

# Inventory

A GLOBAL ROUND-UP . . .

*The month in TRAVEL, HOSPITALITY and RETAIL*

**1. Basel**  
Splash down in the best place to cool off

**2. Turin**  
A morning row on the Po anyone?

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The city's best bits on show

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A swimming kit-list from goggles to bags

**5. Vienna**  
The making of an island paradise

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A refreshing waterside revival



## Current affairs

Many of the world's great cities carved out a living from their rivers. Today residents are returning to them – this time for fun and frivolity. We've dedicated this month's Quality of Life-themed Inventory to six waterway-focused itineraries.

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DESTINATION. . .

*Basel*

## Bank on it

Thirty years ago the already polluted Rhine turned red after a chemical spill. Now cleaned up, the stretch through Basel has been revitalised to become a conduit for commuters, sunbathers and spritzes.

By *Jessica Bridger*  
Photographer *Yves Bachmann*

The deep thrum of a cargo ship bound for Rotterdam vibrates the air as it charges up the Rhine. Hundreds of swimmers, however, are in the water and happily float along undisturbed by the ruckus. Sitting at the Rheinbad Breite, the sun decks are full of happy bathers and MONOCLE spots one who's gone for the full naked look, stretched out on a rock on the opposite grassy bank that's also dotted with old wooden fishing huts. City life, eh?

"Twenty years ago you would have been surprised to see someone crossing the city in a bathing suit," says Victor Arnold, president of the club that runs (and saved) the Rheinbad Breite. The club is run out of one of two Jugendstil



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wood-and-metal Badi that have survived in Basel. “Now some people even leave the office to take a swim to the city centre and pick up lunch,” he says, gesturing at the Roche Tower across the river.

Basel is equal parts classic Swiss charm – complete with cobbled streets and wooden-shuttered buildings – and multinational industry concerned with commissioning Pritzker prize-winning architects for their corporate campuses. Novartis, Roche and other business giants nestle into the Rhine where Germany, France and Switzerland meet. Basel is both an industrial powerhouse and a waterside paradise, complete with its own “Rhyviera”. The Rhine is the same, wide and wild, but also

says Manuel Herz, architect and urban studies professor at the University of Basel. “This really changed the way we use the river; it is now like Basel’s largest public square.” It would be easy to mistake the swimming, sipping and strolling as inevitable but the Rhine’s popularity is actually a remarkable triumph for any 21st-century city.

Nearly 30 years ago the Rhine turned red, the product of a toxic spill at the Sandoz chemical plant. The river was already polluted but the incident served as a turning point. Things improved dramatically following multination legislation and money pouring into the Rhine clean-up. Basel has used a particularly cosmopolitan approach

to bringing people back to the once notoriously dirty water, with cultural events such as the Imfluss music festival, the redesign and rewilding of the river’s edges and, of course, the power of a good spritz.

Near St Alban, the current pulls you gently the minute you put your feet in the water. The water is cool but not cold. Belongings are tucked into colourful waterproof bags that double as floats. The most popular, known as the Wickelfisch, was designed in the 1980s as part of the effort to raise awareness of the river’s potential as an amenity. Local designers often riff on the idea, making sophisticated and sleek versions of their own. The Wickelfisch worked. — (M)

Previous page: (1) Mittlere Brücke  
(2) Relaxing read *This spread*: (1) Landestelle  
(2) Captain grill (3) Rheinbad Breite bar  
(4) Tanning at Rheinbad Breite (5) Drinks at Sandoase (6) Bademeister (left) on the water (7) Stand-up guy



SEE: **Architecture:** Basel has an extraordinarily high concentration of notable modern and contemporary architecture. Guides from Basel Tourism, MONOCLE’s very own and other resources make treasure-hunting easy. Waterside highlights include the 1951 Kraftwerk Birsfelden by Hans Hofmann, a beautiful power station southeast of the city, and the iconic 2015 Roche Tower, by hometown heroes Herzog & de Meuron. [basel.com](https://basel.com)

SEE: **Museum Tinguely:** Basel is known for its museums, and the Tinguely is both world class and locally specific. This Mario Botta-designed museum houses a prominent permanent collection of Basel artist Jean Tinguely (1925-91), known for his kinetic sculptures. It also hosts exhibitions of modern and contemporary artists, including Kurt Schwitters, Steiner+Lenzlinger and Rebecca Horn. It’s a handy place to nip in the Rhine too. [tinguely.ch](https://tinguely.ch)

EAT: **Volkshaus Basel:** The Volkshaus Basel is the kind of place where the well-heeled and the wet haired, just out of the water, can eat side by side, essential in Basel’s city of comfortable contrasts. Herzog & de Meuron updated the 1925 building in 2012 with typical understated respect. Menu staples include Café de Paris entrecôte with matchstick fries and hand-cut spicy beef tartare, along with seasonal specialities such as lamb with morels and nettle tagliatelle. [volkshaus-basel.ch](https://volkshaus-basel.ch)

EAT: **Buvette Flora:** The *buvettes* were created to encourage lingering along the Rhine. Arguably the best of the bunch is Buvette Flora, a black metal-and-wood kiosk with pink and green outdoor furniture. Generous glasses of cooling spritzes, Swiss wine and beer can slake any post-swim thirst. Tramezzini, salads and small snacks work equally well for a swim-up lunch or sundowner apéro. [flora-buvette.ch](https://flora-buvette.ch)



controlled and split into channels for leisure, pleasure and transport.

