical neighborhoods dating back to the mid-19th century, the sights and aromas of street food stalls are abundantly present and hard to resist. From coconut-rich Malay curries and Chinese stir-fries perfected over generations, to South Indian crepes cooked on sizzling griddles: culture lives on a plate here. Early-morning *kopitiams* ('coffee stalls') serve *teh tarik* ('milk tea') and strong black coffee called *Penang kopi*, while hawker stalls prepare oyster omelets and *char koay teow* ('stir-fried noodles'). Eating out here is not so much about dining in fancy restaurants – which is also possible – but about picking up freshly made street food at any time of the day.

So, it's no wonder that the first thing my local Chinese-Malaysian friend Shereen wants to do when we meet up that night is take me out to experience some quintessential Malaysian street food at The Row KL, a strip of colonial-style 1940s shophouses that has been transformed into a lively mix of eateries, bars, and boutiques. Thanks to the juxtaposition of historic architecture with a perfect view of the Petronas Towers, the area is also becoming an increasingly popular place for the local youth to create social media content. The buildings' magic is most visible at night, when the towers light up and become a beacon of light and a convenient orientation point in the city. "For Malaysians, food is everything," Shereen explains when we sit down at one of the local

restaurants on the strip. "When you meet up with friends or family, the first thing you'll ask or be asked is, have you eaten yet? And with strangers, food is a popular topic of conversation as well. It's our way of connecting; it's like a social glue." We decide to indulge in some *nasi lemak*, a Malaysian staple that consists of rice cooked in coconut milk with pandan leaf, accompanied by five essential condiments. "It needs to have egg, cucumber, anchovies, peanuts, and most importantly, sambal," Shereen explains. "We like our food spicy, and without sambal, no meal is complete."

### Shop till you drop

The next morning, I indulge in another typical local activity: shopping. With more than 100 shopping malls scattered around the city, shopping here comes with the territory. In part due to the high average temperatures between 27 and 32 degrees, oppressive humidity year-round, and heavy downpours during the monsoon season, finding refuge in one of the many shopping malls isn't always a choice. With their food courts, cinemas, and gaming areas, shopping malls also function as social hubs here. From teenagers to families and office workers, they all convene at the mall. I make my first stop at The Exchange TRX, the city's latest mall (opened in 2023), which boasts a curated mix of international luxury brands, dining venues, and an IMAX cinema. The most appealing and unique feature of this shopping center is its TRX City Park, a green oasis on the top floor that's more reminiscent of a city park than a rooftop garden. It offers pleasant, shaded walkways, scattered picnic areas, and panoramic views of the city's skyline. When I lie down in the grass and close my eyes for a minute, I almost forget that I'm in the center of Tun Razak Exchange, KL's busy financial district. But I'm also here to shop and since I'd like to take some unique souvenirs home, I meet Shereen at GMBB, a more intimate shopping mall on Jalan Robertson, close to Chinatown's popular shopping strip: Petaling Street. »

Top Perdana Garden

Bottom from left to right Ginger, lemongrass, and turmeric are fundamental aromatics in Malaysian cuisine; Sultan Abdul Samad Building; SANTA! Pool Bar and Lounge at the RuMa Hotel

**PEOPLE ARE PROUD OF THEIR  
HERITAGE AND THERE'S A STRONG  
SENSE OF COMMUNITY HERE**

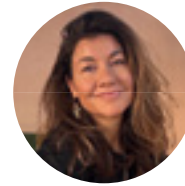


Left page  
Batu Caves

Designed as an enterprising hub for creatives, GMBB is the perfect place to shop for unique products from local artisans and independent makers. Across nine floors, I encounter pretty Malaysian batik garments, vintage clothing stores, and stylish coffee shops. “On the weekends, various workshops are organized here as well,” Shereen explains. “You can take painting classes, try woodworking, or get a Tarot card reading. It’s a fun way for the creatives here to make some money while sharing their crafts.”

With my bag full of souvenirs, I follow Shereen into a speakeasy-style bar on the same street. The entrance of Jao Tim is easy to miss, but once you step inside and head up the staircase, the hectic city life quiets down and you step back in time thanks to the bar’s Art Deco design, classic jazz music, and exposed brick walls. With a cocktail in hand and the local WVC Jazz Ensemble taking the stage as part of the bar’s ‘Table Lamp Concert’ series, I realize that pockets of beauty and serenity are plentiful in this metropolitan city. You just need to know where to find them.

On my final morning, I take a Grab taxi to Taman Tugu. This peaceful urban forest offers various hiking trails, created to preserve the city’s remaining rainforest and educate visitors about its importance. Visitors can also “adopt” a tree, supporting the park’s reforestation and maintenance efforts. The hiking trails through lush jungle vegetation are accessible to most able-bodied walkers, and there are many resting points in case you need a break. For me, the most challenging part of this excursion turns out to be the battle with the heat and humidity. While the few local walkers on the trail seem unaffected by the weather conditions, I’m constantly wiping sweat from my brow, and I’m glad I brought a bottle of water with me. Despite still being in KL, I feel as though I’m immersed in a jungle far from civilization. When I arrive at the exit after 90 minutes, I breathe a sigh of relief. Time to cool off at the mall and get a cup of *kopi*. ◀



MARIEKE VERHOEVEN, *HOLLAND HERALD*’S  
SENIOR EDITOR, FIRST VISITED KUALA LUMPUR  
15 YEARS AGO AND DISCOVERS NEW GEMS DURING  
EACH VISIT TO MALAYSIA’S CAPITAL CITY.

## To eat

### Jalan Sultan

This vibrant road in Chinatown is a great place to sample some street food. While the nearby Jalan Alor is more popular, Jalan Sultan offers a more relaxed and authentic experience. Look where the locals stand in line, have a seat on one of the plastic stools, and indulge in an oyster omelet and some *char koay teow* (‘stir-fried noodles’).

### Something Bakery

Located on the first floor of a historic shophouse on the corner of the popular Petaling Street shopping area, this bakery and coffee place is famous for its handcrafted, multi-layered crepes and premium cakes that are almost too good-looking to eat. Try the bestsellers with creative flavors such as *Genmaicha* (‘green tea’) and Black Sesame. [somethingbakery.com.my](http://somethingbakery.com.my)

### Limapulo Baba Can Cook

For those craving authentic *Peranakan* cuisine (a fusion of Chinese and Malay food), try this restaurant at The Row KL. Dishes such as *nyonyan laksa*

(‘seafood soup’) and *ayam pongteh* (‘braised chicken’) are based on family recipes. [@babacancook](https://www.instagram.com/babacancook)

## To stay

### The RuMa

Staying at this luxury hotel feels like an oasis. The stylish rooms and suites offer skyline views; there’s a cantilevered infinity pool; a serene spa area; and even a library where guests can read and enjoy an afternoon tea. [theruma.com](http://theruma.com)

### Else

Positioned in the heart of Chinatown and housed in an Art Deco building, Else is an understated boutique hotel with a modern design and a heritage feel. Its restaurant, Raw, offers tasty Asian and Latin American dishes such as tuna tostada and cauliflower tacos and is popular with the local in-crowd. [elseretreats.com](http://elseretreats.com)

## To do

### Batu Caves

This series of dramatic limestone caverns, outside the city, is home to one of Malaysia’s most important Hindu

shrines. The Batu Caves are a must-visit for their spectacular setting and spiritual meaning. Take a bottle of water and wear comfy shoes to climb the 272 steps.

### Temple visits

Some of the best options include the Thean Hou Temple complex in Seputeh, which offers panoramic city views and quiet rituals; the Sri Maha Mariamman Hindu Temple, which dates to 1873 and is one of the city’s oldest Hindu temples; and the Chinese Guan Di Temple, dedicated to Guandi, the Taoist God of War and Literature. Visitors are always welcome as long as they respect the rituals and dress codes.

Book  
this  
story



KLM operates seven nonstop flights per week to Kuala Lumpur Intl Airport from Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.

Book your flight on [klm.com](http://klm.com).

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Laurien Meuter

“  
***DON'T ASK WHAT  
 THE WORLD NEEDS;  
 ASK WHAT MAKES  
 YOU COME ALIVE***  
 ”

With the aim of breaking the cycle of poverty for homeless people in Mumbai, Laurien Meuter started Tiny Miracles. Now, 15 years later, the social enterprise has created jobs for hundreds of people and supports thousands with healthcare, education, and life-skills training. Text Charlotte Latten Photography Brenda van Leeuwen

**H**ow did Tiny Miracles come to be? In 2005, when I was working as a banker, I got the opportunity to go abroad for a year, and I chose India – a country I'd visited before where I felt very much at home. On weekends, I volunteered at a day-care shelter for drug-addicted street kids, and I found a lot of happiness in small things, such as teaching them how to brush their teeth. In 2010, when I was sitting at my desk at the bank, looking outside at people rushing from one place to another, I suddenly realized that what I was doing wasn't fulfilling me. Before I knew it, I had told my boss I was leaving for India for a few weeks. I had no plans when I arrived in the poorest area of Mumbai, where 800 people

from the Pardeshi community were living on a 150-meter strip of pavement. I thought that if the kids went to school, all the problems would be solved. Three weeks later, I'd arranged schooling for 40 girls. That's how Tiny Miracles started.

