Lato Radeviča: Making a nation proud

Manor from heaven

Lato gale’s heart and soul

Shine a light

Ineta Radeviča: Making a nation proud

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The easiest way to Scandinavia and Germany
Riga Circus is one of the oldest permanent circuses in the world. The circus, as we know it today, can trace its roots to Roman times, when gigantic arenas were con-

The house is located in a quiet area of exclusive villas in Yuvari on the shore of the sea and next to the pine forest. It is fully furnished and ready for living. 620 sq. m., Land 2 878 sq. m. EUR 3 000 000.

The house has elegant and modern design – wooden facade, Siberian larch windows, bamboo flooring and Italian kitchen furniture with stone worktop. 669.2 sq. m., Land 2 136 sq. m. EUR 3 500 000.

The club-type house “Bellevue” is projected by the worldwide known architect Meinhard von Gerkan. The project is located near the nature park, right next to the beach. 164.9 sq. m. EUR 1 620 000.

Jurmala

Several apartments are available in this building. The house is a fully renovated Art Nouveau building, which has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage list. 164.4 sq. m. EUR 597 100.

The apartment in a new modern building in the center of the city. The apartment has a French balcony and an air conditioning system. An underground car parking is offered. 140.7 sq. m. EUR 314 575.

The apartment has two bedrooms, living room and a fully equipped kitchen; building has an elevator. 78 sq. m. EUR 350 000.

Jurmala

Riga, Alberta Street

Riga, Jeruzalemes Street

Riga, Teatra Street

An apartment in a new modern building in the center of the city. The apartment has a French balcony and an air conditioning system. An underground car parking is offered. 140.7 sq. m. EUR 314 575.

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Jurmala

Riga, Mezaparks

Riga, Rupniecibas Street

Riga, Elizabeths Street

A large five bedroom house has a swimming pool, sauna, gym hall, a basement with wine cellar, winter garden and an underground garage for two cars. 765.4 sq. m., Land 2 868 sq. m. EUR 3 500/month.

A fully renovated Art Nouveau building. The apartment has a fireplace, 4 separate bedrooms, a cabinet and two bathrooms. Underground parking is offered. 225 sq. m. EUR 1 950/month.

An Art Nouveau building with apartments for rent in the center of the city. The apartment house has a courtyard parking and a security guard. 237 sq. m. EUR 2 350/month.

Riga, Mezaparks

Riga, Rupniecibas Street

Riga, Elizabeths Street

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All the first circus in Riga appeared in 1880, when Albert Salamonski bought a plot of land in the city and erected a temporary circus, which toured there over the next eight summers. Salamonski was the man responsible for creating Moscow’s Tsvetnoy Boulevard Circus in 1880, and in subsequent years commissioned famous Latvian architect Jānis Baumanis to design and build a grand circus building in Riga. Baumanis designed more
than 150 buildings in Riga during his remarkable career and in 1888, three years before his death, completed the Riga Circus building on Merkela Street.

Circuses became particularly popular in Russia over the following decades and, in 1919, Lenin is said to have described them as “the people’s art form”. He later allocated state resources to circuses around Russia and, during the Soviet years, Riga Circus also benefited with financial support from Moscow.

Riga Circus survived the turmoil and upheaval of change that came with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and today is recognised as one of the world’s oldest remaining permanent circuses.

Today’s circus building has not changed greatly in its appearance since the late 1880’s, with its dark brown façade topped by the double unicorn ‘Rigas Cirks’ sign and red-roofed big top pointing up into the heavens behind it. The simple kiosk, where you can purchase tickets for shows, is another feature of Riga Circus that appears stuck in a time trap.

The arena seats 580 spectators in its parterre and 450 in the main amphitheatre, and the building also has stables, a circus performers’ training hall and an elephant’s room.

The main season runs from October until the end of March, although it is possible to catch performances throughout the year. Touring circuses from abroad have included the Russian and Chinese State circuses, while Riga Circus has many top performers of its own from the Baltic states, Russia, Ukraine and Sweden. Last year’s “Golden Season” show, which ran during November and December, featured some of the leading stars from the internationally renowned Moscow State Circus.

Anybody attending Riga Circus, which is now the only permanent circus in all of the Baltic states, can expect to see animal acts including elephants, tigers and bears, as well as performing jugglers, magicians, illusionists and, of course, colourful clowns.
Ineta Radeviča made an entire nation proud when she won the gold medal for the long jump at the 2010 European Championships in Barcelona. Gateway Riga spoke to Ineta at home in Moscow and on the road, training in Germany, about the events leading up to that amazing achievement, her family life, and her plans for the future.

I was mostly competing in the heptathlon, as my mother thought that it was very important for a young athlete to develop multiple skills. Rhythm, coordination, speed, power, endurance – a heptathlete must have them all. What I did not have was endurance so, before the last event, the 800 metres, my mom would find me hiding in a rest room, where she had to find the words to convince me to compete. Even today I remember my knees shaking when I was standing at the starting line, but what a great feeling of achievement when in the end you get a medal! It was then that I learned that the saying ‘no pain, no gain’ truly works in sport!

The long jump is a flash of the camera, the triple jump is a short movie

I watched my husband play against Dinamo Riga is like eating tiramisu while being on a diet

I was very little. I remember wearing thick woolly socks so that my feet would fit the smallest available running spikes. Putting a pair of spikes on back then felt like putting on evening make up and my best dress does today – it provided a sense of a special occasion, a big celebration, anticipation and excitement.

You were highly regarded in the heptathlon through most of your teenage years. How did the transition to the long jump and triple jump come about?

Please start by telling me about your life growing up in Kraslava and how you first became involved in athletics.

My life in Kraslava was very simple and fun. I was born into an athletic family. My mom was 22, and after giving birth she started to work as a coach. Every day she took me with her to work at the track where I played in a sandpit. All the athletes played with me and protected me. I started competing when I was very little. I remember wearing thick woolly socks so that my feet would fit the smallest available running spikes. Putting a pair of spikes on back then felt like putting on evening make up and my best dress does today – it provided a sense of a special occasion, a big celebration, anticipation and excitement.