Thousands of people swim through Basel every year, floating past distinguished waterside restaurants, old wooden fishing huts and museums. Families spread out on huge concrete steps and sunbathers relax on gravel islands as people promenade along the banks. *Buvettes* (kiosks) are popular for a snack or drink. At Buvette Flora, near Johanniterbrücke on the Kleinbasel side, the spritzes go far beyond the usual orange tippie, using woodruff, elderflower and lemon.

“The *buvettes* came within the past decade, when the embankment on the Kleinbasel side was redone,”



BUY: **Schwimmsäcke:** The right way to swim the Rhine is with a floating bag that holds your belongings. The classic fish-shaped Wickelfisch was designed in the 1980s and is widely available. Keeping with the creative drive of hometown designers, there are others to choose from. The nicest is by Tarzan, founded in 2001 by Manuel Rieder and Caesar von Däniken, available at the Rheinbad Breite or the Tarzan shop at Schneidergasse. [wickelfisch.ch](https://wickelfisch.ch); [tarzan.ch](https://tarzan.ch)

BUY: **Bäckerei Kult:** Over the years the river has become a lunchtime conduit for some, with a swim to the city centre to pick up something to eat. Since 1726 Backeri Kult has produced superlative baked goods with two locations – one in St Johann and one in Kleinbasel – three minutes from the Rhine. They are favourites of the swim-to-lunch crowd. Friendly staff expertly wrap your choice so it’ll survive the swim back. [baeckereikult.ch](https://baeckereikult.ch)





STAY: **Hotel Krafft:** The waterside terrace of Hotel Krafft is top in the town, good for a relaxed breakfast or nightcap. The 60-room hotel’s classic yet modern rooms are furnished in dark neutral colours. The hotel lends out Brompton bikes and a collaboration with the tourism board gives guests free local transport. The smart yet unpretentious restaurant is one of the best on the river.

*krafftbasel.ch*

STAY: **Hotel Trois Rois:** The Trois Rois occupies a commanding position over the Rhine and is famed for once hosting Napoleon for lunch. With much pomp and circumstance, it is dependably excellent with stunning riverside rooms. Period furniture and grand proportions ensure a leisurely, luxurious stay. Its three restaurants are favourites for the business crowd, while a drink on the bar balcony above the river always hits the spot.

*lestroisrois.com*



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**The full deck**

Monocle’s roster of 30-plus travel guides offer the inside track on our favourite cities around the world (such as Tokyo, New York, Vienna and Seoul). Our guides include everything from the best beds in town to where to swim, cycle and eat.

*monocle.com/shop*

**How to swim in Basel:**

The Rhine has a strong current but is clean and safe for swimming. Pay special attention to where swimming is allowed – roughly between the Schwarzwaldbrücke and the Dreirosenbrücke.

**Step 1**

Buy a waterproof bag for your floating tour.

**Step 2**

Plan your point of entry. A favourite is behind the Museum Tinguely.

**Step 3**

Simply hop on a ferry to switch sides.

**Step 4**

Rinse off at one of the many public outdoor showers at the river’s edge.

**Step 5**

Grab some well-earned fish and chips.

**BERLIN**

**Badeschiff**

By *Mikaela Aitken*

Despite the attractive lakes around it, Berlin isn’t a city one would necessarily associate with a summer dip. However, the Badeschiff, which opened in 2004, has changed that image entirely. Berliners head here to cool off when the mercury climbs. What’s more, it’s created a communal pastime and gathering point in Alt-Treptow, a historically marginalised part of town. The heated pool floats on the Spree’s east harbour and offers views of the historic Oberbaum Bridge, with the TV Tower framing the picture-perfect scene.

As it’s exposed to the elements, the season here only lasts from May to late September. Aside from turning a few laps, bathers also have the option of signing up for yoga on the deck and paddleboarding classes held in the harbour. If you prefer less strenuous activity, rest assured that there’s ample deck space for lazing – and the manmade beach turns into a bar and outdoor cinema in the evening. — (M)

*arena.berlin/veranstaltungsort/badeschiff*



STAY: **Michelberger Hotel:** A pared-back hotel with a lively courtyard. Don’t leave without trying the in-house schnapps.

*michelbergerhotel.com*

EAT: **Markthalle Neun:** The

19th-century market in Kreuzberg is teeming with fresh produce, food stalls and restaurants, and is the heart of Berlin’s culinary culture.

*markthalleneun.de*

DRINK: **Holzmarkt:** A neighbourhood-owned bar, café and exhibition space on the river in Friedrichshain.

*holzmarkt.com*

SHOP: **Voo Store:** A cracking collection of men’s and women’s streetwear, shoes, accessories, books and homeware.

*vooberlin.com*

SEE: **East Side Gallery:** Facing the river on the less frequented south side, this gallery features lesser-known names.

*eastsidegallery-berlin.de*

ILLUSTRATOR: *Sabbi Obata*. IMAGES: *Garry Images*



DESTINATION. . .

*Turin*

**Ship shape**

You can track the best of Turin along its waterways, whether it’s the spritely early-morning rowers or the late-night revellers carousing at the resurgent Murazzi. Explore and experience the aqua vita.