**Tiny Miracles now helps around 3,000 people. Can you take us through the foundation's journey?**

Looking back, a lot of trial and error led to where we are today. For instance, many of the girls I had gotten into school were soon taken out by their parents and sent to work. So I put effort into finding out why with a view to solving the issues that were keeping the children out of school. Besides the

obvious financial reason, I discovered that these children were tired due to health issues and weren't doing their homework. I solved every problem that arose by using my intuition and common sense. The biggest insight came when I realized that you can only empower these communities and get them structurally out of poverty when they have consistent jobs. I learned that the women in the community needed enough money so that they could spend it on the welfare of their families, such as schooling for the kids. I say “women” because, unfortunately, most of the men in this group are alcoholics and need specialized help. So we started creating jobs the women could easily do. »



### How did you accomplish that?

My cousin Pepe Heykoop was an up-and-coming designer at the time, and he developed items, such as a paper cover to turn bottles into attractive vases, that the Pardeshi people could make and that could then be sold in museums and art galleries. A few years later, having given these people new skills such as sewing and knitting, we began making bags and bracelets for Rituals. This lifestyle brand had sponsored us from the very beginning because CEO Raymond Cloosterman believed in my idea. The Rijksmuseum and Tony's Chocolonely followed as important clients. We now export three million bags a year, and we have nearly 400 people on the payroll, whom we pay above-market wages.

### Why has Tiny Miracles developed a holistic program in which awareness and happiness are important pillars?

The Pardeshi people live on the streets and are constantly in survival mode, so they take each day as it comes. I spent a lot of time on the street, observing and wondering what was stopping them



from escaping poverty. We started developing lessons based on that information. In the awareness classes, we teach them, for example, why it's important to get educated and eat healthily, but we also cover practical matters, such as how to open a bank account and apply for an ID card. By giving them knowledge and building their confidence, we want to empower them to take their future into their own hands. Happiness is also a key pillar because life needs to be enjoyed. So we go for picnics and take the kids on days out. We have several community centers. In the newest one, there's a workspace, a day-care center, and a medical facility, but we also host parties where we dance and laugh. People can be themselves there and feel seen and heard. It's like being with family. There's a quote I really love: "Don't ask what the world needs; ask what makes you come alive because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

### What are the plans for Tiny Miracles?

Now that we've created sustainable jobs by producing for big brands, we'd like to return to a more creative process. We've just started a collaboration with a famous European fashion designer who was keen to do something in India. She's currently working on making an artistic statement and other products with the Pardhi community; this group lives on the street and sells roses at traffic lights. The ultimate goal of the project – that will be launched in late spring – is to create sustainable livelihoods for this community too.

**What message do you have for young social entrepreneurs?** I think a lot of people want to contribute to a better world, but they don't know where to start, so my message is: just begin. Roll up your sleeves, take the first step, and if it makes you feel

“  
**THE PARDESHI  
 PEOPLE LIVE  
 ON THE STREETS  
 AND ARE  
 CONSTANTLY  
 IN SURVIVAL  
 MODE**  
 ”

whole and fulfilled, keep going. If you really want to make a difference, remember there will always be a level of inconvenience and discomfort along the way. It will be a bumpy ride, and you need to be prepared to endure that, but I promise the reward will be tremendous. People who were living on the pavement when I arrived in 2010 now rent an apartment. Some of the women who were kids back then now go to university. That they have those chances and that freedom of choice makes me endlessly proud. «





# Just a little makeup

AT MUSEUM VOORLINDEN



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

A vibrant color palette, distinctive signature, and an unrelenting search for new challenges – always within the realm of painting – characterize Claire Tabouret. As soon as comfort

sets in, the figurative painter seeks out a new obstacle. In her solo exhibition at Voorlinden, she paints on canvas, faux fur, plexiglass, bronze, and ceramics. No medium seems beyond her reach as she's always looking for ways to stretch the traditional boundaries of her craft. After making a series of babies with their mouths smeared with food, a thought came to her mind:

our first encounter with painting is through food, followed later by makeup. In her makeup paintings, she combines the two.

**Where and when?**

Exhibition: until May 25 2026

Address: Buurtweg 90, 2244AG Wassenaar

Opening times: museum (11 a.m.-5 p.m.);

restaurant (10.30 a.m.-6 p.m)

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](https://tickets.voorlinden.nl)

# TEMPLES OF WISDOM

In a world that grows louder by the day,  
one place remains peaceful: the library.  
Travel to these awesome athenaeums  
and become part of their story.

Text **Suzanne Stougie**





Paris, France

## RICHELIEU LIBRARY

Designed by Parisian architect Jean-Louis Pascal, and inaugurated in 1936, the iconic Oval Room of the Richelieu Library reopened in 2022 following a 12-year-long renovation that restored its Beaux-Arts splendor. Immersive interactive displays and vivid virtual-reality experiences bring this historic reading room, illuminated from above by its stunning central skylight, into the here and now, while sustainability upgrades – from energy-efficient climate control to improved insulation – make its heritage future-proof.

**Insider tip:** With 9,000 comic books from all over the world on display, this may be the world's most child-friendly library. [salleovale.bnf.fr](http://salleovale.bnf.fr)



Seoul, South Korea

### STARFIELD LIBRARY

In the midst of Seoul's buzzing Gangnam District, the vast glass atrium that is the Starfield Library appears like a mirage: an oasis of calm and light. Uniquely combining culture and couture, 13-meter-high bookshelves rise among the countless shops of the COEX Mall, creating a public forum that feels both futuristic and fun. It offers a staggering 50,000+ books, and even if you don't read Korean, you'll love Starfield for its international magazines, pop-up exhibitions, and cozy seats. It's a place where design, community, and curiosity meet, and where reading becomes a shared urban ritual. **Insider tip:** Arrive before 11 a.m. when the morning light hits the bookshelves beautifully and the café upstairs still has window-side seats available. [starfield.co.kr](http://starfield.co.kr)

Helsinki, Finland

## OODI

Oodi is Helsinki's vision for the future: a cultural hub framed by local timber and powered by renewable energy. Facing the Finnish Parliament House, its sculptural facade curves like a wave that opens not just to orderly bookshelves and airy reading areas, but also to mindful makerspaces and modern music studios. Built as an urban public space, codesigned by the city's citizens and open for all, Oodi proves that libraries can be bold, inclusive and green to boot. **Don't miss:** The public balcony on the third floor, with its stunning views over Kansalaistori Square and toward Töölönlahti Bay, is perfect for a silent sketching session or a spot of alfresco reading.

[oodihelsinki.fi](http://oodihelsinki.fi)

Prague,  
Czech Republic

## NATIONAL LIBRARY

Housed in the Old Town's Klementinum, one of the largest Baroque complexes in Europe, the National Library of the Czech Republic celebrates centuries of scholarship. The Baroque Library Hall is the most atmospheric room, where endless walnut shelves house precious historic writings, including the irreplaceable *Vyšehrad Codex*, a Romanesque gospel book. Ancient globes and lavish frescoes complete this treasure trove of a room, while the Astronomical Tower above it offers sweeping views of Prague's spires. No wonder Mozart and Einstein wandered these corridors.

**Don't miss:** The National Library's magnificent collection of musical scores, recordings, and periodicals is a must for music lovers.

[nkp.cz](http://nkp.cz)





MORALIS  
PASTORALIS

Beijing, China

## BEIJING LIBRARY

Named Public Library of the Year 2024, the Beijing Library is a modern center for culture and community. With millions of visitors and thousands of events each year, this ultra-urban space – which includes the world’s largest climate-controlled reading room – fosters connections and inspires the masses. The glass building, designed by the architects at Snøhetta, rests on slender columns that spread out into a canopy of “giant ginkgo leaves”. Beneath it are terraced indoor hills, providing seating and shelves, while robots dispense personalized reading recommendations.

**Climate credentials:** From rainwater collection to smart ventilation and solar integration, the Beijing Library was built to meet China’s greenest building standards. [bjlib.clcn.net.cn](http://bjlib.clcn.net.cn)





Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

### ROYAL PORTUGUESE CABINET OF READING

Like something out of a Harry Potter movie, the dark-wood bookcases of the Royal Portuguese Cabinet of Reading reach up past a jaw-dropping iron-and-bronze chandelier to a stunning stained-glass skylight. Built in the ornate neo-Manueline style and opened in 1887, this library is a Lusophone institution. The Cabinet of Reading also preserves some of the world's rarest and most meaningful Portuguese manuscripts, and is a gold mine for scholars, students and sightseers alike. **Insider tip:** The library is in the city center, is free to enter, and consists of just one room, so it's easy to fit into any Rio de Janeiro itinerary.