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Apartments in Ozolnieki. 30 km from Riga. Price from 68 000 - 126 000 EUR. Floor space 52-126 square metre.

Riga, Jurijs Volkinsteins, who coach-high school, when a coach from All I could think of then was – his vision of my jumping abilities. competition and explained to me want to be a jumper! wow, no more 800’s! Of course I student of the LU, and started train-
ing in a new group, where some-

I did both the long jump and the triple but, because I had a bet-
ter chance of winning in the triple jump, my coach and I spent more time working on that. Till this day, the triple jump is my favourite dis-
cipline. I am fascinated by its com-
plexity and the sense of freedom it gives me when I put together a good jump. The long jump is a flash of the camera, the triple jump is a short movie.

The story of how you met your husband, Petr, sounds very roman-
tic. Do you mind sharing it with Gateway Riga readers?

Your husband plays for KHL side CSKA Moscow and I know you have become a big ice hockey fan. How do you feel when he plays against Latvia’s Dinamo Riga?

In the late evening, when Mark is asleep and my legs are sore from training, I like to stretch out in bed with a computer and read fashion and culinary blogs. I love how brave and eclectic people are with their choices in these blogs. They mix high street and designer clothes and they put strawberries into their salmon rolls. Most are funny, cre-
ative, and provide great ideas.

What makes you laugh and cry, angry and happy?

My family, my son and my friends make me laugh. I think there is a reason why the words ‘laugh’ and ‘love’ sound similar. Sad movies make me cry. Seeing a tal-
ent go to waste makes me angry. An injury, or not having the oppor-
tunity to develop, or having no desire to learn or step outside the comfort zone makes me upset. Good weather and the sunshine make me happy. Meeting people who are true professionals at what they do, yet are simple, is a pleasure.

When you return to Kraslava, how does it feel after the winners’
To win the European Championships gold is a remarkable achievement. But few people are aware that you gave birth to a baby less than 2 years earlier. How did you manage to go from giving birth in a hospital to being the number one woman at your sport on the planet in the space of two years?

The fact that I did not participate in the 2008 Olympics, because I was pregnant, makes it sound like the pregnancy was an obstacle in my career. Actually, having a child was a motivation. I had a long time to carefully think and plan my return, and I stayed physically active during my pregnancy. Two weeks after Mark was born I was on the treadmill, walking up the hill, and making the trainer nervous as he asked me to check my heart rate every minute. I started going for easy runs when Mark turned 3 months, then, in the fall, I went for high performance training in Florida, where I worked on motivation, mobility, movement and recovery. The program worked very well for me so, when I returned to Moscow, my jumps coach was excited with the progress and we set a goal - a medal at the European Championships. I took it easy indoors, just feeling happy to be wearing my spikes, and competed for a Portuguese club in both the long jump and triple jump. Then I did training camps in Florida and Sochi in the countdown to Barcelona.

Where does your career go after such a massive achievement? You famously jumped 6.92m to win gold, smashing the Latvian record. Can you break 7 metres?

It was an indescribable experience breaking the Latvian record. I enjoy going back to the stadium in my mind but my coach says that the biggest mistake an athlete can make is living in the past. The gold medal will always bring great memories but I still enjoy my life today - this exact moment - and plan the future hoping for the magic 7 metres mark to come at the London Olympics.

How did you feel when you were given the award for Latvian sportswoman of the year last year? It was a great honour to receive the Latvian sportswoman of the year award. To be recognised as an athlete in my home country is something I was dreaming about since I was a little small-town girl. It is a beautiful award. I made a special stand for it in my apartment so it is always in sight and, when the times get really hard, just looking at it motivates me.

Do you see yourself going into coaching one day or would you prefer to simply retire gracefully from athletics and become a housewife or a full-time ice hockey fan? I would like to try working as a coach after I finish competing. I have been blessed with working with great coaches throughout my career so I feel like I have accumulated lots of valuable knowledge and would like to share it.
Cautiously optimistic

While many European economies are expected to endure a testing year of enforced austerity measures, rising unemployment and widespread industrial action, Latvia’s economy may finally have turned the corner and begun its recovery.

Just days before the end of 2010 Latvian Prime Minister Valdis Dombrovskis told the Baltic News Service that “Next year (2011), GDP is projected to grow by three percent and, consequently, we will be gradually emerging from the crisis.”

Should the Latvian economy grow by three percent or more this year it will likely be well ahead of most other European countries in growth terms. However, having endured an horrific contraction of 23 percent during 2008 and 2009 any expansion in GDP figures must be taken in context to the overall size of the Latvian economy compared to its peak years of 2005 and 2006.

In terms of taking its austerity ‘medicine’ Latvia is well ahead of the game compared to countries like France, the UK and even Greece. This is because many Latvians have already seen their salaries slashed by more than 30 percent over the past two years, unemployment peaked at over 20 percent in 2010, and public service cuts have seen schools and hospitals closed. Similar experiences to these await a number of western European countries in 2011. Latvia has the bitter sweet benefit of having already endured the worst.

Analysts predict that Latvia’s GDP growth will be ahead of Lithuania in 2011 and could well match its other Baltic neighbour, Estonia, which has just adopted the euro. Manufacturing, trade and tourism are expected to show significant expansion. Indeed, the Latvian Economy Ministry is predicting that the volume of Latvia’s exports could grow by as much as 31.2 percent between 2011 and 2015. Gone are the days when Latvia imported much and exported little.

While 2011 looks set to be a difficult year for almost all of us, wherever we live in the world, there do seem to be some genuine signals that Latvia, at least, can now conclude that it has already been to hell...and is now on its way back.

2011 is, perhaps, a time for Latvians to feel cautiously optimistic.

Some quick stats:

- **Unemployment rate (% Latest available figures)**
  - Latvia: 18.3
  - EU average: 9.6

- **GDP growth forecast 2011 (%)**
  - Latvia: 3.3**
  - EU average: 1.7

- **GDP per capita in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards) 2010**
  - Latvia: 52***
  - EU-27 average: 100

* Eurostat  ** Latvian Government  *** Eurostat
The road to recovery

New car registrations soared in Latvia in 2010

The Latvian car market made headlines in late 2010 when a report from the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ECEA) stated that new car registrations in Latvia were up almost 80 percent in September, year-on-year. This was while new registrations across Europe actually dropped for the same twelve-month period.

