

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 23 - 25, 2008

WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE

A new way to order a meal

At Paris's Il Vino,
the wine comes first

Where to eat in Beijing | Getting fit for golf

Contents

3 | Fashion

On Style: Cartier courts the ladies who lunch

4, 5 | Food & Drink

Gold-medal cuisine in Beijing

6, 7 | Sports

Getting fit for golf

Climbing rocks, saving lives

Collecting: Football memorabilia



WSJ.com

10, 11 | Cover story Food & Drink

A new way to order a meal

At Paris's Il Vino the wine comes first



On cover, Il Vino's sautéed baby squid with bell-pepper confit and chives, paired with a 2007 Torrontes from Bodega Lurton; above, sautéed sea bass with caramelized endive and sweet potato puree, paired with a 2006 Riesling-Hochrain from Franz Hirtzberger. Photos: Olivier Roux

8, 9 | Food & Drink

Tastings: Barbera at its best

Kingsley Amis's literary hangovers

12 | Film

Indy's looking tired

Art and identity in Taiwan

13 | Travel

A North Korean road trip

14 | Taste

Okely dokely

19 | Top Picks

Events in London and Paris

20 | Time Off

Our arts and culture calendar

Ultimate fighters?

Some of the biggest names in the U.S. cage-fighting scene are police officers.
>WSJ.com/WeekendJournal

Down to earth

Home designs are trending away from 'cathedral' ceilings, seen as drafty and noisy.
>WSJ.com/WeekendJournal

An extra key

A \$22 million Biscayne Bay home for sale includes an island in the Florida Keys.
>WSJ.com/WeekendJournal

WEEKEND JOURNAL

EUROPE

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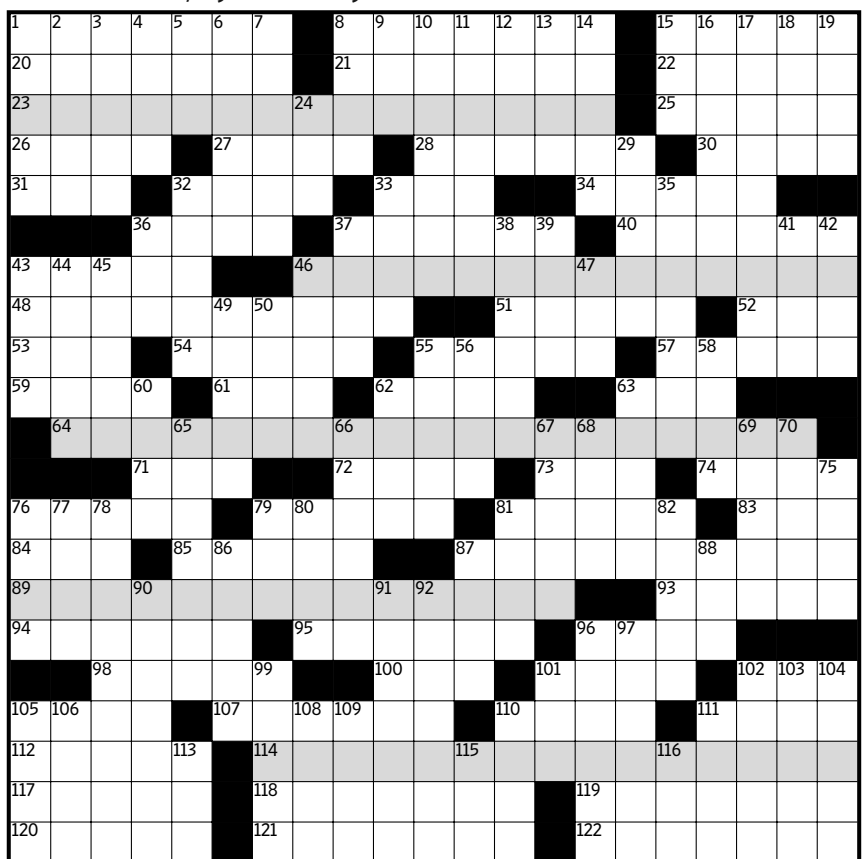
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THE JOURNAL CROSSWORD / Edited by Mike Shenk

Across

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Londoner's lot | 23 Start of a quote by 122-Across | 33 --de-sac | 48 Astor, e.g. |
| 8 The eighth plague of Egypt | 25 Page of music | 34 You might have a yen for it | 51 Orphan Edwin of fiction |
| 15 Epitomes of innocence | 26 Barracks sights | 36 Crazes | 52 Minute |
| 20 Dulles's predecessor | 27 After the whistle | 37 "Humboldt's Gift" author | 53 Hoppy stuff |
| 21 Fat substitute | 28 Hearing aide | 40 Pitches | 54 It makes sounds |
| 22 Another time | 30 Put aside | 43 Curl one's lip at | 55 Reach perfection |
| | 31 Flying off the shelves | 46 Part 2 of the quote | 57 Kindle download |
| | 32 Funny Foxx | | 59 Sorvino of "Mimic" |
| | | | 61 Whiskas eater |