[realgabinete.com.br](http://realgabinete.com.br) (Portuguese website)

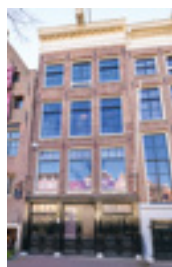
Welcome  
on board



# KLM NEWS

## KLM House

### NO. 47: ANNE FRANK HOUSE



Prinsengracht 263 is undoubtedly one of the most visited addresses in Amsterdam. This canal house is where Anne Frank and her family went into hiding during World War II. The house was built around 1635, and is located near the Westerkerk, a 17th-century church. The KLM house shows the front of the building, which faces the street. Behind it is a courtyard and the *achterhuis* ('back house'), the secret annex where the Frank family hid. The house was turned into a museum, known as Anne Frank House, which opened on May 3, 1960. It's a must-visit – be advised that tickets can be bought online only.

## New destinations

### BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS

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

#### Jersey

Jersey – which is 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 April 4, flight KL1097 will depart from Amsterdam Airport Schiphol on Saturdays, and daily flights will be available from July 4.

#### Santiago de Compostela

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



#### Oviedo

Travelers who love outdoor sports are sure to relish the majestic landscapes of the Spanish region of Asturias. Flight KL1557 now departs weekly on Saturdays and Sundays for the region’s capital, Oviedo. Daily flights will be available from July 4.

## Ask the expert



BRAND CONSULTANT ELISE MEEUWISSE ANSWERS YOUR BURNING QUESTION.

## Why is blue KLM’s brand color



KLM blue has been our signature color for 106 years. It’s visible on our aircraft, uniforms, signage, digital media, and our logo. We were inspired by the sky, and settled on blue because of its association with reliability, balance, and honesty. Over the years, our palette of blue has grown, with new tones added to keep our visual identity fresh and relevant. Today, we blend various shades and make use of rounded graphic elements to ensure that KLM customers feel welcome and valued. The iconic blue has remained at the core of our visual identity. It’s one of our most powerful brand assets.

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

✈ Your flight ticket to

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# KLM NEWS

## Memorable flight

### “We plotted a route to retrace my parents’ steps”

DIRK SCHUDAK, HIS SISTER, AND HIS WIFE TRAVELED TO MEXICO CITY TO RECOVER SOME EARLY MEMORIES.



In 1970, my parents moved to Mexico because my father, who worked for a German company, had to be stationed there until 1974. I was born in Mexico, and have always been curious about our time there. I was too young to remember, and couldn’t ask my parents as I’d lost them while I was young. My sister, Kerstin, was also curious. So in September last year, Kerstin, my wife (who’s Mexican), and I flew to Mexico City to recover a few lost

memories. I’d been before, but not recently with my sister – we hadn’t been back together since we were kids – and never with this purpose. That’s what made this trip so special. We plotted a route to retrace my parents’ steps with the help of cassette tapes on which they had recorded their experiences in Mexico for their parents in Germany. They talked about my arrival at our house after my birth and Kerstin speaking Spanish. They also

spoke of restaurants and places they’d visited. We went to many special spots, such as the hospital where I was born – it was the trip of a lifetime. The fun began on board: after our flight from Amsterdam to Mexico City, Kerstin and I recreated this photo of us on board a flight to Mexico as children.

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

## Get connected

### STAY ONLINE WITH COMPLIMENTARY WI-FI

In addition to the free messaging service that’s already available on board to Flying Blue members,



KLM is now offering all members complimentary Wi-Fi on almost half of its European fleet. This includes our 18 newest Boeing 737-800 aircraft, the Airbus A321neo, and almost all the KLM Cityhopper E2s, with more to come on other aircraft. Non-members are also able to enjoy free online access: simply sign up to the Flying Blue programme prior to departure or via the onboard portal to make the most of this perk, and other membership benefits. [flyingblue.com](http://flyingblue.com)

## 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.

**Stay hydrated:** Drink enough water in the 12 hours before departure and continue to do so during the flight. You can always ask a cabin attendant for a cup of water, or to refill your water bottle, during the flight.

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 travelers, 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



“Waste on European flights is often transported back to Amsterdam to be recycled”

Natascha Libbert (top left and right, bottom left)

## Waste matters

## LAST CALL

KLM AIMS TO HALVE WASTE PRODUCTION BY 2030 COMPARED WITH 2011. EMILY DREIJER, PURSER AND CONTENT STRATEGIST, AND TERRY CONSENHEIM, PURSER AND PROJECT LEAD FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN-FLIGHT, TELL US ABOUT THE FINAL WASTE ROUND.

### What is the final waste round?

**W** Emily: “It’s the cabin crew’s last call to passengers, asking them to hand in any waste that might be in the pockets of their seats or elsewhere around them. Many people clean out their bags as we approach our destination, or find waste after the last pick-up round, so a lot of garbage remains on the plane, and becomes the responsibility of the cleaning crew to dispose of.”

**Why is this round important?** Terry: “It supports the recycling process. The cabin crew collects waste before the end of a flight, and then the cleaning crew removes any waste left in the cabin after everyone has exited the aircraft. They often don’t have the capacity or the time to separate all the waste. So before landing, cabin crew members make their way through the plane with trolleys equipped with special bins, where two types of waste (such as tin and plastic) can be thrown into one container; this makes recycling much easier once the waste reaches the catering services station on the ground.”

**Why can’t everything be recycled?** Terry: “This isn’t KLM’s decision; it has to do with European regulations and laws regarding waste, specifically Category 1 material that’s transported into the European Union. According to these rules, any waste that contains animal by-products from outside the EU must be incinerated within 24 hours of arrival. Waste on European flights is often transported back to Amsterdam to be recycled. The rules are very different for waste on intercontinental flights.”

### How much waste stays on the plane?

**Terry:** “We don’t have exact figures, but we’ve found that about 40% of the waste collected from seat pockets by the cleaning crew is made up of PET bottles, which often have to be destroyed. During a turnaround, every minute counts, and there’s limited space and time to separate materials. As a result, unopened bottles – which make up about 20% of what we find – often can’t be recovered for reuse.”

**What happens to the waste that can be recycled?** Terry: “On European flights, we collect all kinds of bottles, soft drink cans, leftover meals, paper menus, paper cups, and cardboard packaging. Materials such as plastic, tin, and paper are easy to recycle. After a flight, the waste that’s been collected is taken to the catering services station at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, where it’s recycled or reused in several ways. PET bottles are pressed to retrieve the remaining water and the plastic is melted, while leftover food is used to create biogas.”

**How can passengers help?** Emily: “It would be great if they could hand the last of their waste to the cabin crew before landing, to ensure that it’s recycled. Also, for flights within the EU, we encourage passengers to ask the cabin crew to refill their plastic bottles and take them with them when they disembark – water tends to be expensive at the airport. Another thing to keep in mind is that the less waste the cleaning crew has to dispose of, the quicker the aircraft will be ready for its next flight.”



Emily Dreijer, Purser and Content Strategist (left), and Terry Consenheim (right), Purser and Project Lead for Sustainability In-flight.

**Left page:** Cabin crew collecting waste

# KLM FLEET

## Specifications

## BE THERE AND BE SQUARE

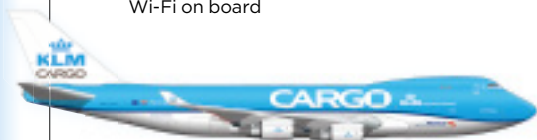


Added to the fleet in 2012, the A330-300s are among KLM's biggest aircraft. If you're flying from Amsterdam to Boston, Lagos or Calgary, you may be in one. These aircraft are named after famous squares: New York's Times Square, Rome's Piazza Navona, Havana's Plaza de la Catedral, Lisbon's Praça do Rossio, and Rotterdam's Hofplein.



### 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: **381/286**  
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**



### 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

### 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



### Boeing 737-800/700

Number of aircraft: **28/6**  
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



### 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**



### Airbus A321neo

Number of aircraft: **14**  
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 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**



Landing gear lever

## UPS AND DOWNS

“This photo shows the landing gear lever of an Airbus A321neo, located in the flight deck,” explains Remon Moolenaar, Test Runner and Ground Engineer. “After takeoff, the pilot retracts the landing gear by moving the lever up. Before landing, the pilot extends the landing gear by moving the lever down, which is indicated by the arrow. If the landing gear is not down and locked, the arrow will turn red. The brush-like strip you can see at the base of the lever prevents debris from accumulating in the slot around the lever. What I find funny is that the landing gear lever resembles the nose landing gear – you can even see the little ridges in the ‘wheels’ of the handle.”

# TRAVELERS



Jan &amp; Guo



## “I’d love to see it while it’s still in pristine condition”

JAN MEIJERS AND CHUNLING GUO TRAVELING TO SHANGHAI ON FLIGHT KL895

**Reason for travel?** Jan: “For work. I work in the engineering sector, and we’ll be in China for a month. We’ll mostly be traveling around the country for our work, but we’ll also be taking a weekend to visit a few islands.”

Guo: “Such as Xiushan Island. It’s supposed to be beautiful.”

**Still on your travel bucket list?**

Jan: “The African continent – Nigeria or Kenya. I’d love to be able to do a safari and see the Big Five. But first, we’re going to Sicily.”