Year-on-year there was, according to the LPAA (Latvian Automobile Association), a 32.9 percent increase in overall new car registrations in Latvia when comparing 2010 to 2009.

Toyota consolidated its position as the top selling car brand in Latvia by increasing its annual sales by 21.4 percent. If, however, Toyota is to continue to rule the roads in Latvia then it will likely have to steer away from fierce competition from VW, Skoda, Renault and Peugeot in the coming year. Each of these companies posted sales increases of greater than 50%, year on year, with Peugeot reporting a truly remarkable jump in sales of 416%.

The biggest ‘loser’ in 2010 was Hummer. Sales for the petrol guzzling vehicles fell off a cliff with only 2 sold, compared to 21 the previous year. Meanwhile, the top end luxury sector of the market does continue to tick along: 4 Bentleys, 2 Maseratis, 2 Rolls Royce, 1 Aston Martin, 1 Ferrari and 1 Lamborghini left the show rooms and dazzled all around them in 2010. Even in these most difficult of economic times, great wealth and the need for status do appear to still be alive and well in the Baltic states.

Before the crisis hit around 80 percent of new cars were purchased using leasing agreements but with the collapse of the Latvian economy and the huge defaults that followed there has been a change in the way new cars are being bought. Now only around 20 percent of new cars leaving the showroom have been financed in this way, with the majority of purchases now made by companies rather than by individuals (29%).

This huge growth in new car sales, although small still in total value compared to 2007, does suggest, along with several other positive indicators, that as well as the car market the Latvian economy is also on the bumpy road to recovery.

(See ‘Cautiously Optimistic’ on page 16)

The majority of purchases now made are by companies rather than by individuals

### Top ten best selling car brands in Latvia for 2009 and 2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Percentage change</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1 Toyota</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 VW</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>93.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Skoda</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>80.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Renault</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>56.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Peugeot</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>416.1</td>
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<td>6 Hyundai</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Ford</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>44.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Mitsubishi</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>-57</td>
<td>-23.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Opel</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 BMW</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>-60</td>
<td>-31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total for all brands in Latvia</strong></td>
<td><strong>3745</strong></td>
<td><strong>4976</strong></td>
<td><strong>1231</strong></td>
<td><strong>32.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures provided by the LPAA

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Photos courtesy of LPAA, Andris Kulbergs & Inchcape
Latgale's heart and soul

Although it is the region's second city, many consider Rezekne to be the cultural heart of Latgale.

Historical overview

The territory of Rezekne has been inhabited since the ninth century when a castle was built in the area to defend against marauding tribes. According to official records though, it was not until 1285 that the town of Rositten was first mentioned in historical documents. At this time it was an integral part of Livonia and remained so until the sixteenth century when it became part of the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom.

In the 1770s Rezekne was granted county city status as it once again came under the control of a different...
ent master, this time the royal Russian imperial court.

**Railway town**

Rezekne became a boom town in the 1830s with the construction of one of the most important roads in the whole region, the Warsaw – St. Petersburg highway. The first Rezekne – St. Petersburg rail connection was opened in 1861, and much as modern aeroplane routes influence migratory and vacation patterns today, it lead to many Rezekne residents moving to St. Petersburg, and thousands of Russian citizens travelling back the other way, principally to enjoy holidays in the attractive Rezekne region.

In 1904 the Moscow – Ventspils line was finally completed and immediately lead to further industrial development in the city. Thousands were employed by the rail road and in the factories that sprung up close by. Later, in 1917, Rezekne became part of the independent state of Latvia.

**The ruins of war**

Tragically, during WWII thousands of residents were killed and the majority of the city’s buildings were destroyed during vicious German bombing. Photographs paying testimony to the original beauty of the city can be seen at the Latgale Culture History Museum. The city was painstakingly rebuilt after the war, with many green areas included.

**Cosmopolitan Rezekne**

Rezekne is close to Russia, Belarus and Lithuania, and this geographi-
cal juxtaposition has made a significant impact on the ethnic make-up of the city.

Although it is one of Latvia’s most sizeable cities (population 36,000), Rezekne’s population is made up of many different nationalities and ethnic groups aside from Latvians (44 percent of the population), including Russians, Belarusians, Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, and the indigenous Latgalians.

**Authentic tourism**

Rezekne feels untouched by the unattractive commercial aspects of modern tourism and what you tend to see in this attractive city feels completely authentic. Pride of place are the ruins on Rezekne Castle Hill and the Rezekne Heart of Jesus Cathedral, located on another of Rezekne’s seven hills. Both attractions stand out above the city’s skyline and add plenty of additional character to this attractive urban area.

One of the most striking attractions is certainly the United for Latvia monument. Mara, traditionally a Pagan figure, holds a Christian cross in her hand high in the air and remains a symbol of Latgalian identity today.

Another not-to-be-missed attraction is the Rezekne St. Nikolai Old Believers church, a gorgeous cemetery complex that also houses a fascinating museum, which has bags of information about Latgalian Old Believers.

There are a great many other attractions worthy of the attention of visitors in Rezekne, including several historical churches and grand houses, but it is arguably the natural and unhurried atmosphere of this city that is the biggest attraction here.

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**Getting There:**

- **Train** – as a railway town Rezekne can be reached via Moscow, St. Petersburg, Vilnius and Riga.
- **Bus** – there are plenty of regular bus services, running on a daily basis, to and from Riga.
- **Car** – expect to take 3-4 hours to reach Rezekne from Riga by car. Follow the A6 to Jekabpils, and then the A12 Moscow road.