By *Jesse Dart*

Photographer *Luigi Fiano*



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Life on Turin’s rivers begins early – very early – in the morning. While most of this elegant city’s residents are still asleep, and long before breakfast begins being served at its stately cafés, dedicated rowers take to the River Po. In winter they’re faced by bitterly cold waters and a dark sky but in the summer, gliding on the calm surface of Italy’s longest river, they’re rewarded with the best view that Turin can offer. The snow-capped Alps in the background, the city’s lush hill on one side and the long stretch of the Valentino park on the other – with the tower of the city’s Mole Antonelliana presiding from above; it’s a marvellous, peaceful vignette.

But soon there’s even more activity along its banks: joggers and



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dog-walkers take to the parks and students from the nearby universities and schools keep the lawns occupied well into the afternoon (often with guitars and beer glasses in hand). After dinner, activity moves to the Murazzi, the historic riverbanks where a handful of clubs keep people dancing until the sun rises again over the river.

The Po isn’t the only river in Turin but it is a vital artery: three more waterways crisscross the city and all have been an important part of the urban fabric since Turin’s beginnings. In 1892 the International Federation of Rowing was set up here, and every year since 1992 the Silver Skiff Rowing Brigata has taken place on long stretches of the Po.

Luca Ballarini, an architect and designer, spends his weekends at the Società Canottieri Caprera, on the eastern bank of the river. An avid rower, he says that having four rivers is “a very important feature of Turin – one that we [the Turinese] are trying to promote”. During the 1911 World’s Fair a number of pavilions were built along the west bank and one of the few that remain is the elegant French Pavilion, which is now the Società’s rowing club.

Ballarini founded a non-profit called Torino Stratosferica, which brings together some of Turin’s creative minds to imagine, promote and campaign for Turin at its best – and the relationship with the four rivers is a central part of their mission. River



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- (1) Performance artist David Megaboom  
(2) Birschöpfli (3) Brazil clan tanning  
(4) Typical kiosk at Parco del Valentino  
(5) View of Turin (6) Rowers in training  
(7) Trainer at Società Canottieri Armida



development, Ballarini says “needs several things: political support, a developer with deep pockets and an iron will”.

It’s not just about rowing though. All along the Po and Stura you’ll find plenty of green spaces for walking, running, biking and bird fancying. For a shady spot, try the grass under the giant weeping willow across from the Castello del Valentino. If you’d rather go for a long run or a stroll, miles of walking paths stretch from the southern San Salvatio neighbourhood, following the Po all the way to the northern Parco della Confluenza, where the Po and Stura combine.

Many of the rowing clubs have friendly cafés and excellent restaurants and offer more than just river



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sports, with gyms, pools and tennis courts all available for their members. Bars such as Fluido serve water-side aperitivos and after a long hiatus, one of the city’s venerable institutions, the Imbarchino del Valentino, is reopening its terraces to those who want to spend their days reading under the pergola and stick around for evening gigs. Even with clean water, river swimming is in its infancy, though the annual Polar Bear’s Club dip in the icy waters in the winter months shows that it can be a pleasurable affair.

Once the focal point of the city’s nightlife, the Murazzi in the centre of the city have seen several of its clubs close due to periodic flooding and shortsighted policies. But some of its storied lynchpins – Giancarlo, The

Beach and Doctor Sax – have managed to survive. And there has been a resurgence of new openings too, spear-headed by Mario Mongio and friends, who opened the Turin outpost of sushi joint Bomaki in 2018.

“Now locals stop to thank us because we believed in an area that is often undervalued but deserves special attention,” says Mongio. “We hope that it will cause a re-evaluation of the whole area, where commercial activities will grow, so as to start a real new era of the vibrant and beautiful Murazzi.”

Turin’s many squares and porticoes may be where many residents like to idle and wander on a weekend – but it’s along the rivers that daily life really flows. — (M)



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**STAY: B&B Via Stampatori:** Expect wooden flooring, a calming courtyard and a superb alfresco breakfast. With only a few rooms, the townhouse-turned-bed-and-breakfast provides respite just steps from all of Turin’s attractions.

*viastampatori.com*

**EAT: Gaudenti 1971 (Via Po):** Not only a hotspot for coffee, cornetti, cakes and a morning pick-me-up but also an excellent weekend brunch.

*gaudenti1971.com*

**EAT: Scannabue:** This flag-bearer of Piedmontese food is a neighbourhood staple, with friendly dinnertime vibes and archetypal plates such as vitello tonnato, and *agnolotti del plin*: a small ravioli filled with either herbs or meat.

*scannabue.it*

**PICNIC: Latteria Bera:** With plenty of green space along the river bank for a picnic, stop by the iconic Latteria Bera for some provisions. From cheese and salumi to grissini and wine, the historic

local has been dishing out tasty goodies since 1958.

*13 Via San Tommaso*

**DRINK: Caffè-Vini Emilio Ranzini:** This tiny spot serves some of the best bite-sized snacks in Turin. Located on a quiet, side street near the Porta Palazzo market, it’s open for lunch, aperitivo and dinner.

*9G Via Porta Palatina*

**DO: Società Canottieri Caprera:** For visitors looking to row or hit the tennis courts and pool while in town, the Società Canottieri Caprera offers day and guest passes to non-members (€30).

*canottiericaprera.it*

## KYOTO

### Kamogawa Delta

By Kenji Hall

In summer the banks of the Kamogawa Delta – where the Takano and Kamogawa rivers meet – fill with sunbathers and picnickers. Not far from the forested grounds of the Shimogamo Shrine, the delta is a popular place for splashing around, with residents often frolicking among the large stones that span the water. These concrete blocks – some of which are carved in the form of birds and turtles – were placed here in the 1990s to stabilise the riverbed.