Guo: “The Maldives. I’d love to see it while it’s still in pristine condition. It looks so beautiful, from what I’ve seen online.”

**Who’s your dream passenger to sit next to?**

Jan: “Klaas. He was our Labrador and died a few months ago; we miss him very much.”

Guo: “My family – everyone. I’d love to be able to take them with me, show them as much as possible.”

Snehesh

SNEHESH NAG  
TRAVELING TO NEW DELHI  
ON FLIGHT KL871

**Reason for travel?** “I’m en route from Dallas to New Delhi. I’ll be visiting family in Kolkata, where I’m from. I’ll also be performing in New Delhi, which is why I’m carrying my travel sitar. After that, I’ll be touring in Australia for a few weeks, and will then return to Kolkata before heading back to Dallas.”

**Still on your travel bucket list?**

“There are so many places. Like Iceland – the northern lights have been on my list for a while. I haven’t seen much of Europe either, so maybe Spain. I’d love to experience their culture, religions, and food.”

**Who’s your dream passenger to sit next to?**

“I just watched the Bob Dylan film; he’s a hero of mine. I don’t know if I’d want to sit next to him for an entire flight; I might embarrass myself. So maybe I’d swap him for a friend that I’d take to Spain with me. I don’t have a particular one in mind. I’d like to take them all.”



David &amp; Colleen

DAVID AND COLLEEN  
GAWTHORPE TRAVELING TO  
BIRMINGHAM ON FLIGHT KL1047

**Reason for travel?** David: “We just came back from Bonaire, where we’ve been going for the past 20 years.”

Colleen: “David was scuba diving, but unfortunately my insurance won’t cover me for that now, so I read a lot and lounged on the beach.”

**Still on your travel bucket list?**

David: “We’re lucky and get to travel quite extensively, so there aren’t many places that we haven’t seen.

We’re currently planning a big trip back to Australia and New Zealand.”

Colleen: “I was born in India, and I enjoy going to Kolkata whenever I can. My sister lives in South Africa, and my niece lives in Zambia, so I get to travel to Africa a lot too.”

**Who’s your dream passenger to sit next to?**

Colleen: “I used to enjoy talking to younger passengers during flights. But nowadays, everyone seems a little closed off when they travel. I’d like to have one of those conversations again.”

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Flying Blue is the loyalty programme of



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### My Miles



**“I always use my Miles on extra tickets”**

THANKS TO THE MILES HE'S NOTCHED UP, PETER VERHAGE IS ABLE TO TAKE HIS WIFE ALONG ON BUSINESS TRIPS.

For the past 43 years, I've worked in industrial packaging. While this might not sound like an industry that requires much travel, I have to make two trips a month. I used to travel even more often before the pandemic. My business trips take me all over the world – from South Africa to Mexico and China. I often fly KLM, and since discovering that I could earn even more Miles if I arranged accommodation via Booking.com,

I've been booking my stays through them. This has allowed me to rack up quite a few Miles, which I always use on extra tickets, often for my wife. I like bringing her along on business trips because it gives her an opportunity to see some of the destinations I visit. One of our most recent trips was to China. I had to be in Shanghai on business, so I used my Miles to book a ticket so that my wife could join me for my last few

days there. I was also happy that she was able to access the Business Class lounge, where she could wait comfortably for her flight. The next tickets I plan to purchase with my Miles will be to Indonesia or Vietnam. Those countries are still on our bucket list.

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



Shanghai, China

# ONBOARD ENTERTAINMENT

*Wicked: For Good* has  
all the ingredients  
for a satisfying finale

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 programs 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](http://entertainment.klm.com) for the full listing before your next trip. For now, sit back, relax and enjoy your journey.

Our pick



## WICKED: FOR GOOD

A stellar cast and a Broadway hit since 2003, *Wicked: For Good* has all the ingredients for a satisfying finale. Director Jon M. Chu returns with a confident second chapter that prioritizes emotional fallout over spectacle. Elphaba (Cynthia Erivo), now branded “wicked”, lives on the margins while pushing back against the Wizard’s (Jeff Goldblum) propaganda. Glinda (Ariana Grande), positioned as his polished symbol of “goodness”, wrestles with ambition, guilt, and loyalty. The result is a glossy, bittersweet build toward an inevitable reckoning.

Musical, 2h17min

Films

## WATCH IT NOW



© 2025 20th Century Studios.

### Ella McCay

Drama, 1h55min

Emma Mackey plays Ella McCay, a lieutenant governor whose world is turned upside down when her mentor steps down as governor, forcing her to take over. She must then navigate the pressures of leadership while balancing public duty with a complicated private life.



© 2025 20th Century Studios.

### Is This Thing On?

Drama, 2h1min

Loosely based on English comedian John Bishop’s life, this film follows Alex (Will Arnett) and Tess (Laura Dern), who, after years of marriage, decide to separate. One night, Alex signs up to perform at a comedy club – a choice that sets him on an unexpected new path.



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### Song Sung Blue

Musical, 2h12min

When Mike (Hugh Jackman) and Claire (Kate Hudson) team up, sparks fly. Claire has experience as a Patsy Cline tribute performer, and together they pivot to a Neil Diamond tribute act, finding success as their partnership onstage starts to reshape their lives off it.

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 3D graphics, this golf version will give you all the thrills of the game from the comfort of your own seat.

TV

## IN CASE YOU MISSED THEM...



### Pipe Dream

Documentary, 47min

A look at the creations of artist Theo Jansen, who has been making beautiful, wind-driven, animal-like “Strandbeests” – using PVC pipes – on the beaches of the Netherlands since 1990. But will he succeed in his quest to make his artworks self-sufficient?



© 2025 NBCUniversal.

### Matteo Lane: The Al Dente Special

Comedy, 57min

Comedian Matteo Lane began his career in bars around Chicago before reaching a wider audience via appearances on *The Late Show* with Stephen Colbert and *Late Night* with Seth Meyers. Five specials later, it’s clear Lane knows what he’s doing.



© ESPN/ESPN.com.

### The Power of Pickleball

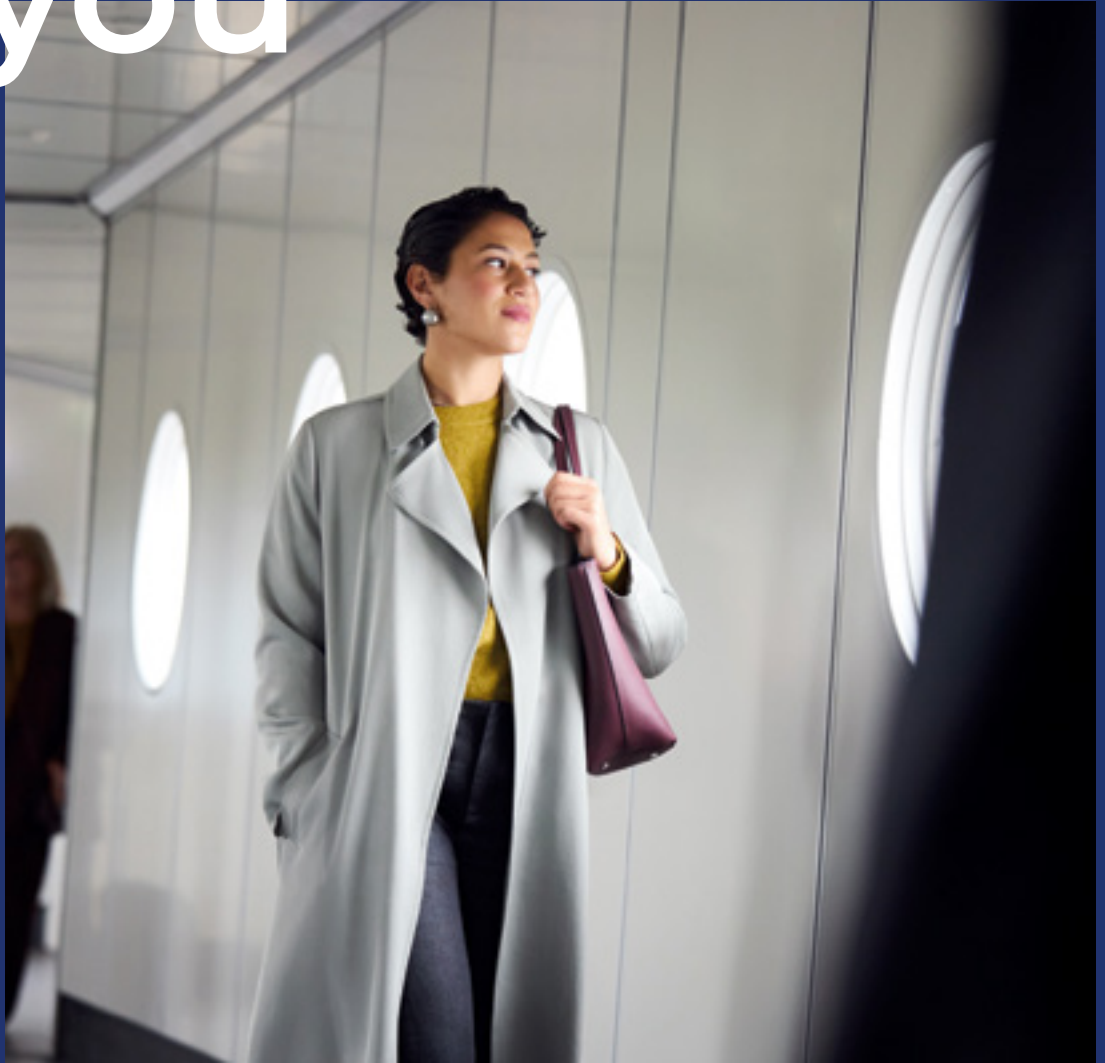
Sport, 1h25min

This documentary traces how a backyard game invented in 1965 – played with a plastic ball – grew into a nationwide hit uniting generations. It explores the people, passion, and communities behind America’s fastest-growing sport.