Cash Position / by Marie Kelly



- | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 62 Early release | 8 Topic of many songs | 50 Reuben's mother | 87 First U.S. ballistic missile |
| 63 Refrain snippet | 9 Pay attachment | 55 Kidney-related | 88 Dead-end job, e.g. |
| 64 Part 3 of the quote | 10 Tiny unit of an organism | 56 Agenda component | 90 "Why bother?" |
| 71 Towel embroidery | 11 In general | 58 Prepare to switch | 91 How the pros vote |
| 72 Emulate Odysseus | 12 Crockpot creation | 60 Masseur's target | 92 Picnic sights |
| 73 ID info | 13 Heinrich Schliemann unearthed it in 1871 | 62 Crude dude | 96 Chicken little? |
| 74 Starbucks size | 14 Bond holders, at times | 63 Paris site | 97 Flight board phrase |
| 76 Katana's cousin | 15 Once around | 65 Some explosions | 99 Very silly |
| 79 Bustle | 16 Ismaili leader | 66 Country's Yearwood | 101 Family member, familiarly |
| 81 "Cockaigne Overture" composer | 17 Chess problem caption | 67 Key | 102 It's a dyeing art |
| 83 Fizzle out | 18 Penetrating wit | 68 Singer Suzanne | 103 Alamo event |
| 84 One-time bridge | 19 Trim | 69 Low point | 104 Extra charge |
| 85 1987 Peace Prize recipient | 24 Budding business? | 70 Subject for an X-file | 105 Economist Smith |
| 87 Some bills | 29 Costner's "Tin Cup" co-star | 75 For fear that | 106 Cause of misery |
| 89 Part 4 of the quote | 32 Cost | 76 Makes the cut, in a way | 108 "Ah, yes" |
| 93 Beyond well-done | 33 Piddling payment | 77 Crowning | 109 Singer Hendryx |
| 94 Wild outings | 35 Miniature burgers | 78 Plymouth muscle car | 110 Company dinner |
| 95 Subject of a noted 1922 documentary | 36 Work wk. end | 79 Capture | 111 Designer Jacobs |
| 96 Split | 37 Deck crew's head | 80 Private Benjamin's portrayer | 113 Tax |
| 98 Clueless | 38 Address used when asking for a loan, maybe | 81 Composer Satie | 115 Bean spiller |
| 100 How the pros vote | 39 One way to transfer cash | 82 Caucasian coin | 116 What boys will be |
| 101 Fit to be tried | 41 Red Sox general manager Epstein | 86 Hills | |
| 102 "Be Prepared" org. | 42 Go after | | |
| 105 Rudiments | 43 Phishing, e.g. | | |
| 107 Kind of column | 44 S.F. setting | | |
| 110 Make change? | 45 Price performance | | |
| 111 Hyatt hire | 46 Mazda roadster | | |
| 112 Discourage | 47 Many millennia | | |
| 114 End of the quote | 49 Statement nos. | | |
| 117 All-purpose conjunction | | | |
| 118 Ladies of Spain | | | |
| 119 Famed first name in navigation | | | |
| 120 Thought-provoking | | | |
| 121 Publishing family | | | |
| 122 Author of the quote | | | |

Last week's solution



WSJ.com

Crossword online
For an interactive version of The Wall Street Journal Crossword, WSJ.com subscribers can go to
WSJ.com/WeekendJournal

Down

- Hidden downside
- Cold call?
- Butler of fiction
- Muscle Beach display
- Fire proof
- No longer clear
- Does a bakery job

❖ Fashion

Cartier courts the super-rich

SEVERAL DOZEN philanthropists, art enthusiasts and ladies who lunch gathered in a private home here last week to discuss art savage and Cartier jewelry. It was almost hard to tell it was a marketing event.

Andrew Bolton, assistant curator for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, was the af-

On Style

CHRISTINA BINKLEY

ternoon's star attraction—or nearly so, as he was competing with a 51-carat, yellow diamond ring and several million dollars worth of other jewelry that was strewn among peonies and orchids on the banquet table.

But over Maine lobster and Cara Cara orange confit, the folks from Cartier were hard at work attempting to rejuvenate interest in what the company originally was known for: stunning “high” jewelry of the sort that once caused Indian maharajahs to appear in the company's Paris atelier, carrying bags of gemstones for Cartier to set.

These days, Cartier is better known for its heavily advertised, mass-produced “Love” bracelets and watches—as well as the accessories that please investors: sunglasses, handbags, pens, lighters. There is even an assortment of fragrances, such as “Délices de Cartier,” which is described on the company's Web site as smelling like “iced-up Morello cherry.”