Kyoto’s riversides play an important role in the city’s life in general. Summer is humid so a walk along the bank, a splash in the shallows or just a drink overlooking the water are indispensable – and a staple of the ancient capital’s close relationship with its waterways. — (M)



**STAY: Hotel Kanra Kyoto:** Located near Higashi Honganji temple, this 68-room hotel has an attractive interior that fuses Japanese and western elements. It’s also got a traditional in-house spa.

*hotelkanra.jp*

**EAT: Kiln:** Set on the banks of the Takase River, this bistro specialises in charcoal grilling: think Wagyu beef, chicken brochette and charred yellowtail.

*kilnrestaurant.jp*

**DRINK: Bar K-ya:** Owner-bartender Junichi Kurono runs this exceptional spot. The extensive menu includes seasonal cocktails and Scottish and Japanese whiskies.

*103 Yaoya-cho, Nakagyo-ku*

**SHOP: 45R:** Launched in 1977, 45R is famous for *aizome* (indigo) dyed clothes made in Japan. See the brand’s full line-up at the Kyoto branch.

*61 Masuya-cho, Nakagyo-ku*

**SEE: Saiho-ji Temple:** The temple is no more but there is an eerily beautiful moss garden: more than 120 varieties create a delicate carpet under a canopy of trees. The upper level is a *karesansui*-style dry-rock garden.

*56 Matsuo-jingatanicho, Nishikyo-ku*

PHOTOGRAPHER: Tsutomu Watanabe



DESTINATION. . .  
Brisbane

## Shore thing

Brisbane River is a gravitational force for the Queensland capital’s splash-happy and active residents. From kayaking to cooling off by its banks, there’s plenty to do along this winding waterway.

By Mikaela Aitken

Photographer Faye Sakura Rentoule



(1) Out with the dog (Piera, if you were wondering) (2) Lunch on the river (3) Oars at the ready (4) Rower at Commercial Rowing Club (5) New Farm Park (6) Sunset strip



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There’s what the world considers a conventional wake-up time and then there’s Brisbane’s. “The river is incredibly well used between the hours of 04.00 and 07.00,” says Jo Cook, club captain of Commercial Rowing Club. While fruit bats still pock the night sky, boat lamps illuminate the serpentine path of the Brisbane River. “There’s something almost spiritual about being on the water that early,” she says.

Commercial Rowing Club is one of many organisations catering to Brisbane’s growing affection for watersports. Yet it dates to 1877, making it one of the oldest continuously running sport clubs in Queensland; grainy photos show Victorians cheering on the rowers.

“The Brisbane River is a symbol of the city’s liveability and prosperity,” says Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner. Accordingly, local and state governments are supporting it, with more than AU\$6.9bn (€4.3bn) of tourism-related infrastructure under construction. This will add to the extensive network of walks and cycleways that hug the river’s spine, outdoor public gyms, pocket-size beaches and zippy catamarans that motor 5.4 million people around the city every year.

A large percentage of Brisbane’s key precincts also enjoy prime river real estate: the Queensland Museum and Gallery of Modern Art at South Bank, Eagle Street’s dining precinct (favoured by the suits) and the



verdant public park, marketplace and Powerhouse theatre at New Farm.

This progressive use of the river hasn’t always been an easy sell. It’s taken decades for entrepreneurial residents such as John Sharpe to not only activate other central stretches but to persuade people to use them. “Twenty years ago the attitude was that the river was just an industrial quarry,” says Sharpe, the founder of some of Brisbane’s biggest leisure operators, such as Riverlife and Story Bridge Adventure Climb. He built up a fleet of kayaks and bicycles and convinced thrill-seekers to clamber up the 20-metre cliffs jutting above the river at Kangaroo Point. “When you spend money on amenities, it draws people to the river,” he says.



**EAT: Bar Alto, Brisbane Powerhouse:** A converted power station with an Italian restaurant and enviable waterside berth. [baralto.com.au](http://baralto.com.au)

**SEE: Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art:** A great place to see some of the state’s finest treasure. [qagoma.qld.gov.au](http://qagoma.qld.gov.au)

**DRINK: Felons Brewing Co:** Take your pick from the crisp lager, pale ale or “middy”, a mild session lager. [felonsbrewingco.com.au](http://felonsbrewingco.com.au)

**DO: Riverlife:** A heritage-listed boathouse from which a paddleboard can be rented and adventure organised. [riverlife.com.au](http://riverlife.com.au)

**DO: Commercial Rowing Club** A comely veranda in the West End of the inner city with views to 20km of uninterrupted river. [revolutionise.com.au](http://revolutionise.com.au)



(1) Sunny disposition (2) Rowers on the Brisbane River

Even on an overcast day there’s an alluring glint of green-blue. It’s almost inviting enough to jump in, if it weren’t for some of the less welcoming river dwellers. “Sometimes you’ll feel a knock on the bottom of your boat,” says Cook. “And you don’t know whether you’ve hit a log or a shark.”

At the wharves the subtropical climate is embraced with lofty and open architecture; diners perch on wooden boardwalks overhanging the water, the atmosphere is laidback and the service is warm and familiar. “We don’t need a significant monument like a tower or a big bridge to define us,” says Luke Fraser, CEO of Howard Smith Wharves. “We define ourselves by our lifestyle.” — (M)



## GENEVA

### Pointe de la Jonction

By Mikaela Aitken

There are many spots in which to enjoy the waters of Lake Geneva. Most residents and visitors tend to prefer the Bains des Pâquis – a swimming complex jutting north of the centre – but the younger crowd in Geneva favour Pointe de la Jonction (*pictured, below*).