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# SKYTEAM

Innovation and connection

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For more than 25 years, SkyTeam has made global travel smoother and better connected. Guided by our founding promise of “caring more about you”, our digital innovation puts passengers at the center of every experience – ensuring your journey is as enjoyable as your destination. With industry-leading technology, our alliance of 18 member airlines offers you a smarter and more rewarding way to travel.

### Seamless check-in

When your trip involves connecting across multiple members on the same

itinerary, our goal is to make the experience feel effortless. With SkyTeam's industry-leading seamless check-in technology, you can check in for eligible multi-carrier trips through the website or app of your preferred member airline. Boarding passes for all your connecting flights are issued digitally, allowing you to skip the lines and head straight to security – saving valuable time.

### Smarter rewards

Did you know that you only need one member loyalty account to earn and redeem miles across all 18 airlines in

our alliance? SkyTeam technology connects our member airlines' loyalty programs, making it simple to start earning toward rewards such as flights and other perks. SkyTeam Elite and Elite Plus status also unlock a number of traveler benefits, including priority services, extra baggage, and access to hundreds of lounges worldwide. To check which benefits apply to your next trip, use our Loyalty Benefits Calculator on [skyteam.com](http://skyteam.com).

### Reliable bag tracking

Few things disrupt a trip more than a missing bag. That's why SkyTeam is investing in new technology to transform baggage tracking across our global network. In the future, travelers will benefit from real-time baggage updates, even when connecting between different member airlines. With access to more accurate information from check-in to arrival, you can travel with greater confidence and peace of mind.

Wherever you're headed, you can rely on our innovative technology working behind the scenes to get you there with ease.

SkyTeam is the 18-member airline alliance. Find out more about news, services, and upcoming events at [skyteam.com](http://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, takeoff, 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 **video recording** of any person on board without their explicit consent is not allowed.

## Lithium batteries

**Cell 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](http://klm.com) for more information.

## Carry-on baggage at EU airports

To increase passenger safety, security rules for carry-on baggage are in place for all flights in accordance with EU 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 100 ml

and packaged in a resealable, transparent plastic bag (maximum volume 1 liter, 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](http://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. Traveling to the US? Only bring liquids on board bought and sealed at Schiphol. Transfer in the US or Canada? Pack your liquids in your checked baggage.

## 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](http://connect.klm.com)  
Or scan the QR code



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# EUROPE



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

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

SkyTeam member

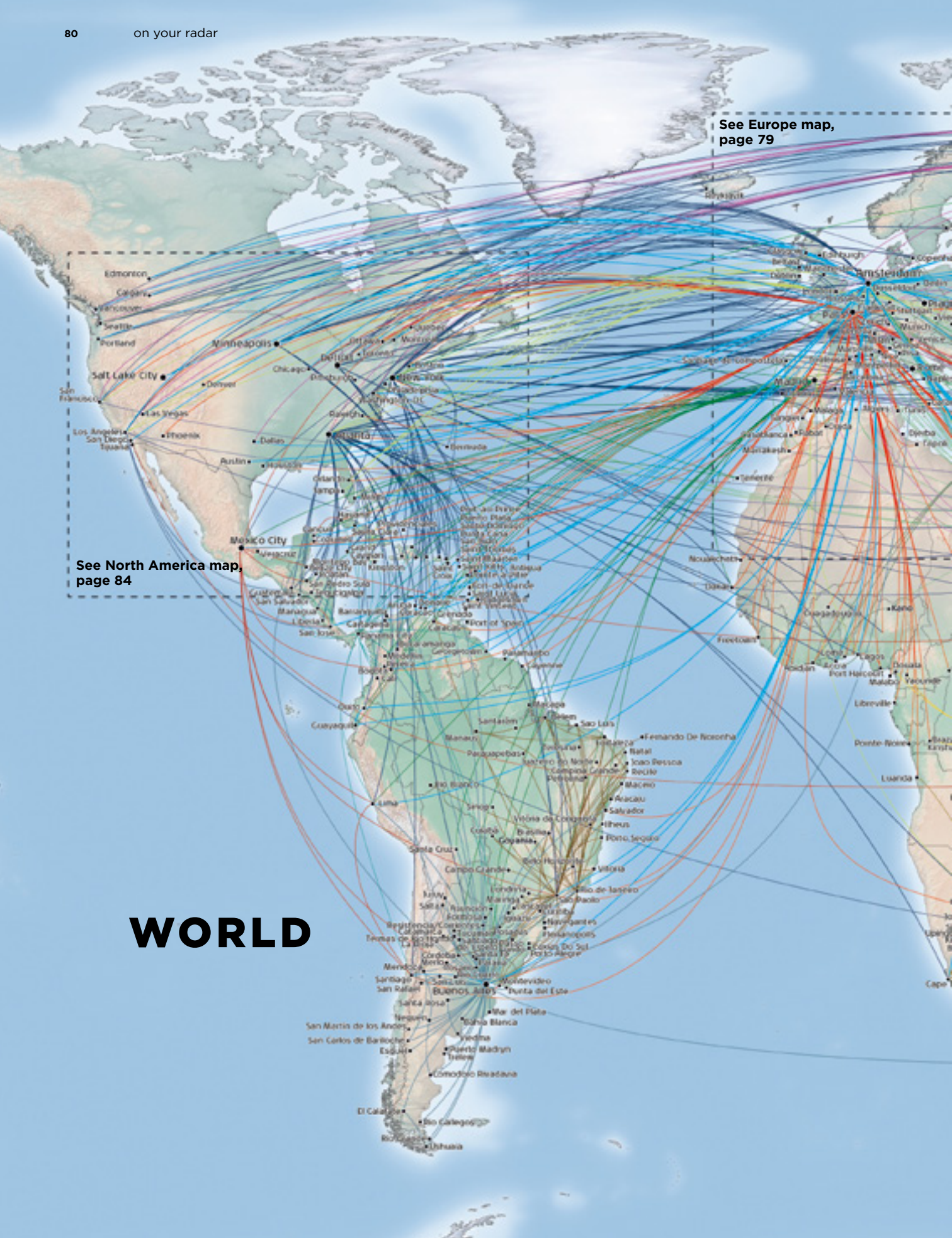
See World Map for intercontinental flights, page 80