These products enlarged Cartier, a unit of **Compagnie Financière Richemont SA**. But while they haven't exactly tarnished the jeweler's image, they've certainly scratched it a bit. This is precisely the paradox of the luxury industry today. The world isn't creating maharajah-size spenders fast enough to meet Wall Street growth targets, so companies do what Tiffany recently announced and what made Coach a juggernaut a couple of years ago: They open stores in malls and fill them with products trading on the brand's panache.

Anxious about losing its luster, however, Cartier is aggressively stalking the superwealthy in their own natural habitat. Cartier's U.S. chief executive, Frédéric de Narp, last year recruited art adviser Carl Adams from Christie's auction house, where Mr. Adams had assembled an enviable Rolodex. As Cartier's vice president of business development, Mr. Adams organizes 18th-century-style salons that give Cartier access to socialites in their own homes. “We want these influential women to understand the heritage of the brand,” Mr. de Narp says.

The luxury house doesn't sell anything at the events. Rather, it aims to build relationships with future customers so that when someone wants to buy a \$150,000 bracelet, she thinks of Cartier first.

“I'm trying to build an awareness that Cartier—at a certain level—still exists,” Mr. Adams says.

Last Thursday afternoon, 44 bejeweled women gathered at the Bel Air home of Carla Sands, wife of real-estate mogul Fred Sands. The guest list was chosen jointly by Cartier and Mrs. Sands. “I've known the hostess for years, and I knew the caliber of the people she would invite,” Mr. Adams said. He'd already held

“Cartier ateliers” in Costa Mesa, California, and Palm Beach, Florida.

After midday hors d'oeuvres in the Sands living room, Chanel haute couture client Susan Casden, actress Suzanne Somers and a cross-section of Los Angeles socialites lunched on the veranda.

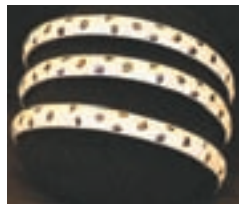
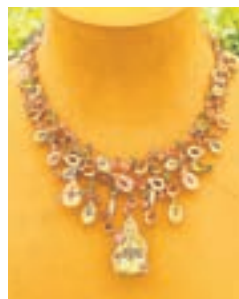
Some of Cartier's best five- and six-figure inventory served as centerpieces. They quickly became irresistible. “I never thought I'd look good in a big rock like this,” mused Kathi Koll, wife of real-estate developer Donald Koll, as she tried on the 25-carat “D internally flawless,” emerald-cut diamond ring.

Three women, including art patron Susan Gersh, hatched a playful plan to invest jointly in a **Panthère de Cartier** bracelet set with 1,310 diamonds and 133 sapphires. Prices, however, weren't discussed.

By the time the iced mango pudding arrived, Joni Smith—a fixture on the Los Angeles Philharmonic annual gala committee—had loosened buttons on her frothy, high-necked dress to try on an elaborate necklace of diamonds, amethysts, sapphires and other gems. She pulled a tiny mirror from her purse. Mr. Adams fetched a bigger mirror. “We should pass them around, yes. I think that's a great idea,” he said belatedly.

Mrs. Smith joked that a bauble might fall into her handbag. “My purse keeps falling open.”

After coffee and candied cashews, the group retired to the screening room for Messrs. Adams and Bolton's PowerPoint presentation on fauvism, the Ballet Russes and how wild-animal art influenced fashion and Cartier. A photo of dancer Vaslav Nijinsky in spotted tights segued to a



Clockwise from above, **Joni Smith** (left) with Annette O'Malley; a **Panthère de Cartier** bracelet; a necklace of diamonds, amethysts and sapphires.

shot of Cartier panther watches and a plug for Cartier as an innovator in setting stones in platinum. Ms. Somers jabbed her neighbor to point out photos of Cartier patrons and influences whose clothes intrigued her: a snazzy bejeweled dress, a pair of sparkly cowboy boots.

Mr. Adams gossiped about Cartier clients. “What was great about the Duke and Duchess of Windsor was that they were extraordinary

customers of ours,” he said with a grin. Mr. Bolton entertained the salon with tales of scouring eBay to bolster the Met's collections.

There were no questions as the lecture concluded. Mr. Adams appeared thoughtful as a white-gloved handler packed away jewels.

He was already planning his next salon. “I've got to figure out how to get people to loosen up,” Mr. Adams said, “and get the conversation going.”



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Gold-medal cuisine: Provincial dishes enliven Beijing's food scene

BY STAN SESSER

Beijing

PROTESTS, TRAFFIC and pollution are three things visitors to Beijing expect to encounter at the Summer Olympic Games. But the city has something else to offer attendees willing to venture beyond hotel and tourist restaurants: some of the best food on the planet.

Dumplings here are lusciously plump and thin-skinned. Peking duck is incomparably tender and juicy. And then there are the dishes that will surprise most Western visitors, from hot corn juice to purple lily roots with pumpkin.