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**Further Information:**

- **Rezekne Tourism Information Centre**
  - Hotel Latgale, Rezekne
  - Open Monday-Friday, 10-18; +371 2633 7449
tic@rezekne.lv, www.rezekne.lv

**A Place to Rest Your Head:**

- **Hotel Latgale**
  - Opened in 1991, the Hotel Latgale is one of the most famous hotels in the region. The hotel is a full service three-star with over 100 rooms. Prices for single rooms start at 27 lats, including breakfast.
There have been lighthouses since ancient times. These simple towers, which originally used fire, but today use lamps or lenses, have been warning mariners and their ships about the dangers of the coastline for centuries. Not surprisingly for a nation that has around 530 kilometres of coastline, the lighthouse is a common sight along Latvia’s coastal meadows, rocky shorelines, sea ports and harbour entrances.

There are 34 lighthouses in Latvia, or balas to use their Latvian name, with a number of them dating back to Russian imperial times.

Shining a protective light
A lighthouse comprises not just a lighthouse tower, but also the lighthouse keeper’s living quarters (if it is operational), its boat and fuel houses, and additional features such as a lightning rod, watch room and fuel house.

Due to technological advances there are less and less operational lighthouses relying on being manned, although deep-sea advances in sea navigation technology, the role of the lighthouse is just as important as it has always been, with their constant presence along Latvia’s shores no doubt saving hundreds of lives every year.

Today, they are increasingly thought of as tourist attractions, admired for their aesthetic value as well as their essential functionality. Responsibility for monitoring and regulating Latvia’s lighthouses falls on the Latvian Maritime Administration although they are actually operated by the various port authorities in the country such as Ventspils and Riga.

As well as being of great importance to sea navigators, lighthouses are now attracting great interest from tourists.
Latvia's beacons of light
Here is a guide to some of Latvia's best known and most interesting lighthouses:

**Mikelbaka lighthouse**
In service since: 1884; 1957
**Interesting facts:**
At 62 metres, Mikelbaka is the tallest lighthouse in the Baltic states. It was blown up during WWII and rebuilt during the Soviet era. It is 277 steps to its viewing platform with stunning views of the local coastline.

**Slitere lighthouse**
In service since: 1850
**Interesting facts:**
Slitere is the second oldest Latvian lighthouse in service and the highest above sea level, although the tower itself is only 22 metres in height. It has the honour of being the furthest inland lighthouse in Latvia, and has been used as an observation lookout since 2002. It is open to tourists.

**Kolka lighthouse**
In service since: 1884
**Interesting facts:**
Kolka Lighthouse is built on an artificial island. The Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga meet at Kolka Horn, making it a particularly treacherous place to navigate. Several Liv fishing villages are found in the vicinity, and the evidence of past ships wrecks is occasionally washed ashore.
**Ovisrags lighthouses**

**In service since:** 1814  
**Interesting facts:** Latvia’s longest functioning lighthouse has maintained its stone wall tower appearance throughout its history. Ovisrags is 38 metres tall and has been in service for almost 200 years.

**Ainazi lighthouse**

**In service since:** circa 1920  
**Interesting facts:** White octagonal lighthouse located next to a wood keeper’s cottage.

**Kronvalda Park lighthouse**  
**(formerly Mangalsalas Beacon)**

**In service:** 1863–1968  
**Interesting facts:** This pint-sized beacon was originally located at the mouth of the Daugava river. It has been inactive since 1998, when it was relocated to Kronvalda Park. Visitors to Riga can now see the former 6-metre high Mangalsala beacon next to Riga Canal and the Riga Free Port building.

**Daugavgriva lighthouse**  
**(also known as Bolderaja)**

**In service since:** 1957  
**Interesting facts:** Evidence suggests that fire-lit navigational facilities have been present here since 1536, although the first tower on this site was built in 1721. Due to its strategic position, at the entrance to the Daugava river and close to Riga, the lighthouse was destroyed during both world wars. Today’s manifestation is painted in black and white bands and has a distinctive red roof.

**Mikelbaka lighthouse**

**In service:** 1957  
**Interesting facts:** This was meant to be Latvia’s tallest lighthouse. Due to financial problems, the project was halted and the tower remains unfinished.

**Ventspils South Mole lighthouse**

**In service since:** 1879  
**Interesting facts:** Ventspils port has around half a dozen lighthouses in and around the coast and port entrance. One of the best known is the South Mole lighthouse with its distinctive green dome and tower. It can be reached via the Ventspils pier promenade. The original lighthouse on the mouth of the Venta river was destroyed during the second world war.

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One day I realised, that if I wanted to work in an international company and become competitive in an open job market I would need more than just a degree from a local university. So which university should I choose? There are a lot of different universities that offer students a good education, but only a few that take care of students after they have finished their studies. IMI is one of them. They did not just teach me, but subsequently found and recommended good job opportunities for me.

I started my studies on the Post Graduate Diploma course. The studies were very intense and reflected “real life” situations. IMI puts effort not just into teaching a course, but also on grooming, punctuality, responsibility and susceptibility.

After finishing my studies, IMI found a great internship position for me in one of the largest hotel groups – ACCOR. Working there I noticed how many CVs are being sent by other job seekers. Most of them land in the rubbish bin. I could have been one of them too, but receiving your education from IMI is like a guarantee to potential employers that I am a skilled worker and thus my CV ended up on the manager’s desk.

My in-training at the ACCOR chain hotel was very hard, but IMI prepared me very well for all the situations and tasks that I had to deal with. One day I was in Latvia working in a small company, doing simple things, the next moment I am working for an international company, working with international clients with a great career ahead of me.

Edgars Zeltmanis  
IMI Graduate June 2010
**Uzava lighthouse**

**In service since:** 1925

**Interesting facts:**
The lighthouse keeper's house closely resembles a church with its white-washed stone walls.

Today the site is open to the public but the tower is closed.

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**Liepaja lighthouse**

**In service since:** 1868

**Interesting facts:**
Liepaja has consistently been of strategic naval importance in the past centuries. Liepaja lighthouse was damaged during WWI and extensively repaired during the inter-war years. It is located on Liepaja's southern breakwater.

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**Vinarium Civitatis Rigensis**

**Mentioned in ancient manuscripts from 1293**

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**Welcome to the medieval times**

Start your journey to the medieval times in the heart of the Old Riga Town in Latvia.