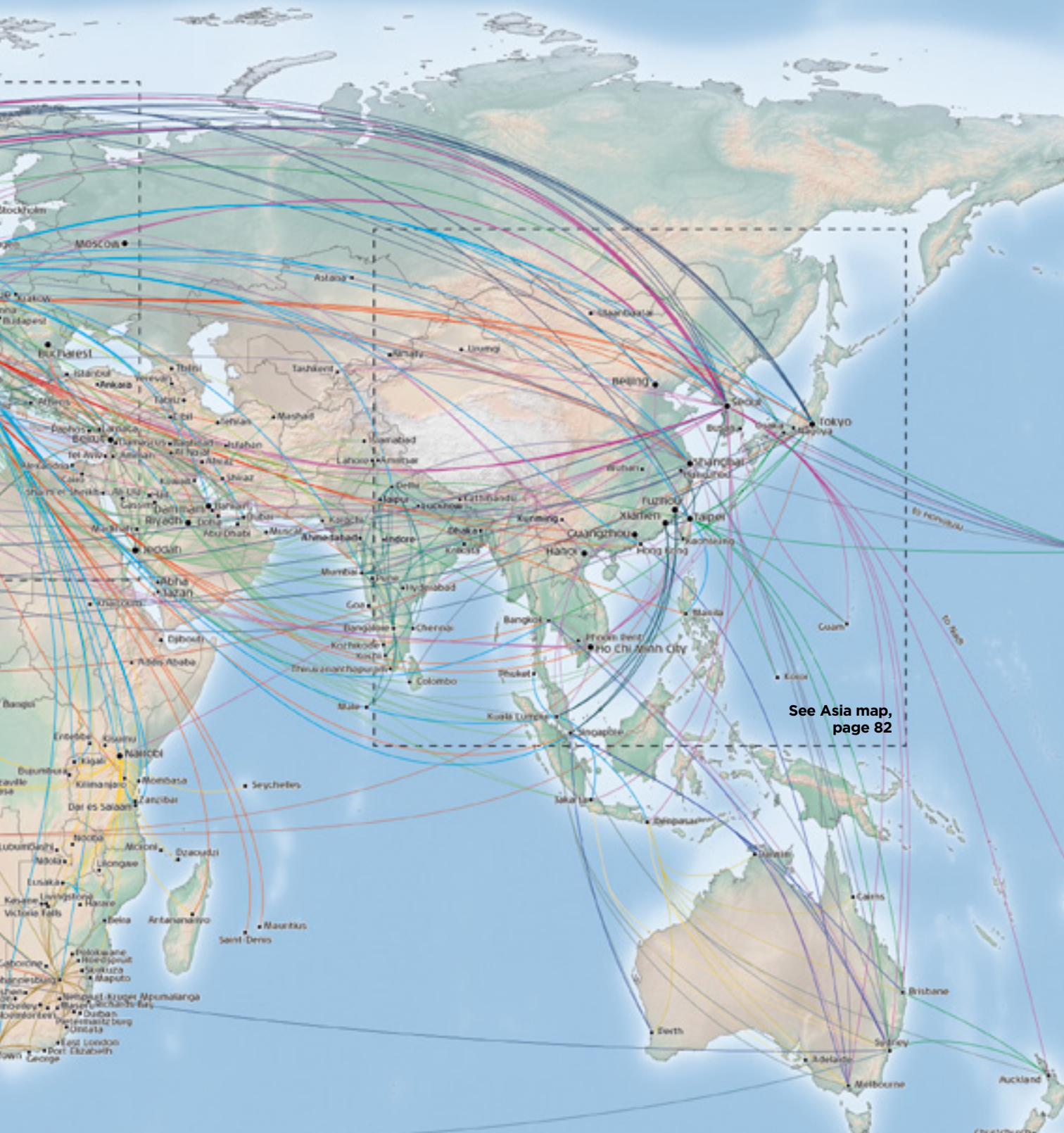
The lines are illustrative and do not represent the actual routes taken by the aircraft. We do not currently fly over Russia or Ukraine.

See Europe map,  
page 79

See North America map,  
page 84

# WORLD





See Asia map, page 82

- |  |                       |                   |                 |                      |                  |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>KLM, SkyTeam and select code-share partner routes</b> | KLM                   | Air Link          | Indigo          | Middle East Airlines | Vietnam Airlines |
|  | Aerolíneas Argentinas | China Airlines    | Jetstar Airways | Qantas               | Virgin Atlantic  |
|  | Aeroméxico            | China Eastern     | Kenya Airways   | Saudia               | XiamenAir        |
|  | Air Europa            | COPA Airlines     | Korean Air      | TAROM                |                  |
|  | Air France            | Delta Air Lines   | GOL             | Transavia            |                  |
|  | Garuda Indonesia      | Malaysia Airlines | Winair          | 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](http://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
- Vientiane
- Yangon
- Sukhothai
- Da Nang
- Bangkok
- Saigon
- Phnom Penh
- Hanoi
- Ho Chi Minh City
- Phuket
- Koh Samui
- Krabi
- Lombok
- Denpasar
- Medan
- Kuala Lumpur
- Singapore
- Riyadh

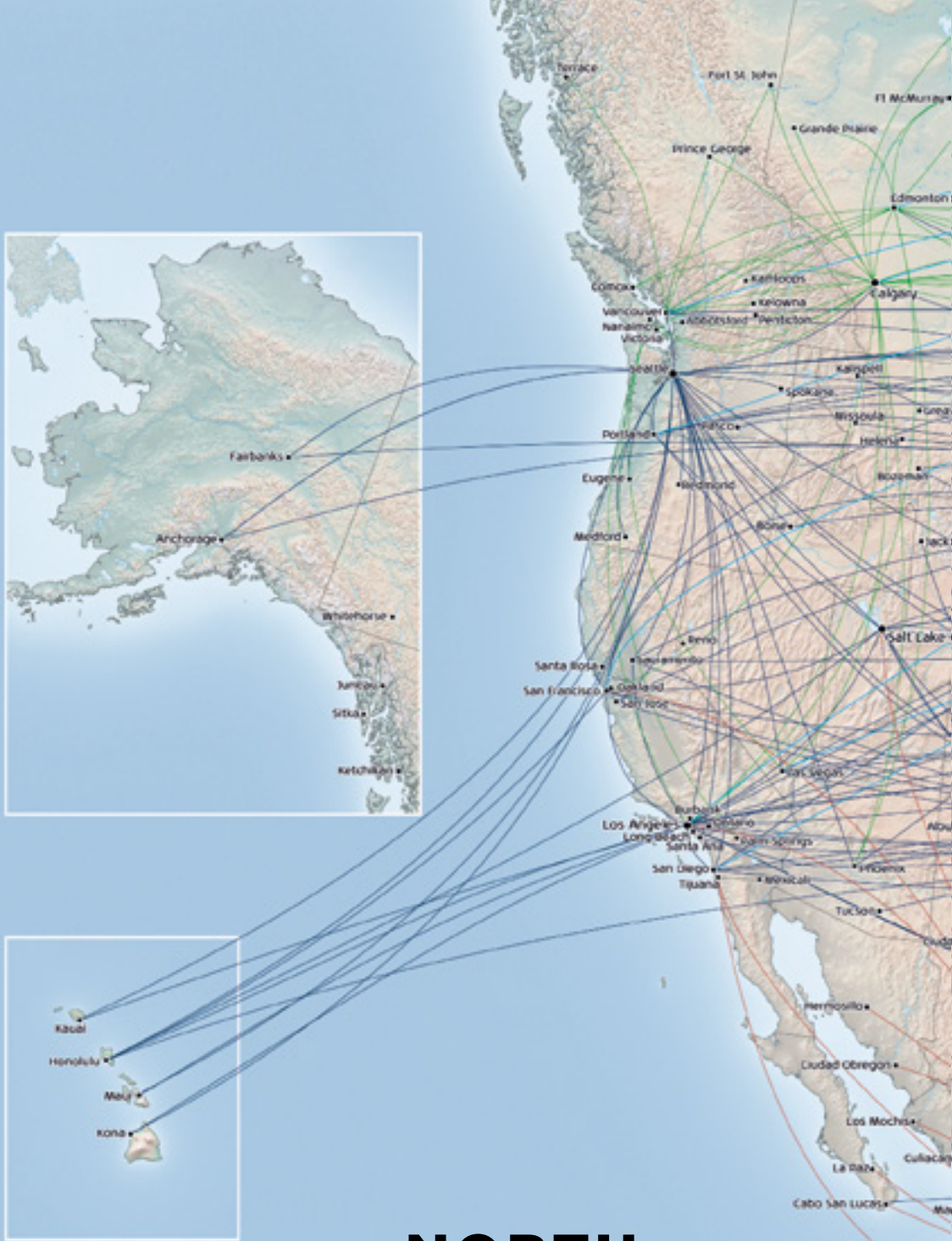


**KLM routes, KLM code-share routes and other SkyTeam destinations in Asia.**

- 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.