It's a world away from the state-owned restaurants that defined Beijing dining as recently as a decade ago, with contemptuous staff and bland, greasy fare. In recent years, these have been eclipsed as private enterprise and exploding personal wealth have turned Beijing into a magnet for restaurants from the provinces. Now, ask Beijingers for recommendations and you'll get a list of places specializing in cuisine from as far away as Guizhou in the Southwest and the Silk Road in Xinjiang, north of Tibet. These restaurants have come up so far and so fast that Beijing now rivals Shanghai, its sister city in attracting new-found wealth, as the most interesting and varied dining scene in China.

"Today I think the restaurants in Beijing are better than in Shanghai or Guangzhou because of their variety," says Eileen Wen Mooney, a Chinese-American and longtime Beijing resident, whose book on the city's res-



A chef holds **chive 'pizza'** from Beijing snack restaurant Jiu Men Xiao Chi.

Photos: Stan Sesser/WSJ, Doug Kanter, Raul Vasquez

taurants is set to come out next month. "The people in Beijing really want to explore new things."

Dining at many of these places requires a trip into the *hutongs*, the rabbit warrens of

narrow alleys where—at least before many were bulldozed—Beijingers did much of their local business. Don't count on finding a cabbie or a waiter who understands English. At Jiu Men Xiao Chi, a chaotic hutong restaurant specializing in Beijing-style snacks, you get your seat by standing over a table that's almost finished and glaring at the occupants until they leave.

Historically, Beijing has lacked the proud culinary tradition of some of the provinces. Landlocked and with a climate too cold for rice-growing, the native cuisine is based on wheat, leaning heavily on dumplings, noodles and flat breads. Lamb, often in the form of a Mongolian hot pot, was introduced via nearby nomadic and Muslim cultures. While the Cantonese ate everything that moved or poked out of the ground, Beijingers were limited to cooking that was heartier, heavier and—especially at state-owned restaurants—excessively oily and salty. Those hungering for seafood and a variety of vegetables needed a train ticket south.

Beijing now boasts seafood that would satisfy the most finicky Cantonese, thanks in part to improvements in China's vast transportation systems. If you don't believe it, order the steamed Reeves shad, the house specialty at Jade Garden, which serves the food of Jiangsu province. It's a rare and costly freshwater fish that is stunningly rich and delicate.

A tiny, six-table restaurant, called Guo Yao Xiao Ju, specializes in Tan Family cuisine, a type of cooking even many Chinese haven't heard of. It dates to the mid-19th century, when Tan Zongjun moved to Beijing from

southern Guangdong province to assume a government post. Known for his lavish banquets, he developed a new cuisine using elements of both the north ("lumpy dough soup" is boiled bits of dough in a tomato-based stock) and south (seafood, especially fish stomachs). The chef at Guo Yao Xiao Ju, whose name is Guo Xinjun, is his family's fourth generation trained in the Tan Family style. In an elegant dining room, seven of us had a gastronomic adventure for less than \$100.

We consulted three foodies who are experts in Beijing restaurants—Ms. Mooney; Steven Gu, a former corporate headhunter who travels China ferreting out the best restaurants everywhere he goes; and Cheng Lixin, an accomplished cook from Wuhan, former economic researcher and now an Air Canada flight attendant who frequents the Toronto-Beijing route. Based on their recommendations, we chose eight restaurants whose menus, ranging from Peking duck and classic Beijing dumplings to the cuisines of Guizhou and Jiangsu provinces, will reward the considerable navigation efforts required to get there. For restaurants with Chinese-only menus, we have translated names of a few dishes into Pinyin, the Western-alphabet transliteration of Chinese characters.

WSJ.com

Hot pots

Get a printable guide to these restaurants, download audio pronunciation tips and see more photos of the Beijing dining scene, at WSJ.com/Europe

Extremes of China's cuisines

Stan Sesser on some of the highs and lows of dining in Beijing.

Spiciest

The chicken with red chilies and whole cloves of garlic at Jun Qin Hua, the Guizhou restaurant, will leave your tongue in a state of paralysis.

Best bargain

The dumplings at Xian Lao Man. Three of us ate 40 of them—plus lots of other food—and got a bill for \$12.



Most delicious

The Peking Duck at Liqun Roast Duck elevates something commonplace to its highest form.

Most expensive

The steamed Reeves shad at Jade Garden. In Beijing, \$41 for a half fish would be outright highway robbery if the fish didn't taste so wonderful.



Hardest to navigate

Jiu Men Xiao Chi, the Beijing snack restaurant, appears to be hopeless chaos when you arrive, but it reveals its delights to those nervy enough to score a table.



Easiest to navigate

Even though it is patronized largely by Beijing locals, Hua Jia Yi Yuan, the modern Beijing cuisine restaurant, hasn't missed a trick in welcoming foreigners, including a menu with a photo and English caption for every dish.