It’s a little more rough and tumble, less manicured. It sits on a foresty patch where the fast-paced sandy waters of the Arve collide with the slower, glacial blues of the Rhône; here the two rivers merge into one hypnotic green swirl. The best view is from the Viaduc de la Jonction. For a dip, head to Pointe de la Jonction Park, where you can also pick up a kayak from Canoë-Club Genève. — (M) [bains-des-paquis.ch](http://bains-des-paquis.ch); [canoe-club-geneve.ch](http://canoe-club-geneve.ch)

**STAY: Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues Geneva:** This was the city’s first hotel (it opened in 1834) and it remains an institution. [fourseasons.com/geneva](http://fourseasons.com/geneva)

**EAT: Café de la Paix:** This French-style brasserie always has a convivial atmosphere. The menu changes regularly but the focus is always on top-quality seasonal Swiss produce. [cafe-delapaix.ch](http://cafe-delapaix.ch)

**DRINK: Bottle Brothers:** Located in one of the city’s most buzzy quarters are sister bars Petit and Grand Bottle. [bottlebrothers.ch](http://bottlebrothers.ch)

**SHOP: Les Enfants Terribles:** One of the city’s best furniture and design shops. [les-enfants-terribles.ch](http://les-enfants-terribles.ch)

**SEE: Musée d’Art Moderne et Contemporain:** Switzerland’s largest museum for contemporary art has wide windows and high ceilings that welcome in a pleasing diffused light. [mamco.ch](http://mamco.ch)



SHOPPING  
Global

## Kit for purpose

The great outdoors has its minor niggles but these trusty allies will spare you.

By Hester Underhill  
Photographer David Sykes

So you’ve booked your ticket for Brisbane, Basel or Bordeaux but now you need a little inspiration. We’ve amassed a few items for keeping your valuables dry, affairs arranged and self looking smart no matter where in the world you find yourself. Expect snappy waterproofs, picnic kit and prize finds from around the world. Dive in. — (M)



### 1. Bag Speedo

This fluorescent bag is lightweight and water-resistant, handy for stashing your riverside gear. [speedo.com](http://speedo.com)

### 2. Protective case Nanuk

Make sure your electronic devices stay safe from harm with this polycarbonate case, which is waterproof and impact resistant. [nanuk.com](http://nanuk.com)

### 3. Swimsuit cleaner Roullier White

This lime-scented swimwear wash is handmade in the UK and prevents colours fading so those bright yellow budgie smugglers won’t lose their dazzle. [roullierwhite.com](http://roullierwhite.com)

### 4. Rucksack raft Above Below

Pop your belongings into this wetbag and inflatable raft combo and you can tow your picnic across to the other bank. Neatly packable and capable of transporting 70 litres of goodies from A to B and back again. [abovebelow.sc](http://abovebelow.sc)

### 5. Sun lotion Saltee

This 30SPF waterproof sun protection from London-based Saltee contains essential oils to soothe your aching muscles after a front crawl session. [saltee.co.uk](http://saltee.co.uk)

### 6. Dry bags Overboard

This colourful selection of pouches is water and dirt proof so you can take a relaxing dip safe in the knowledge that your belongings are protected. [over-board.co.uk](http://over-board.co.uk)

### 7. Liferaft keyring Force 4

This handy flotation device will stop your keys sinking like a stone. [force4.co.uk](http://force4.co.uk)

### 8. Camera Nikon

This hardy camera can be submerged up to 10 metres. Snap while you swim. [nikon.com](http://nikon.com)

### 9. Headphones Sony

These waterproof, wireless headphones can be paired with your phone – just make sure your device is waterproof too. [sony.com](http://sony.com)





DESTINATION. . .  
Vienna

## Going with the flow

From the river refuge of Alte Donau to the buzzy bars and restaurants that line the Danube Canal, the city waters have become a focal point for the Viennese. Clothing optional.

By Alexei Korolyov  
Photographer Gregor Hofbauer

there are people here in all weathers, and in all stages of dress and undress,” he says.

Not far from the island is the Alte Donau, or Old Danube, a rerouted lake-like arm of the great river and another prime location for a summer dip that’s visited by an estimated one million people every year – not bad for a city of two million. Surrounded by the plate-glassed skyscrapers of the Donaustadt district, it is an urban swimming oasis, complete with clean water, boat rentals and waterfront restaurants (Zur Alten Kaisermühle is so good it nabs an accolade in the Restaurant Awards in our *Drinking & Dining Directory*). Here areas such as the Strandbad Gänsehäufel (a sandy, wooded island in the still waters)

bear testament to this city’s love of spaces in which to escape, and many Viennese have been coming here for generations.

The Danube’s main body is no longer as logistically important as it was in medieval and early industrial times; then it was used to transport goods and building materials to the city. But it is still a busy artery for rowing, cruising and some regional shipping.

However, there’s another iconic waterway in Vienna that rivals the Danube in popularity, though Johann Strauss wrote no waltzes about it as he did the original version: the Donaukanal, or Danube Canal. This rather fast-flowing stream (formerly one arm of the river) curves around the central Innere Stadt district and

on a warm summer’s day its embankment teems with people. The high foot-traffic has made it an integral part of the city’s economy and a marker of its high quality of life. “Fifteen years ago there was nothing here; now the canal and the area around it are bursting with life,” says Haya Molcho, owner of Tel Aviv Beach, one of a dozen new bars that have helped turn the once dull stretch around. “I’m from Tel Aviv myself so water is very important to me and this is as close as you get to it in Vienna.”