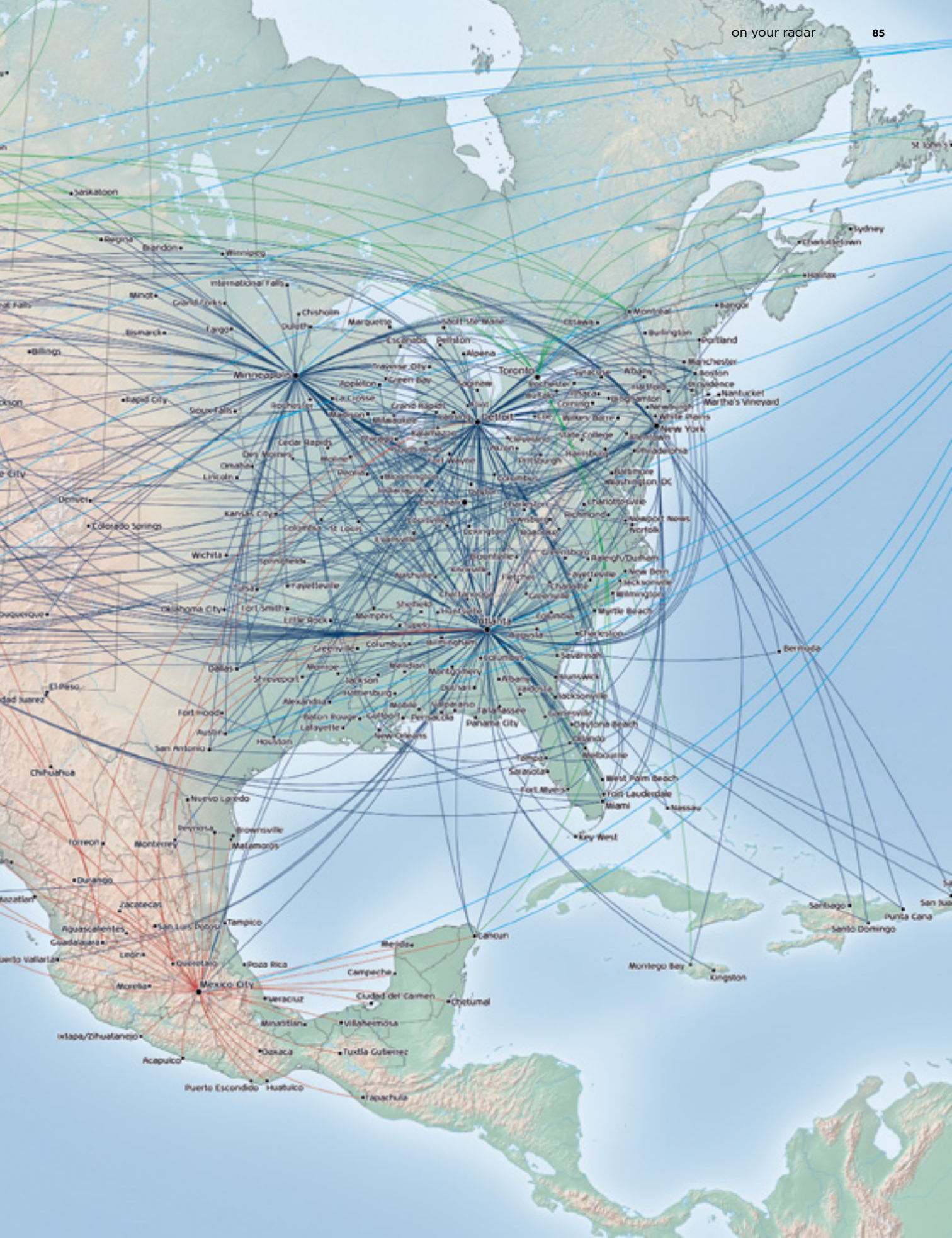
# NORTH AMERICA

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

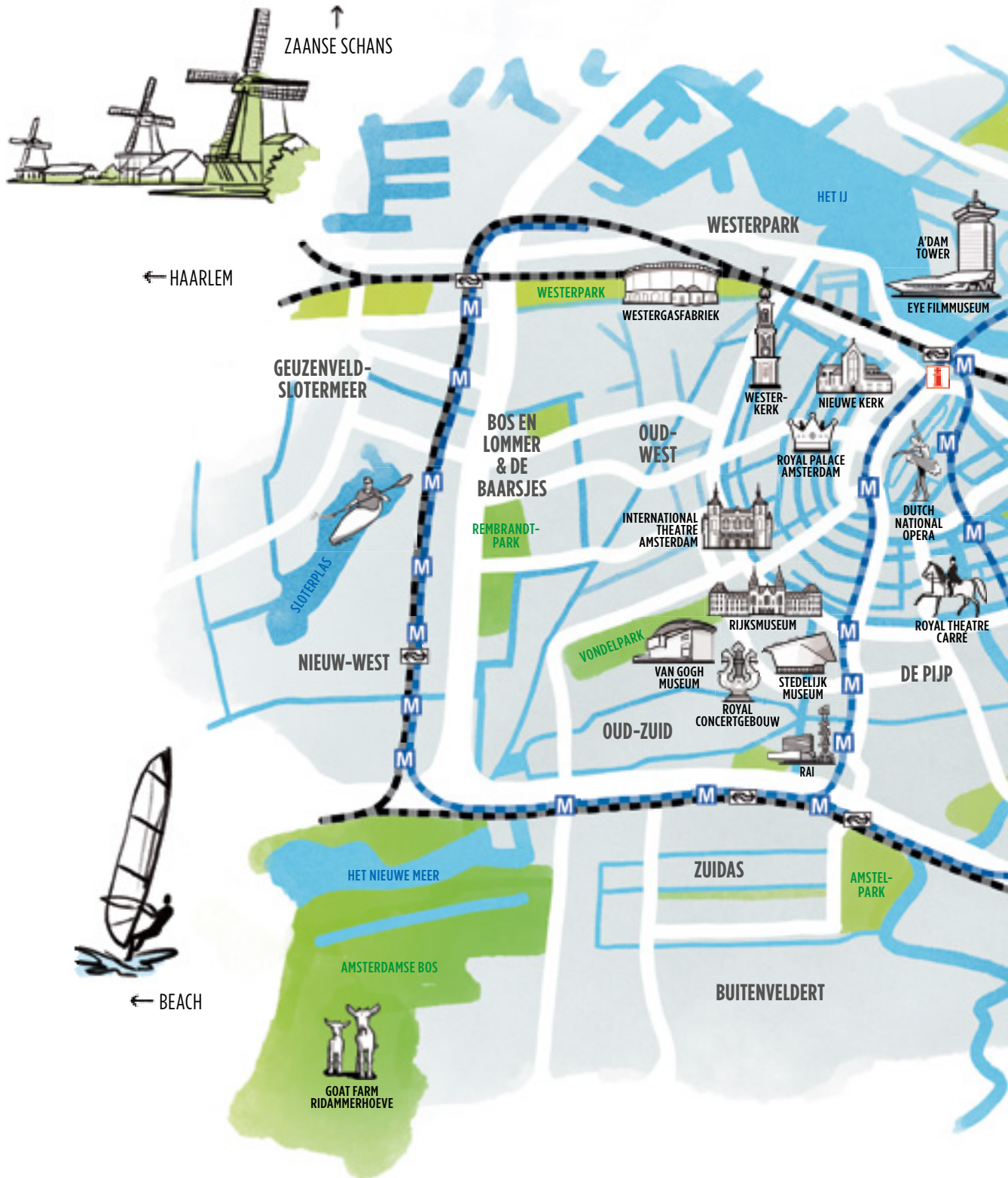
- KLM
- Aeroméxico
- Delta Air Lines
- WestJet