Best avoided

Eating in hotels. I'm sure that somewhere in China there's a great hotel restaurant, but I haven't found it.



Hong Zhuang Yuan (Beijing congee)

It looks like a Salvation Army thrift store, but the food doesn't suffer. Hong Zhuang Yuan has 29 branches in Beijing open 24 hours a day, many of them looking like a warehouse on the outside and a barn on the inside. I picked one near the Panjia Yuan antique market, which provides a second reason to make the excursion. The specialty here is congee, the thick rice soup that served

elsewhere ranges from ethereal to library paste. Here, 15 kinds of congee are on the menu, my favorites being with mushroom and duck, with five kinds of nuts and with sliced fish. There's also a knockout roast pork knee (mysteriously referred to as "catsup big bone" on the menu) and really nice sliced duck with sesame buns.
7 Panjia Yuan Rd. (near Panjia Yuan antique market), Chaoyang district; ☎ 86-10-8771-8029; cash only; around \$7 a person

Xian Lao Man (Beijing-style dumplings)

In this bustling room decorated with big jars of pickled garlic, customers are offered a full menu of stir-fries and cold dishes. They're all good, but inevitably most people migrate to the dumplings, which are sheer poetry—freshly made, big and plump, with a tender, delicate skin. The stuffings range from classic pork (Zhu Rou Da Bai Cai Jiao Zi) to varieties you've never heard of, such as a mix of carrots and tofu (Lao Man Jiao Zi). Despite ordering lots of other dishes, three of us wolfed down 40 dumplings—and this was scheduled to be our light lunch. But in the gluttony



of dumplings, don't miss a dish that looks like a Chinese version of coleslaw (Xian Lao Man Da Ban Cai). Made from shredded Napa cabbage and tofu skin, it puts to shame any coleslaw served in the West. It was so good that, even though we were stuffed beyond reason, we had to order seconds.
252 An Nei Da Jie, Dongcheng district; ☎ 86-10-6404-6944; cash only; around \$4 a person



Jun Qin Hua (Guizhou)

In two barren rooms, you roll up your sleeves and eat hearty, spicy food from impoverished Guizhou province in China's Southwest. The cuisine resembles that of neighboring Sichuan: While it's not as oily, you'll definitely notice the dried red chilies and the numbing "peppercorns," which are actually the fruit of the prickly ash plant. A spectacular dish here is a whole catfish

cooked at your table in a hot-and-sour tomato-based broth (Suan Tang Yu Huo Guo). The chicken in red chilies and whole cloves of garlic (La Zi Ji) will immerse you in spices. Gou Rou, one of the most popular dishes in Guizhou—sometimes known in English as man's best friend—is also on the menu, the featured meat in a red-hot soup.
88 Meishuguan Houjie, Dongcheng district; ☎ 86-10-6404-7600; cash only; around \$7 a person



Jade Garden (Jiangsu)

Seafood delicacies are served in a modern restaurant so elegant and trendy, it's hard to believe the food will be any good. But it turns out to be great—the cuisine of Jiangsu province, on the coast just north of Shanghai, with some dishes from Shanghai and Hangzhou thrown in. Jade Garden is a commentary not only on how wonderful food transplanted from other provinces can be, but also on how the current crop of Beijing restaurants, with impeccable taste,



ignores the chandeliers and faux-Louis XIV furniture that define "elegance" in Hong Kong. Apart from the memorable steamed Reeves shad (at \$41 for half a fish, the most expensive thing I ate in Beijing), the spareribs Wuxi-style and the cold chicken in hot-and-spicy sauce will enliven your meal.
6 Jiqingli Chao Wai Ave., Chaoyang district; ☎ 86-10-6552-8688; major credit cards; \$25-40 a person



Guo Yao Xiao Ju (Tan Family cuisine)

If I had just one meal in Beijing, this three-year-old restaurant is where I'd eat it. Elegant surroundings, terrific food, interesting cuisine, reasonable prices and the one-upmanship of being comfortably ensconced at a six-table restaurant in this otherwise teeming city—what more could you ask? The menu won't be familiar: "lumpy dough soup" in a tomato stock (Ge Da Tang); sliced pork sausage marinated in



the fiery Chinese liquor maotai (Zi Zhi Jui Kao Xiang Chang); a rich fish-stomach soup (Nong Tang Yu Du Si) and, most delicious of all, duck meat and chives rolled into crepes and deep-fried (Ya Si Dan Juan). Mr. Tan's cuisine, dating back 150 years, deserves to be perpetuated indefinitely. The staff doesn't speak English but they are warm and friendly, making this a welcome refuge from Olympics bustle.
58 Jiaodaokou Bei Santiao, Dongcheng district; ☎ 86-10-6403-1940; major credit cards; around \$15 a person



Hua Jia Yi Yuan (Modern Beijing)