Relax in the glimmering lights of candles. Try the favourite dishes and drinks of King Philip I, Duke Charles of Bavaria and Margaret of York. Listen to the Ancient Wall and the Old Wall whispering the secrets of the Order of Knights Templars. Find your medieval treasure. Find your philosopher's stone. Find your Grail.

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**Authentic medieval restaurant Rozengrals**

Rozena 1, Riga, Latvia, ph.: +371 67220356, info@rozengrals.lv, www.rozengrals.lv
Manor from heaven

Latvia boasts one of the world’s highest concentrations of manor houses and palaces.

Any casual visitor, who spends more than half a day in the Latvian countryside, will quickly notice that there is a huge number of castles, palaces and manor houses dotting the rural landscape.

It’s a remarkable fact that Latvia is home to more than 1,000 manor houses and palaces. Relative to its population of just 2.2 million, there can be few countries in the world that have such a high concentration of stately homes per capita.

Luxury out of servitude
Most manor houses date to a time from the fifteenth century to the present day, and were once the homes of wealthy Baltic-German families. These Baltic Germans held the overwhelming majority of the top positions in both the government and the army, while the aver...
age Latvian peasant was forced to endure a life of servitude and near poverty as a serf – a practice that did not die out until the nineteenth century.

Grand houses were constructed throughout Kurzeme, Latgale, Vidzeme and Zemgale, with Latvian serfs tilling the local land, in the manor house gardens and in the woods. Servants’ houses, barns and cowsheds were built adjacent to these properties and, as time passed, it was not unusual for a village or hamlet to develop on the surrounding land. This fact is quickly apparent when visiting today’s Latvian countryside, where it is not uncommon to find villages, with populations of less than 1,000 citizens, that boast grand manor houses in varying states of restoration or decay.

Some early manor houses were actually quite simple affairs, not too dissimilar – aside from an obvious higher quality of comfort – from standard dwelling places. But, later, as contemporary styles of architecture became ever popular, more ornate buildings were constructed, or existing manor houses upgraded, to include elements of baroque, Gothic and Art Nouveau. Remarkable architectural ensembles were conceived and built, many with dozens of hectares of pristine gardens and well-tended parks.
But, happily, large scale restoration has become a fact of life in the past 15 years, and in 2011 many Latvian ‘muizas’ have returned to their splendour and grandeur of yesteryear. Dozens of manor houses now function as hotels and are extremely popular with young Latvian couples who wish to tie the knot in this spectacular and classical setting.

Due to the sheer number of Latvian manor houses it is impossible to give a fair overview of them without writing an entire book on the subject. Here, however, is a selection that this writer thinks should not be missed:

**Slokenbeka manor house**
The only surviving fortified manor house still to be found in Latvia. Dating back to 1484, today it houses the Latvian Food museum.

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**End of an era**
The boom in Latvian manor house construction began to die a death in the nineteenth century, with the end of serfdom, and later in the early twentieth century as a result of war and social upheaval.
The entire Baltic German population upended and left for Germany during World War II, while, under Soviet occupation, forced collectivization and elimination of property rights meant that many manor houses fell into disrepair, with a number destroyed.

**New beginning**
By the time Latvia regained its independence in 1991, a large number of its once magnificent manor houses lay in relative ruin, with little cash available for restoration and disputes over who actually owned the properties often dragging on for many years.
Janumoku manor house
This Latvian architectural masterpiece was built for Riga’s greatest ever mayor, George Armitstead, at the turn of the twentieth century. He commissioned its building to celebrate Riga’s 700th birthday. Jaunmoku is actually a combination of palace and manor house and visitors can enjoy an overnight stay in one of 20 rooms in the manor house, starting from just 25 lats.

Diklu palace/manor house
This magnificent building could conceivably be considered as both a palace and a manor house. It dates back to 1896 but was lovingly renovated and restored to its former glory in 2003. Today, the manor house has 26 rooms, a luxurious restaurant and state-of-the-art spa facilities.

Malpils manor house
Built in 1760 but almost totally reconstructed in 1911, following a savage fire, Malpils functions today as a luxury hotel. Popular with wedding parties, Malpils boasts stunning gardens, boating ponds and a romantic ‘lovers’ bridge.

Blankenfeldes manor house
Built in 1462, famously, King Louis XVIII of France stayed here during his time in Latvia. Blankenfeldes was owned by several barons while today its attractive English park is open to visitors.

Kuksi manor house
Located near Kandava, Kuksi manor house boasts a magnificent waterfront setting and exquisite, fully restored original wall paintings. Visitors can enjoy a delicious meal prepared using seasonal local produce, and even stay overnight in one of its 13 ornate rooms.

Stameriena manor house
Relatively undiscovered by foreign visitors, Stameriena is a dramatic Art Nouveau ensemble, which wouldn’t look out of place in Transylvania. The building was restored during the early twentieth century and, as well as having 24 hectares of parkland, its interior and exhibitions can be visited for a nominal entrance fee.

Your best morning wake-up in Riga!
- Coffee
- Newspapers & Magazines
- Baked Goods
- Transport tickets
- Mobile prepaid cards

NARVESSEN

G A T E R B A Y  R I G A  w i n t e r / s p r i n g  2 0 1 1
Transaero, consistently one of the world’s fastest expanding airlines of the past two decades, began flights between Moscow and Riga in late 2010, becoming the sixth new airline to commence operations out of RIX last year. Transaero’s decision would certainly seem to make sense: passenger numbers between Riga and Moscow recorded a 45 per cent increase over a twelve month period between 2009 and 2010, with Moscow now the fifth most popular destination for air traffic to and from the Latvian capital.

Famously, Transaero was the very first private airline in post-independent Russia, when it began operations with a single flight from Moscow to Tel Aviv in November, 1991. Four years later, IATA announced that Transaero was the fastest growing airline on the planet. It moved to its current base at Moscow’s Domodedovo Airport in 2001, and between 2003 and 2008 reported a breathtaking twelve-fold increase in passenger numbers. In 2007 it was the first Russian airline to introduce e-ticketing and online check-in.