As late as the 2000s, much of the canal was an empty concrete promenade riddled with grime and crime but, thanks to restaurateurs such as Haya and the city government’s rejuvenating efforts, it has changed beyond

The canal isn’t ideal for swimming because of its murky waters but there are some options for those unwilling to travel several subway stops to the Alte Donau. Badeschiff is a converted ship anchored close to where the canal meets the River Wien (which, incidentally, gave Vienna its name). In addition to bars on deck and a small skittle alley in its bowels, Badeschiff also boasts an open-air swimming pool with beautiful night-time views of the illuminated Jean Nouvel building on the opposite bank.

“For the Viennese, water is bound up with images of a summer holiday,” says Badeschiff owner Gabor Hillinger. “So when they come to the canal, they like to imagine that they’re on holiday.” — (M)



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“The Danube begins in Germany and goes all the way to the Black Sea but people will always associate it with Vienna,” says Daniel Eberharter, a communications specialist who, like all Viennese, finds himself inexorably drawn to the riverside during the summer months.

So great is his dedication to the Danube, Eberharter once spent a whole year observing and cataloguing life on the Donauinsel, or Danube Island, a 21km-long stretch of artificial land that slices the great river in half. Created in the 1980s as a flood regulation measure, the island has since become a fecund paradise for bathers, wildlife enthusiasts and the occasional bare-cheeked nudist. “One thing you notice straightaway is that



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3

(1) Danube Island (2) Bar on the Donaukanal (3) Book smart (4) Renowned chef Haya Molcho cooking for Tel Aviv Beach (5) Study time (6) Manoeuvring a rowing boat is a two-person job (7) Tel Aviv Beach is a popular sundowner hot spot

recognition. This new look is enhanced by striking modern architecture such as the SO/Vienna hotel by Jean Nouvel (interesting but not to all tastes) and the Raiffeisen bank building, which uses the canal’s strong current to meet most of its electricity needs.

Like its big brother, the canal is also used for navigation. The Twin City Liner connecting Vienna and Bratislava – another Danube-side metropolis – sets off from here. Its terminal is downstairs from Motto am Fluss, one of the smartest restaurants to appear on the canal (almost 10 years ago now). “It’s important for us to be where things are happening,” says manager Astrid Kahl-Schaban. “And this is where things are happening in Vienna.”

PHOTOGRAPHER: Stefan Fürbauer

### On the Alte Donau

We recommend the Alte Donau for its pristine, calm waters, which are easily accessible from much of the riverbank, especially those close to the subway stop.

EAT: **Zur Alten Kaisermühle:** The open-air deck is the best place to eat if the weather allows it – and the grill is the best thing to order from. The spare ribs are sticky, stocky and sublime.  
*kaisermuehle.at*

DO: **Segelschule Hofbauer:** Rent pedal and rowing boats, or sailing vessels, from this boating school on the eastern bank.  
*hofbauer.at*

### On the Danube Canal

You could just kick back in the sun with a can of beer but the Danube Canal offers much more in the way of food and drink.  
EAT: **Motto am Fluss:** This welcoming restaurant consists of two venues: a classy 1950s-style place serving international cuisine (with a few Austrian specialties)

and a breezy café with a spectacular deck.  
*mottoamfluss.at*

EAT: **Hafenkneipe:** A small bar famed for its signature dish, Steckerlfisch: grilled fish on a stick. Its delicious complexity defies its simple description.

April to September; *Franzensbrücke Bridge*  
DRINK: **Tel Aviv Beach:** This relaxed place serves Israeli food and cool drinks to see you through hot Vienna afternoons.  
*nemi.at*

DRINK: **Strandbar Herrmann:** An expansive beach bar in the shadow of the beautiful Jugendstil Urania observatory.  
*strandbarherrmann.at*

DRINK: **Central Garden:** Cosy bar with a sports ground and sandy terrace. It also offers concerts and community events.  
*centralgarden.at*

VISIT: **Badeschiff:** The name means “bathing ship” – a reference to its open-air swimming pool – but Badeschiff also offers simple hearty food and drinks.  
*badeschiff.at*



MUNICH  
Weideninsel  
By Janek Schmidt

There are many spots on the River Isar where you can swim at a leisurely pace (and even two spots to surf year round in the Englischer Garten). The most popular locations are on a 5km stretch between Flaucher in the south – where rocks form small basins for kids to paddle – and Praterinsel, further downstream. Mid-route lies Weideninsel (pictured), an island accessible by wading through the knee-high water. Downstream and close to the bistro Fräulein Grüneis, for those who like a snack with their dip, is Eisbach. This little arm off the river has been home to a surfing culture since the 1970s, where small sections form powerful standing waves. Forgot your board? Just watch and soak up the atmosphere. — (M) eisbachwelle.de