The customers of this beautiful, sprawling courtyard restaurant are overwhelmingly Beijingers, but this place makes foreigners feel at home, including a menu with dazzling photos and English translations of every dish. The food is "modified to the needs of contemporary people who need to eat healthy and green," the menu brags, and that's not hyperbole. From the pitchers of fresh

fruit juice and hot corn juice (a real discovery), to the crunchy wild vegetables and the hot pot of assorted seafood, meat and vegetables, everything is fresh-tasting, light and delicate. The "Li Yuan Famous Chicken," presenting Sichuan flavors without all the oil and dried chilies, is noteworthy.
235 Inner Dongzhimen St., Dongcheng district; ☎ 86-10-6405-1908; major credit cards; around \$20 a person

Liqun Roast Duck (Peking duck)

Don't be deterred by the winding streets that take you to Liqun: Trishaw drivers are parked at the entrance to the hutong area to pedal you to the restaurant's front door. The walk to your table takes you through an authentic Peking duck kitchen, with flames shooting out of the brick oven and ducks hanging from the walls. It's a world away from Da Dong, the most famous of Beijing's many Peking duck restaurants, where the version I ate left me wondering what all the fuss was about. It was dry and tasteless; presentation took precedence over flavor. No such complaints about Liqun. Here, Peking duck is slapped unceremo-



niously onto your very inelegant table, but what a duck it is—tender and juicy, and served with delicate, paper-thin pancakes. The menu offers 30 duck dishes besides the classic, ranging from duck tongues to duck hearts to organs you don't want to know about.
11 Beixiangfeng Alley, Zhengyi Rd., Chongwen district; ☎ 86-10-6705-5578 (reservations essential); major credit cards; a whole duck is \$20



Jiu Men Xiao Chi (Beijing-style snacks)

This sprawling courtyard house in a hutong district near the Forbidden City requires you to be a Beijinger and deal with pushing and shoving. First, you jockey for a table. Then you buy an electronic pay card at the cashier's booth (if money is left, it will be refunded) and pick up a tray and utensils. Then it's food-booth hopping, each specializing in enticing snacks,

whether as ordinary as wonton soup (miraculous) or as exotic as a sheep's head (I didn't try it). They deduct the price of the dish from your card, sometimes asking you to return in five minutes while it's cooked to order. Finally you're ready to sit at your table and eat. Don't miss the beef in sesame buns (Shao Bing Jia Rou) and the Chinese chive "pizza" (Hu Bing).
1 Xiaoyou Hutong off Denei Dajie Rd. Xicheng district; ☎ 86-10-6402-5858; cash only; around \$10 a person

How getting fit for the links can pay off

A LOT OF GOLFERS I know follow Mark Twain's regimen for physical fitness: "Every time I feel the urge to exercise, I lie down until it goes away."

Still, it's hard not to wonder what a little more application on the physical front could do for one's golf game, given the way golf magazines and TV commentators rhapsodize

Golf Journal

JOHN PAUL NEWPORT

about the maniacal workouts of players such as Tiger Woods and Vijay Singh. I have nothing against exercise. In fact, I enjoy a heart-thumping 30 minutes on the elliptical trainer whenever I can find time for the gym. Ditto for the pumped-up feeling in my arms and legs after a weight workout.

But there's a difference between this type of general exercise and the golf-specific drills prescribed in articles and on videos. Golf routines usually have you assume some kind of awkward position—standing on one leg or prone like a wounded bug on your back with feet and arms waving in the air. Then they call for repeatedly moving an isolated body part or an obscure muscle—such as the *gluteus medius*—in an unnatural way.

These exercises, in my experience, are amazingly tedious. Sometimes when you finish, you don't even feel tired; there's instead a fatigue in the microfibrils of the muscles, which isn't the same as that good old satisfying "burn." You have to take it on faith the effort is worthwhile.

The most authoritative source for golf fitness advice is the Titleist Performance Institute, a supergym and golf-practice center in Oceanside, California. For \$10,000, you can go there and get a physical workup by doctors, physical therapists, nutritionists and swing instructors, plus a new set of custom-fitted Titleist clubs. Titleist's Tour pros spend a lot of time at TPI.

Or you can log on to its Web site, mytpi.com (free after registration), and develop your own fitness program. The site goes deep with articles explaining the biomechanics of golf

and provides sample workout regimes geared to different goals, such as power, balance or flexibility. Short video clips demonstrate each exercise.

The experts at TPI know their stuff, and the workouts they prescribe can help your golf game—if diligently pursued. That's a big if.

Take, for example, Tour pro Rory Sabbatini, whose case study is posted on the site in such detail it feels like an invasion of privacy. Between February 2007, when he started working with trainer Jeff Banaszak, and February 2008, Mr. Sabbatini improved his internal hip rotation, which is key in creating a stable golf swing, from 25 to 60 degrees on one side and from 27 to 62 degrees on the other. He made dramatic progress in other measures and, more important, eliminated the lower left back pain that had been preventing him from practicing as much as he needed to. His world rankings during that period climbed from 42nd to eighth.