Unlike some Russian airlines its strategic model is aimed towards the airline becoming the Russian industry leader for both business and leisure flights.

By the end of 2010, Transaero’s fleet consisted of 57 modern Boeing 747, 767 and 777s. In fact, it was the first airline in Russia to operate Boeing aircraft way back in 1993. Transaero experienced significant growth in the first nine months of 2010, up over 40 per cent from the same period the previous year. This sterling performance followed on from the positive growth figures it enjoyed at the height of the global economic crisis in 2009, when most other international airlines saw large drops in their passenger numbers. 2010 also saw Transaero expand its international routes with direct services to New York’s JFK beginning in November. The Russian airline also offers direct Transatlantic flight to Cancun, Miami, the Dominican Republic and Cuba.

Currently, Transaero’s flights between Moscow and Riga operate three times per week.

Transaero has expanded its international routes with direct services to New York’s JFK beginning in November

Transaero was the very first private airline in post-independent Russia

Russian love affair

Transaero is the latest leading Russian airline to begin direct flights to Riga
The wonders of the Americas

Flying Transatlantic from Riga is now easier than ever with several new routes via Moscow

Cruising the vast Atlantic Ocean that divides Europe from the Americas opens up an exciting world of limitless business opportunities and truly world-class tourist destinations. While the majority of airlines operating out of RIX link Latvia to hundreds of destinations all over Europe and Asia, Russian airline Transaero now offers seven exciting destinations on the other side of the Atlantic via its operating base in Moscow.

If you want to catch one of the ‘Wonders of the World’ then consider flying to Toronto, arguably the most vibrant city in Canada. Niagara Falls, one of the globe’s most spectacular natural sights, is just a short half-day trip away from Canada’s largest city. The noise and intensity of its thundering waterfalls are something that stay with visitors forever. Flights operate all year round, leaving Riga via Moscow, as they also do for the unofficial capital of the world – New York (also directly connected to Riga by Uzbekistan Airways) – and enigmatic Miami, where you can escape to the wide open spaces and sun-drenched beaches of the Florida Keys archipelago. However, if you like your beaches more exotic and the vibe rather wilder, then the Dominican Republic’s Punta Cana might just be the place for you. The country is popular with high end package holidaymakers, who enjoy its fantastic climate and to-die-for beaches, but the Dominican Republic is also a country blessed by incredible mountain scenery and a distinct Caribbean culture.

Other Transatlantic destinations that can now be reached from Riga are available either during the winter- or summer-only months. For guaranteed summer sun there is Varadero in wonderful Cuba. The beaches here are fantastic but it goes without saying that you should at least factor in a couple of days away from the deckchairs and the Cuban capital, Havana.

Can’t get away from Latvia for some summer sun? Then fear not! New Transatlantic destinations available during the winter months include Cancun, where you can explore the Yucatan Peninsula with its stunning beaches and remarkable Mayan archaeological sites such as Chichen Itza.

And then there is, Rio. South America’s third largest city should not only be visited for its carnival but also to see the Statue of Christ the Redeemer, to take in a football match at the Maracana football stadium, and, of course, to sunbathe and watch the beautiful people on the world-renowned Copacabana Beach.

With so many new exciting destinations available on the other side of the Atlantic many in the Baltic states will find they are beginning to look in a westward direction rather than to the east when it comes to making their holiday plans in 2011.

For guaranteed summer sun there is Varadero in wonderful Cuba

If you want to catch one of the ‘Wonders of the World’ then consider flying to Toronto

Photos courtesy of Wikimedia commons

Photos courtesy of tourism Toronto

Photos courtesy of Justin Walley

Photos courtesy of the Dominican Republic ministry of tourism
**ROYAL Boutique**

Swiss Watches Duty Free Shop “ROYAL Boutique” is conveniently located in Schengen Terminal at RIX and offers a great variety of the most recognizable brands and accompanied with International Warranty Certificate to guarantee worldwide after sale service: Montblanc, Longines, Rado, Tissot, Jaques Lemans, Swiss Millitary,... and innovative approach to the human body can be enjoyed in its peaceful beauty salon in Riga’s silent quarter of Embassies and patented medical facilities and high quality cosmetic solutions.

**BALTĀ PIRTS**

Want to recharge after a long night out or a stressful meeting? Riga’s oldest spa, the 100-year-old Baltā Pirts bathhouse offers an unforgettable spa experience with a touch of local culture. Chill out at the moose café, relax in the steam room as you wait for your massage, take a cold plunge in the pool, or enjoy a Latvian joke, which is like the sauna you might see at your local gym, except a lot bigger, with a wood-fired stove, lots of steam, and bucket of fragrant birch leaves for each sauna-goer to fan the heat with. Reservations generally aren’t necessary, but if you’d like to reserve a time for treatments or manage, we recommend calling ahead! Space is also available for private parties.

**SWISS WATCHES DUTY FREE SHOP**

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**Wellness & Entertainment**

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Do you think – is it a myth of a blue cow? No, it’s all true! Definitely there is one – steak & fish restaurant Blue Cow located in the very heart of Old Riga on Līvu Square. It’s impossible to escape hearing moo from a distance, which welcomes and encourages everybody to taste high-quality modern Latvian dishes prepared of organic products, fresh fish dishes and a wide range of steaks as well.

Maistaru iela 21 (Līvu laukums) Riga
tel +371 67223307, +371 29522323
www.zila-govs.lv info@zila-govs.lv

Also the interior will charm with its simplicity and ancient design, and probably for a moment it will make you believe – indeed somewhere here must be living a real blue cow.

Livonija Restaurant

Do you think – is it a myth of a blue cow? No, it’s all true! Definitely there is one – steak & fish restaurant Blue Cow located in the very heart of Old Riga on Līvu Square. It’s impossible to escape hearing moo from a distance, which welcomes and encourages everybody to taste high-quality modern Latvian dishes prepared of organic products, fresh fish dishes and a wide range of steaks as well.

Livonija is also available for banquets, which are a great way to celebrate the holiday season.

