

# wallpaper

  
**LATEST ISSUE**  
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WALLPAPER\* GETS ABOVE ITS STATION

TRAVEL DIRECTIVES FOR APRIL 2002 – our take on what’s working and what’s not in the world of travel

WORKING

Until the UK and US governments can solve their ‘open skies’ dispute (see *Not Working*), the Icelandic flag carrier offers transatlantic business class service for a fraction of the price and happily condones three-hour layovers for a quick dip in the Blue Lagoon.

Hydraulic lavatory doors in Heathrow Express keep hands germ-free on the 15-minute journey to and from Paddington.

Moving luggage icons at Schiphol baggage terminals.

PrivatAir may be Switzerland’s best-kept secret for luxury first-class travel. With on-board amenities such as a spacious restaurant, a cosy salon and a bedroom to retire to on long-haul flights, the \$25,000 a day price tag (excluding flying time) seems more than fair.

The Friday night dining cars on the Rhätische Bahn from Chur to St Moritz.

NOT WORKING

Open skies above the Atlantic. Fears of losing shares in their own markets have made attempts by both the UK and US governments to liberalise their air space and allow competitors to tap into the lucrative Heathrow-US line direct half-hearted and sadly unsuccessful.

Duty-free kiosks situated near departure gates at Frankfurt International make for a sad last impression of one of Europe’s best airports.

Business class on British Midland. Three rows of economy-style seats separated from the rest of the cabin by a small curtain and food that’s only slightly better than economy doesn’t earn the right to be called business class.

Competing iris-scan technologies at various European and US airports. What we need is a single, global system rather than various companies

vying for market hegemony, inevitably affecting service, safety and convenience. Someone (the IATA, for example) should step in and establish international standards ASAP.

TRAIN GANG

Eyes in Asia may be on Maglev’s inaugural \$66m project, due to debut in Shanghai next year, but more practical tigers have already made airport transfers easier. Singapore recently extended its MRT service to Changi International, whisking you from baggage claim to your Raffles suite in just 30 minutes. And in April Malaysia will unveil its KLIA Express rail-air link, halving the journey to town.

CRUISE CONTROL

When it comes to A-grade drinking establishments, Sydney’s waterside venues are par none. New addition Cruise, a bar, restaurant and cocktail lounge, is no exception. Upstairs you can enjoy fabulous views of the Opera House, while downstairs Jeremy Lord’s huge light wall distracts barflies with its array of pink, orange and yellow lights that respond to sound and movement.

CARRIE HUTCHINSON  
Cruise, Sydney Cove, The Rocks, tel: 61.2 9251 1188

DISH THE DIRT

True to its name, Hamburg’s lunch café Gerüchteküche, aka Gossip Kitchen, is the city’s unabashed ode to slander and hearsay. The homey interior, designed by sculptor Florian Borkenhagen, is fitted with chatter boxes and a post-it column to stay one step ahead of *Bild*. And on the food menu, tempting tidbits include freshly baked bread, salads and a varied selection of home-made soups.

Gerüchteküche, ABC-Strasse 19, Hamburg, tel: 49.40 30 99 97 83

OVEN READY

Proving that restaurants can be kinetic environments is Oven, a new multifunctional venue in Barcelona, where mobile screens and stages transform the space into restaurant, dance floor and bar. Pure lines and half-tiled walls contrast with the deep red modular sofas and organic ball light designed by Antonio Arola. It’s all tidied off with art projections, DJ sessions and a tasty menu.

MONICA CUENDA  
Oven, Ramon Turró Street 126, Barcelona, tel: 34.93 221 08 30

SPY GAMES

Minox’s new pocket binoculars make playing I Spy from the balcony of the Royal Opera House delightfully mischievous. The ultra-compact, all-metal design makes for an extremely lightweight and shake-free companion, but most exciting is the advanced technical spec, including a porro-prism which offers six times the magnification and an (apparently more impressive than it sounds) 6.1 degree field of view.

Minox BD 6x20 CP, £149, www.minox.com