Mr. Sabbatini's progress didn't come easily. Mr. Banaszak, who runs a company called Back9Fitness, traveled to nearly every event where Mr. Sabbatini competed. Early each week he would give Mr. Sabbatini an hour of stretches and deep-tissue massage. He'd spend another 30 minutes working on Mr. Sabbatini's shoulders, trunk and hips before each round and put him through another session afterward. In addition, he supervised two or three strength workouts a week, and gave Mr. Sabbatini daily drills to do on his own. He even whipped up protein breakfast shakes for Mr. Sabbatini and prepared nutritious snacks to eat during rounds.

And that was just maintenance work. On Mr. Sabbatini's off weeks, Mr. Banaszak ordered more intense routines.

For everyday golfers, such commitment would be absurd. "Most golfers don't want anything to do with the gym, to be honest," Mr. Banaszak said. That's why he has decided to focus his business on Tour players rather than on the much larger consumer market.

But even a milder commitment to fitness can help. For those serious about improving their physical



Shoulders
Latissimus muscles are key to generating width in the backswing.

Lower back
Most golf injuries here stem from a weak swing foundation in the legs.

Gluteals
Strong backside muscles help build a stable, consistent swing.

Hip
Limited hip rotation can cause excess lateral motion in the swing and back stress.

Pro golfer **Rory Sabbatini's** fitness regimen helped bump his world ranking from 42nd to 8th.

capabilities, Mr. Banaszak advises seeking out a well-trained physical therapist for an overall assessment. (The TPI Web site has links to train-

ers certified in its methods.) This kind of exam can identify any particular concerns, such as limited mobility or muscular imbalance, and therapists can recommend an appropriate conditioning program. After a few sessions, players can perform the exercises alone, but Mr. Banaszak recommends follow-up ses-

sions every two to three months. "Knowing how to adjust the intensity and when to progress is the part that you really can't do on your own," he said.

And if that's too much trouble? Dave Phillips, a TPI co-founder, said casual players can see dramatic improvements in their swing with as little as five minutes of work a day, provided it is the right kind.

Increasing internal hip rotation by just five degrees, for example, can lead to a significantly better turn behind the ball, which can increase distance and take pressure off the lower back. "Most back injuries from golf are caused because the hips aren't able to turn enough," he said, "causing the lower back to have to jump in and do a job it's not designed to."

A simple exercise to improve hip mobility is called the windshield wiper. While lying on your back with your feet off the floor, knees bent to 90 degrees, and with your calves parallel to the floor, make fists with both hands and place them together between your knees. Now, without separating your hands and knees, move your feet as far apart as possible, keeping the calves parallel to the floor. Hold briefly and repeat many times.

For most golfers, the two other prime areas to work are the gluteal muscles that run up the back of the upper legs and the core muscles of the lower torso. Mr. Phillips calls these the King and Queen. Both sets of muscles, he said, help the golfer brace against rotational forces during the swing and hold the body at proper angles.

The bedrock golf exercise, he said, is the deep squat, done with arms extended, holding a golf club over your head. "It involves all the most important golf muscles, both in the lower body and in the shoulders," he said. Nearly all Tour players can squat at least to where their thighs are parallel to the floor, he said, but only about 30% of American adults can.

"Those are the ones I'd work on: the King, the Queen, the hips and the deep squat," said Mr. Phillips. "Take five minutes a day while you're watching television. You'll be amazed at how your swing will improve."

—Email golfjournal@wsj.com.

US PGA TOUR/Getty Images

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Climbing rocks, saving lives

BY MICHAEL J. YBARRA
Special to *The Wall Street Journal*
Moab, Utah

FIRST A ROCK BOUNCED down the side of the cliff and I was relieved that the noise wasn't my friend Liz. Then I saw Liz sliding down the slope feet first, before she hit a ledge, flipped over and came to a stop on her back, scuffed up a bit but not really hurt. "At least we know I bounce," she said.

If Liz had been seriously injured, I have no idea what I would have done that day. We were alone in the mountains, at least an hour of rough cross-country hiking from the nearest trail, much further from any rudimentary medical care.

I often seem to find myself on the edge of trouble, far from help. In the Andes last year a climbing partner got violently sick, two days hard travel from the nearest road. In California, a couple of years ago, I broke an ankle ice climbing and had to hobble a painful hour by myself down snow slopes to my car.

"It seems like you're trying to kill yourself," a friend once told me. But I'd like nothing more than to grow old still going into the hills to play. Which is why I recently spent eight days in a classroom (and a couple of nights in the field) learning what to do when calling an ambulance isn't an option. I came to Moab, Utah's outdoor Mecca, to take a Wilderness First Responder course, whose graduates are known as Wolfers.