Meistaru iela 21, Livu laukums, Riga, LV-1050
tel +371 67223351 reservations
info@livonijarestaurant.lv
www.livonijarestaurant.lv
Open: daily from 12:00 – 24:00
Capacity: 60 persons

In restaurant we offer a creative European cuisine, on the 2nd floor there is a banquet hall with perfect view at Līvu Square and in the basement rooms in relaxing atmosphere you can enjoy a hookah.

Cafe Boulangerie Bonjour
French Bakery Boulangerie Bonjour is like a little part of France located in Old Riga. Here, in Boulangerie Bonjour we offer the greatest, the tastiest pastries, croissants, baguettes and cakes prepared by French cooks.

Early in the morning you can start your day with cup of coffe and some of French patisseries, or in the evening enjoy the best French wines and snacks. It’s the best place in Riga to feel the real atmosphere of French boulangerie-cafe.

You are always welcome to Boulangerie Bonjour cafe!
Jēkaba iela 20/22, Riga
tel +371 67325707
www.boulangeriebonjour.lv
Mon – Fri 7:00 – 20:00
Sat – Sun 10:00 – 18:00

Bar/restaurant GARAZA
It’s a very stylish and comfortable place in old Riga, placed in Aldaru street 10. “GARAZA” is made for people who love everything about cars, delicious food and drinks. You can sit in car or motorcycle bench, or in train couplet and sup fine wine or cocktail. “GARAZA” takes care of food quality cooperating with Latvian farms and farmers to guarantee the freshness and the chef is always making every meal with care. It also place for sport lovers. You can watch all the world biggest sports events there! Or you can imagine yourself in a famous musician concert while watching it on screen.

On holiday nights you can come and enjoy grate music with DJ and professional bartenders.
THEY CAN FIX YOUR ENGINE THERE!
Aldaru iela 10, Rīga
tel +371 67224696, fax +371 67224438
garazabars@garazabars.lv, www.garazabars.lv
Mon – Thu: 9:00–24:00
Fri: 9:00–2:00
Sat: 11:00–23:00
Sun: 11:00–23:00
**Andalizijas Suns**

This is a democratic pub for everyone’s taste beginning with the freshest Italian-style design and ending with a wide variety of dishes from hamburgers to car-purchase style and ending with a wide variety of dishes from hamburgers to car-purchase style. Anybody can enjoy the cosy atmosphere and hospitality of the main building of the LIDO Recreation Centre. The restaurant “Pétér Garlis” is a marvelous exception, open since 1978. Above all, it keeps stable and secure position in the race in spite of all the governmental changes. You will be surprised by such an amazing collection of roosters over the bar, as well the design and interior of this place is cozy and justify the name of the restaurant. The success key of the Restaurant “Pétér Garlis” is the delicious meals served with acceptable prices. The menu is classic with lots of original “Pétér Garlis” meals.

**Lido Recreation Centre**

The LIDO Recreation Centre is characterized by an unmistakable Latvian environment, countless tasty dishes, LIDO beer, live music, and a year-round celebration of national festivities with gorgeous décors.

Use this opportunity to enjoy national dishes cooked according to ancient Latvian recipes, as well as an excellent selection of international dishes. Your chosen dish is cooked right in front of you by skilled LIDO cooks. The main building of the LIDO Recreation Centre is one of the biggest and most beautiful log buildings in Europe, and can host more than 1000 guests. Anybody can enjoy the cozy atmosphere and hospitality of the Centre and instantly feel at home here.

**Trattoria del Popolo**

One of the most visited Italian restaurants in Riga. The popularity could be explained by the Italian trattoria ambiance and the cuisine, which could be described as not so simple approach to basically simple Italian food, but still keeping “for people” concept first and tasty food. Carefully picked Italian wine selection and small wine cellar makes the place an expert in the field. Trattoria del Popolo have recently won the 1st place award in “The Baltic Times” readers poll as the best Italian restaurant.

**Ristorante Al Capone**

Delicious and authentic new high Italian gastronomy in boudoir-elegant surroundings, but still hearty and not snobbish. The concept is Italiano vesinu, simple and authentic and very tasty Italian from impressive wine selection. Perfect for long 5-course dinners in a big company, as well as in quiet romantic dinner-essence. Service is very corresponding.

**Gastronome**

Seafood restaurant Gastronome often to enjoy dishes of different fish and other seafood, you will find a favourite, exotic and Latvian fishmonger and saltwater fish prepared on open grill in the menu. Every Friday and Saturday musicians perform in the restaurant, making already pleasant atmosphere even more attractive.

**Carlston – that’s great!**

There are a few words to remember while visiting Riga. Carlston’s restaurant has been successfully operating since 1999 and has become one of the biggest and most famous restaurants in Riga. Carlston is the place in city centre where you can enjoy peace, silence and sunny summer terrace.

Carlston is also renowned for its quality service, great food and catering team.
ANOTHER 600,000 PASSENGERS IN 2010

RIGA International Airport brushes aside difficulties to see strong growth.

The number of passengers using RIGA International Airport keeps growing, despite the crises that have hit the airline industry in recent years. Impressively, there has not been a dip in passenger numbers at RIX – now by far the biggest airport in the Baltic region – for the last 15 years.

The figure rose by another 600,000 in 2010, as the airport welcomed 4,662,482 passengers in total during the year, 15 percent more than the previous year. Around 13 percent more aircraft were handled than in 2009 and as much as 33 percent more cargo.

The growth came in the face of significant disruptions to air traffic in northern Europe, such as the ash-cloud crisis in April and severe weather conditions in December.

Looking forward to the coming year, Anis Luboe, Chairman of the Board of RIGA International Airport, commented that there was no reason why the growth should not continue in 2011 as well.

“This year, at the expense of bigger capacity aircraft, the number of passengers may rise by 5 percent year-on-year. The number of flights in 2011 is estimated to grow by almost 4 percent as we intend to bring back some of the airlines that have left the airport,” he said.

In December 2010, RIGA International Airport handled 323,522 passengers, around 2 percent more than during the same month in 2009. The number of aircraft and cargo volumes handled at the airport in December also grew on the year, by almost 7 and 14 percent, respectively.