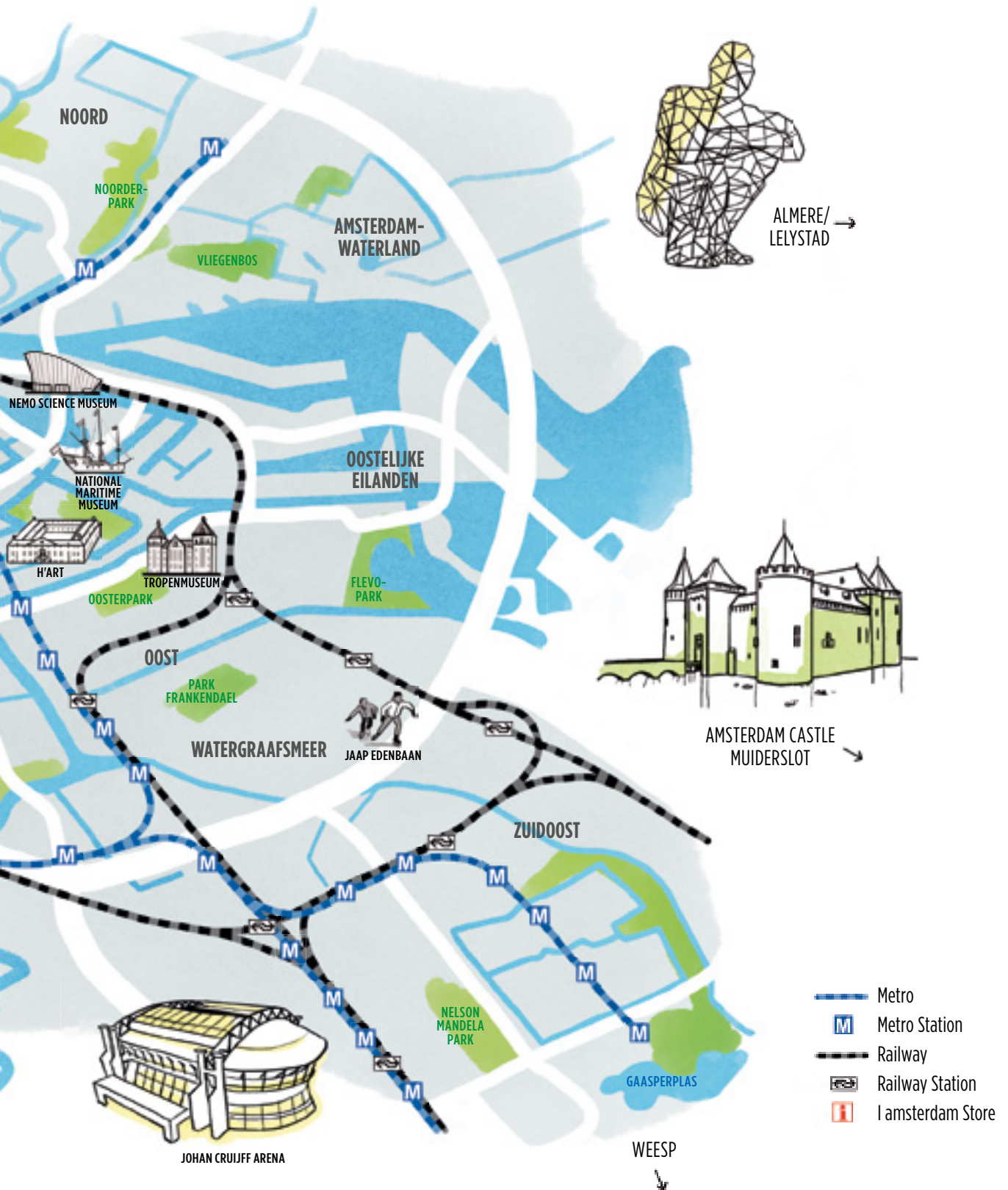
SkyTeam member

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



# AMSTERDAM

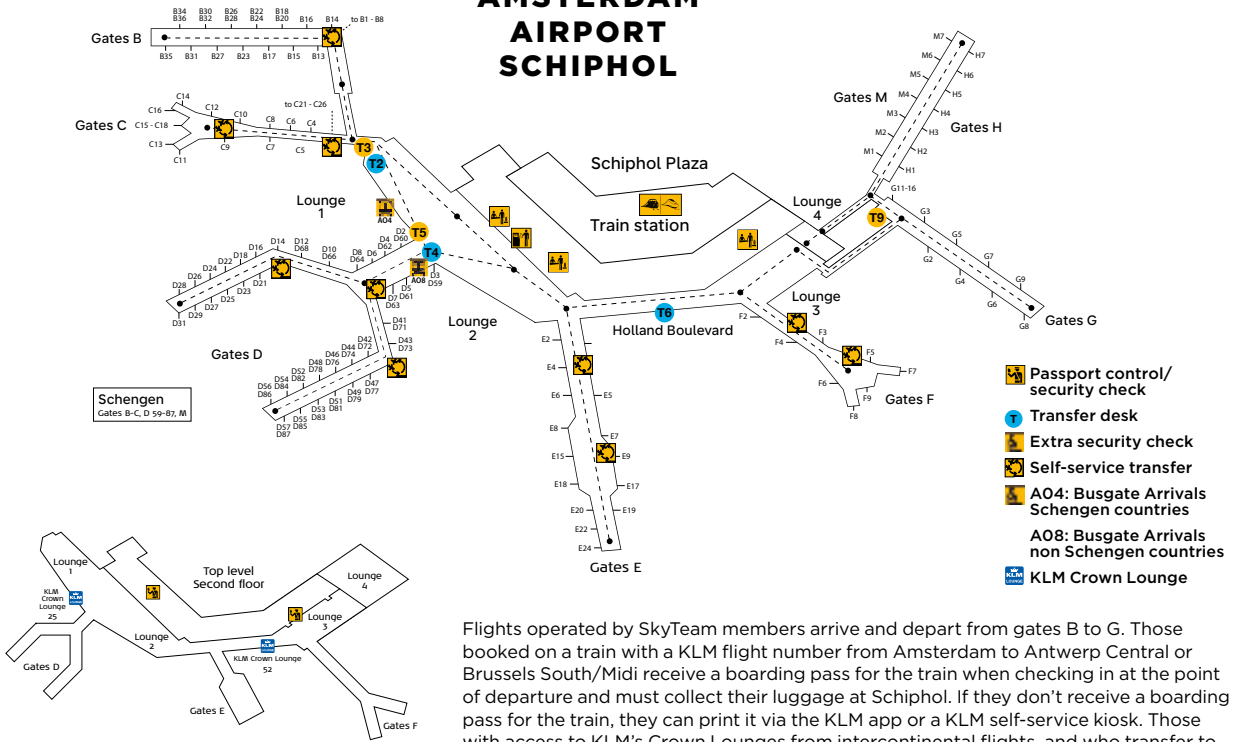




# AIRPORT MAPS

The Netherlands

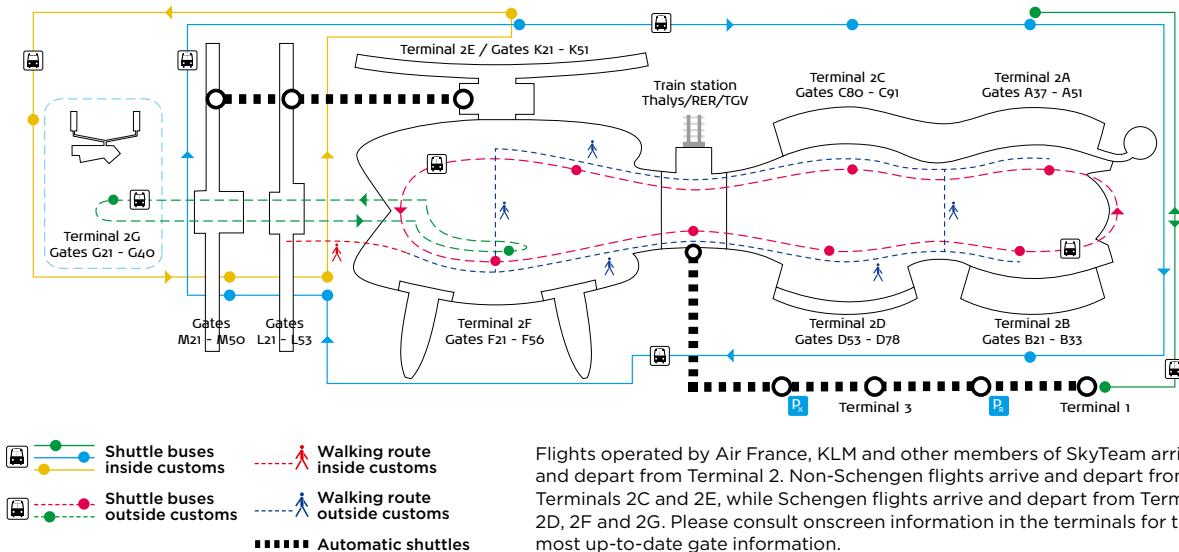
## AMSTERDAM AIRPORT SCHIPHOL



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



Timothy Druiventak

TIMOTHY IS A DIGITAL LEARNING CONSULTANT WHO PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF KLM'S WORKFORCE.

**What does your job entail?**

Together with a team of six other colleagues, I keep an eye on the digital learning environment for KLM employees. We don't develop digital modules; rather, we focus on digital learning tools. I think of us as gardeners, and the training software as the vegetables in our garden. We maintain the garden – KLM's digital platform 'My Learning' – so that employees can cherry-pick the training and tools they need.

**What kind of training is on offer?** There are modules for all departments. We're always looking for more mechanical staff, so training them is a priority. There's also cabin crew training, and safety and compliance training for office staff, as well as hospitality modules and guidance on how to work from home securely, among others.

**Did you always want to work in the aviation industry?** Yes, and in the military too. I studied at the Dutch Royal Military Police Training, Education and Knowledge Centre in Apeldoorn, then worked at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol for six years as a border officer before specializing in learning and development. I love what I do – seeing someone's face light up after they learn a new skill never gets old.

**“We maintain KLM's digital platform, ‘My Learning’”**

# BARBADOS



## Wildlife

At the Barbados Wildlife Reserve, visitors are free to roam around the woods and view wildlife such as deer and peacocks. There are also iguanas, turtles, and tortoises to see. A highlight is observing the resident Barbados Green Monkeys up close during feeding time in the afternoon.

## Cou-cou

Traditional Bajan food has both British and African influences, with several dishes centered around fish. *Cou-cou*, a savory dish made of cornmeal and okra, served alongside flying fish, is a favorite, and is the national dish of Barbados.

## 28°C

With an average daily temperature of 28°C, nine hours of sunshine, and, still within the dry season, April is the perfect time to visit Barbados. While it cools down slightly during the evenings, the temperature is still comfortable enough to enjoy outdoor activities.

## 80

There are more than 80 beaches here, and they're ideal for both swimming and snorkeling, which is the best way to take in the impressive marine life. Crane Beach, one of the top beaches in the Caribbean, is only a 30-minute drive from the capital, Bridgetown.

## Culture

The island's rich culture and history is reflected in its museums and galleries. Join a walking tour of the Garrison area, part of Historic Bridgetown, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to learn about the British military's occupation of Barbados, which began in the 17th century. Or visit the Gallery of Caribbean Art, which showcases artists from across the region.

## 1703

After the British claimed Barbados in the name of King James I in 1625, they found that sugar cane – a particularly lucrative crop at the time – grew well on the island. The invention of rum, made from sugar cane, led to the opening of the Mount Gay Rum Distillery in 1703. Today, the distillery is the oldest continuously operating rum distillery and is open to visitors.

# MR MARVIS



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Play Every Day with the perfect shorts from MR MARVIS. This season, we're introducing The Short Weekenders: structured canvas shorts with a slightly shorter cut for a relaxed look. Familiar favourites like The Originals – we're celebrating their 10th anniversary this year – as well as The Piqués and The Short Linens return in new colours. Complete your look with our polos, shirts and knitwear. Timeless design, made in Portugal. Shop now on [mrmarvis.com](https://mrmarvis.com) or in our brand stores.





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ATELIER - JEWELRY - WATCHES



BY APPOINTMENT TO THE COURT  
OF THE NETHERLANDS