STAY: **The Flushing Meadows:** Eleven of the 16 rooms here were designed by a different creative – such as restaurateur Charles Schumann – and feature soaring ceilings. [flushingmeadowshotel.com](http://flushingmeadowshotel.com)  
EAT: **Weinhaus Neuner:** A wine bar and restaurant set in a noble 15th-century building. The kitchen focuses on Bavarian and Austrian dishes, using only the freshest ingredients. [weinhaus-neuner.de](http://weinhaus-neuner.de)  
DRINK: **Seehaus:** It doesn't get much better than sitting with a glass of something cold on the banks of the Kleinhesseloher See in the Englischer Garten. The Seehaus beer garden is one of the most relaxing places in Munich. [kuffler.de](http://kuffler.de)  
SHOP: **Roeckl:** Founded by Jakob Roeckl, this label has been designing gloves for more than 170 years. Today, it has five shops across Munich and is run by sixth-generation Annette Roeckl. [roeckl.com](http://roeckl.com)  
SEE: **Lenbachhaus:** Built as a Tuscan-style villa for German artist Franz von Lenbach in the late 19th century, the building has been a museum since 1929 and features art from that period right through to today. [lenbachhaus.de](http://lenbachhaus.de)



DESTINATION. . .  
Bordeaux  
Give us a wave

After decades of decline, a museum celebrating the French city's love of wine, markets offering fresh seafood and canny commercial investment have transformed the once-seedy banks of the Garonne.

By Sarah Moroz  
Photographer Thomas Humery



- (1) Afternoon snack  
(2) Les Chantiers de la Garonne  
(3) Breakfast at Les Halles de Bacalan



Bordeaux has been informed by the crescent-shaped Garonne since Gallo-Roman times. Its busy inland port saw decades of decline in the late 20th century until former mayor Alain Juppé launched an ambitious urban-revitalisation plan in the 1990s. It has transformed the previously grim docklands into promenades, bike paths and green spaces galore. The city's 18th-century architecture has been honoured by Unesco – most of Bordeaux is a World Heritage site – but modern projects are shifting the landscape. The boldest addition is the glass-and-aluminium La Cité du Vin, which was built by XTU Architects in 2016. The museum, which is dedicated to the history of viticulture, has an alien feel to it: its swirling silhouette

is inspired by the eddy of wine in a glass. Inside, interactive features aim to simplify the complexities of wine. There are also tasting rooms, a cellar with more than 800 varieties of wine and a shop. Next door is Les Halles de Bacalan, an indoor market and food court. Each counter proffers hearty lunch specials, such as hake ceviche and duck breast with chorizo-filled mashed potato. On Thursdays and Sundays, an organic market held on the docks is ideal for supplies: its 21 producers sell everything from radishes to jewel-like strawberries. Further downriver is the new Maison de l'Économie Créative et de la Culture en Aquitaine (Méca), a new building on the Quai de Paludate jointly designed by Danish



firm Bjarke Ingels Group and French studio Freaks Architecture. The site is the headquarters of three regional arts institutions and its café-cum-restaurant boasts panoramic views. Its raised agora transforms into a stage for outdoor concerts or art installations. “Bordeaux’s power *is* its river-bank,” says Iván Mata, an architect at Freaks Architecture.

Bordeaux’s centre is anchored on the Garonne’s left bank but its right bank is catching up. Crossing the river on the southern Pont de Pierre or northern Pont Chaban-Delmas – or by BAT3 boat – you reach the Bastide neighbourhood. Home to a mix of abandoned factories, new social housing, greenery and outdoor café-bars, its potential will be transformative.



1

Bastide also hosts the Jardin Botanique, which features a communal neighbourhood garden and a greenhouse. It butts up to the riverside Parc aux Angéliques, which leads to La Caserne Niel, known as “Darwin”, a community hub with a responsible ecology bent. Located in a former military barracks, it includes an urban farm, skatepark, co-working space and Le Magasin Général, a café and organic grocery shop where one can buy delicacies such as honey or scallop rillettes. Now teeming with entrepreneurs, creatives, and visitors, the site was derelict just 10 years ago.

Few Bordelais visited Bastide – let alone invested in it – until Philippe Barre founded La Caserne Niel in 2008. He now oversees a slew of

other sunset-facing venues: the sleekly rustic La Belle Saison, which offers quinoa bowls and snacks of Basque *chistorra* sausage; Les Chantiers de la Garonne, a bar and brewery serving drinks coffee IPA and lemon-and-thyme beer; and a nautical club. Barre also acquired La Guinguette Chez Alriq, an eclectic *cabaret populaire* that has hosted quirky concerts since 1990.

“The river brings us to another place,” says Barre. He is now engaging with city hall to try to persuade them to be thoughtful about future developments along the Garonne. Like many Bordelais, he wants to see projects and enterprises that further channel the spirit of the river and provide the means for a sea change in this once-overlooked area of the city. — (M)



2

**STAY: La Course:** This townhouse features rooms with vast bathtubs, canopy beds and private terraces. [lacourse-bordeaux.fr](#)  
**EAT: Chez Boulan:** Local and seasonal, this restaurant *iodé* specialises in seafood and oysters. [chezboulanbordeaux.fr](#)  
**DRINK Symbiose:** The restaurant gives way to a speakeasy-style cocktail bar tucked behind a grandfather clock. [4 Quai des Chartrons](#)  
**DO: Bordeaux Canoe:** Take a two-hour tour of the Garonne by canoe or kayak past the city’s 18th-century façades, between Bègles and Bordeaux. [bordeauxcanoe.com](#)

(1) Ball’s out (2) Dinner at La Guinguette Chez Alriq (3) Elizabeth Quay (4) Bicton Baths (5) The Island Brew House