The figures for December are significant as they demonstrate that the airport continued to work efficiently without the kind of painful air traffic disruptions witnessed elsewhere in Europe during the month. Only 21 flights were cancelled in Riga through poor weather – between December 10 and 26, which represents just 0.6 percent of the total number of flights.

The airport’s personnel worked to significant lengths to keep the runway open, together with the taxiways and aprons and keeping lighting and signs clear of snow and ice. This kept traffic moving. The most recent airline to launch services at RIX – the sixth in 2010 – was the Russian carrier Transaero. It has been offering three flights a week between Riga and Moscow Domodedovo since October 31 using its Boeing 737 aircraft.

This means that scheduled traffic between Riga and Moscow is now performed by as many as four carriers – Aeroflot and the Latvian national carrier airBaltic to Sheremetyevo, UTair to Vnukovo Airport and both Transaero and airBaltic to Domodedovo. airBaltic has been flying to both of Moscow’s major airports since December.

A total of 12 new destinations were opened in 2010, to Amman, Athens, Athens, Belgrade, Bucharest, Kittila, Kutaisi, Lulea, Madrid, Rome, Vienna, Vasa and Visby. airBaltic’s most recent addition to its substantially increased number of destinations from Riga include Kittila in Finland, one of the best places in Europe for winter holidays, a route that is available now, Gdansk, Poland, which will be operated to from April 18, and Budapest, Hungary, from May 16.

S H O P S A N D R E S T A U R A N T S TO GET NEW FACE IN 2011

The airport attracts a global partner for its non-aviation income – TAV Airports Holding.

Since January 1, RIGA International Airport has benefited from having a new operator for its commercial space and tax-free shopping area, TAV Airports Holding.

According to the deal, TAV will be the master concessionaire of the commercial space for a 10-year period. The agreement provides for a gradual takeover of commercial-space operator functions by TAV.

There is plenty of reason to believe that the airport terminal will acquire a new face during the year, bearing greater resemblance to the kind of shopping and dining areas that can be seen in the world’s leading airports, while at the same time preserving and bringing out the characteristic traits of Riga and Latvia.

TAV Airports is the leading airport operator in Turkey with a market share of 48%. It operates Istanbul Ataturk Airport – one of the busiest airports in Europe – as well as Ankara Esenboga Airport, Izmir Adnan Menderes Airport and Antalya Gazipasa Airport in Turkey.

Beyond Turkey, the company operates Thessaloniki in Greece, Monastir and Enfidha airports in Tunisia, and Skopje and Ohrid airports in Macedonia.

TAV Airports participates in other branches of airport operations too, such as duty-free sales, food and beverage services, ground-handling services, information technologies, security and other commercial area operations.

The company, which has 12 subsidiaries – six airport management and six ground handling operators – serves a grand total of 175,000 flights for approximately 300 airline companies and 42 million passengers on average per year.

It provides its integrated airport services, including management, finance and construction, together with its sister company TAV Construction. In total, TAV employs more than 11,000 employees.

In 2006, TAV established a partnership with the investment bank Goldman Sachs International, the fund management company Babcock&Brown, the infrastructure fund of the Islamic Development Bank and Global Investment House. RIGA International Airport has therefore acquired a global partner that will help it to substantially maximise its share of non-aviation income, nearly doubling this income from the commercial space in the terminal. The non-aviation income of RIGA International Airport currently accounts for more than 40 percent of its total income and has already tripled over a five-year period.

The rapid growth of the airport, where passenger traffic has grown threefold over five years, clearly called for a change in the development concept of its commercial space.

It arranged an international tender for the rental of its commercial space and the operation of its tax-free sales area last summer, with a view to raising the income from the management of its commercial area and ensuring world-class commercial services.

The qualification criteria for companies taking part in the tender were demanding – long-term experience in the management of the commercial and tax-free areas of international airports; a high financial turnover from the operation of commercial space; excellent references from the airports; and the condition that goods manufactured in Latvia would be included in the tax-free sales area.

The agreement with TAV Airports Holding is the logical next step in the development of RIGA International Airport, whose further growth will be accompanied by a modern and versatile range of services and shopping opportunities.

In the near future, passengers will be able not only to purchase familiar items at the airport but also choose from a richer assortment of goods – including a wide choice of Latvian souvenirs and other local Latvian products.

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Events Jazz Up Airport Interior

Fashion show and art exhibitions give passengers plenty to look at.

RIGA International Airport has been enlivening the interior of its terminal building lately with a series of events aimed at raising its profile among the public and entertaining passengers as they wait for flights.

The liveliest of these events so far was the opening of Riga Fashion Week on November 3. The unusual venue gave the first day of this 13th international annual fashion festival a very special atmosphere, combined with the romance and drama of air travel.

For many people, it’s hard to imagine a more cosmopolitan place than an airport, with individuals from many countries and cultural backgrounds meeting there. It’s open to everybody, yet it is nobody’s home. Nobody stays there for very long.

An airport is a place where you can feel most poignantly that time waits for no one. Everything flows and changes very rapidly.

Just like in the world of fashion, guests and onlookers were taken for a flight of fashion as the festival was declared open and the multicultural atmosphere was enhanced by shows by the Baltic region’s leading fashion designers, including Natālija Jansone (Latvia), Gedrūdis Šarkauskas (Lithuania) and Tīna Talume (Estonia).

The musicians Diana Moon, Roberto Meloni and DJ Tres-E performed for the audience against a backdrop of dazzling graphic visualizations.

Several art exhibitions have opened at RIGA International Airport in recent months, the latest of these being an exhibition of photographs called Aviation from a Different Viewpoint, which opened in December in the Departures area. The artist is Ilmārs Elijass, a member of the airport’s ground handling department and the 20 photographs show aircraft in the sky, on the runway and on the apron, taken at different angles.

Until March 1, an exhibition of paintings by the artists Kasparis Pēriskis and Inga Eglite, A Look at the Airport Sky, was also on view in the Departures sector.

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