## STOCKHOLM

### Brunnsviksbadet Beach

By Melkon Charchoglyan

So these aren’t technically rivers but in the spirit of swimming we’ve included the Swedish capital’s embarrassment of beautiful bathing spots. In the summer the Swedes are happy to splash out anywhere and the capital city is no poorer for options than the countryside. Most visitors opt for Brunnsviksbadet Beach but there are plenty of other spots to discover. The best and most accessible is Långholmen, a large island northwest of Södermalm that’s dotted with summer cottages and jetties. To the north of the city, a five-minute walk from Stockholm University and the Universitetet metro, you’ll find Lake Brunnsviken. Its shores are ideal if you’re after some solace (the students are away for much of the summer). — (M)

**STAY: Hotel Skeppsholmen:** A 78-room hotel in a former 17th-century barracks, tastefully reinterpreted by architecture studio Claesson Koivisto Rune. The island setting makes you forget you’re in a city at all. [hotelskeppsholmen.se](#)

**EAT: Oaxen Slip:** Set in a former boatyard in Djurgården, this restaurant serves Nordic recipes with a few ingredients from further afield; the lamb shoulder with yoghurt and turmeric sauce alone is worth the trip. [oaxen.com](#)

**DRINK: Bleck:** This charming restaurant-bar with a rustic terrace is perched under a towering oak tree and softly lit by twinkling fairy lights. The cocktails – adventurous but always on point – are the main attraction. [restaurangbleck.se](#)

**SHOP: Kaolin:** This artist-owned space has displayed tableware and ornaments by Swedish ceramicists since 1978 and today presents wares by more than 20 makers – mostly Stockholmers. [kaolin.se](#)

**SEE: ArkDes:** Sweden’s largest architecture museum, on the island of Skeppsholmen, explores the link between design and society. [arkdes.se](#)



DESTINATION. . .

Perth

## In fine feather

Explorers and residents alike have become besotted with Perth’s Swan River. So how has it retained its status as the city’s focal point? With good planning, a love of water sports and an appreciation of nature.

By Adrian Craddock

Photographer Dion Robeson



3

When James Stirling, the first governor of Western Australia, began to explore the Swan River in 1825, he was astounded by what he saw. To his eyes it was a “spot as beautiful as anything of the kind I have ever witnessed”. Nearly 200 years on, the landscape that bewitched Stirling has changed dramatically. Along its banks stands Perth, a key player in Australia’s lucrative resources sector. Its central business district is home to busy bars and shops; at night the logos of mining companies illuminate the towering skyline.

Urban planners have always tried to protect the river, the city’s most important natural asset, and the waterway remains central to the everyday lives of most residents, as

well as a major attraction for visitors. “The river is part of our DNA,” says Andy Fethers, a two-time world sailing champion and instructor. “We’re blessed to have it so close to the city.” Fethers has raced and lived around the globe but he recently returned to his native Perth to oversee Swan River Sailing, a non-profit organisation that operates private charter boats and gives inexperienced sailors the opportunity to view the city from the water. “It’s a unique vantage point,” he says. “During most charters the dolphins will come have a look at us; if not the swans will.”

Fethers often heads south towards Fremantle port, past the lush riverside parks and sports grounds of Perth’s oldest and most affluent suburbs and



4

Bicton Baths, a popular swimming spot since 1926. But there is more to see. A short walk south of Perth’s busiest shopping streets is Elizabeth Quay, a newly constructed waterfront precinct. The state government conceived the project as a way to improve links between downtown Perth and the river.

At the heart of the AU\$440m (€270m) development is an inlet lined with a promenade and picnic spots. Restaurateurs have moved quickly, opening casual spots such as The Island, a restaurant in a heritage-listed kiosk that serves delicacies including prawns and slow-cooked lamb shoulder. “Our building is very open so you can do a lot of people-watching,” says Marisa Romeo, The Island’s acting general manager. “There are always

runners going by and on the weekend they often stop in for breakfast.”

In summer, ferries leave Elizabeth Quay for the Swan Valley, docking intermittently at wineries such as Sandalford. The estate dates back to 1840 and was originally owned by John Septimus Roe, the surveyor general on Stirling’s inaugural voyage to Western Australia. “Some of the vines on our grounds are 125 years old,” says Sandalford CEO Grant Brinklow. “In a state as young as Western Australia, that is rare.” Brinklow has worked at Sandalford for more than a decade but his appreciation for its natural surroundings hasn’t waned. “The Swan is everything to Perth,” he says. “Without that water we wouldn’t have the life we have here.” — (M)



5

**STAY: Como The Treasury:** Perth’s premier stay is a 48-key affair in a revamped 19th-century building. [comohotels.com](#)

**EAT: Freshwaters:** Local architect Paul Burnham is responsible for designing one of the city’s most beautiful cafés. [3 Lilla St, Peppermint Grove](#)

**EAT: The Boat Shed:** This restaurant’s floor-to-ceiling windows offer an unrivalled vantage of the CBD at night. [boatshedrestaurant.com](#)

**DRINK: Raffles:** This art deco pub touts riverside views and unusual cocktails. [rafflesperth.com.au](#)

**DRINK: Riverside Brewhouse:** This microbrewery continues a long tradition of beer-making on the banks of the Swan. [riversidebrewhouse.com.au](#)

**COFFEE: Rubra on the Swan:** An artisanal coffee roaster that sits adjacent to Perth’s oldest rowing club. [rubraontheswan.com.au](#)