Taught by the Wilderness Medicine Institute (part of the National Outdoors Leadership School), the course trains people to assess and treat medical emergencies when professional help is more than an hour away. "You don't have to be surrounded by trees and rocks to be in wilderness," said Brian Barrett, one of our instructors. "That ambulance can be a long time away on a highway sometimes. Your basic skills can make a difference."

Over 80 hours, we studied various ways people can hurt themselves in the backcountry and how to help them. There were 30 of us in the class, many of whom were river or mountain guides with a professional need for a Wolfer certificate. A Wolfer course seems to appeal to a certain kind of person: At least four of us were living out of our cars. One was getting by on a daily food budget of \$2.50.

The foundation of the course is the patient assessment system, where you practice life-saving measures (CPR, stopping bleeding, patching up a sucking chest wound, to name just a few) and learn how to check a person from head to toe for additional injuries. That meant a lot of time either lying on our backs outside pretending to be hurt or groping strangers trying to figure out what they were pretending to suffer from. Sometimes our patients were conscious and articulate; other times they were confused, confrontational or comatose. It didn't matter: Their lives were in our hands.

Lectures covered how to field-treat everything from lightning strikes to snake bites, spinal injuries to amputations, heart attacks to frostbite. "I have a 4,000-page book about wilderness medicine



Students during a practice drill at the Wilderness Medicine Institute.

with so many things that will frighten you into never leaving your apartment," said Marko Johnson, another instructor.

One hot desert day we walked across town to a stream where the class had to triage a pile of five of our classmates who were simulating a biking accident. Then we had to strap the most urgently injured patient to a litter and transport her by ourselves back to the class. Bundled up to immobilize a possible spinal injury, heat stroke was probably a real danger for her.

In the second week of the class, the pace proved a bit grueling for me and I found myself dozing during one lecture about diabetes. Afterward, I was attending my friend John, who was playing a confused diabetic trying to figure out what dose of insulin he should be taking. He checked his blood sugar and laboriously arrived at a dose.

"Are you sure?" I asked. "Yeah," he said, before he changed the dose and took it.

Then he croaked. He didn't need insulin, after all—something I should have known and never have let him administer in these circumstances. His problem was actually low blood sugar. A candy bar would have cleared up his confusion.

I had a chance to redeem myself one evening when Mr. Barrett hiked five of us into the slick rock country above town and cut us loose. "Over that rock awaits your destiny," he said.

In the scenario we had gotten seriously lost during a long day hike in the mountains. Now it was close to sunset and we had no idea where we were—or what was about to happen.

"I think I see the way," one of our group, Jill, said suddenly, running across the rock. Then she fell and began howling in pain. The rest of us rushed to her side and soon discovered that she had an

open fracture—her tibia sticking through her skin, represented with makeup and a broken stick taped to her leg.

Without a first-aid kit, we quickly stopped the bleeding and improvised a splint. By now it was almost dark and we had to find a place to spend the night. Troubling clouds were looming on the horizon (for real) and the wind was kicking up.

We found a cave but carrying Jill there over the uneven terrain was an ordeal, especially when one rescuer backed into a cactus.

As soon as we had Jill resting next to a mock fire, another team member, Joanne, went off to relieve herself. Walking back toward us, she hit the ground and went into a grand mal seizure.

The three of us left standing had to stabilize Joanne and move her to the cave, which was starting to resemble a hospital ward. "If anyone else gets sick," I told my two classmates, "I'm out of here."

The final exam consisted of a written quiz and another patient assessment. Everyone in the class passed.

A week later I went rock climbing outside of town at a crag called Wall Street. I was almost at the top of a challenging route when things got desperate. The sandstone slab became virtually featureless. I clipped my rope to the penultimate protection bolt and tried to claw my way to the last bolt, just out of reach. I fell, going for an eight-meter ride and whacking my ankle before the rope caught me.

By the time I lowered to the ground, my left ankle was swollen like a grapefruit. In my mind, I repeated my Wolfer training: I have a patient whose chief complaint is that he stinks at climbing and broke his ankle. Fortunately, I didn't have to test my splinting skills, since I was close to my car. I drove myself to the ER.

Puma boots worn by George Best (estimate: £2,000-£3,000).



Memories of football's glorious moments

MANY OF THE AVID FANS of football are also collectors, of the game's medals, trophies, jerseys, caps, blazers, boots, balls and autographs.

Football is the sport with the largest number of collectors.

Collecting MARGARET STUDER

"Golf collectors may be the most moneyed, but football has the numbers," says London sporting memorabilia specialist Graham Budd. At the eponymous auction house's latest sale on May 7-8, 750 of 1,150 lots were devoted to football, with the rest covering a spectrum of sports.

Sold items ranged from £32,200 for famed Arsenal player Peter Storey's two 1970-1971 winning medals; to £8,050 for a white, short-sleeved jersey worn by Tottenham Hotspur's formidable Maurice Norman in the F.A. Cup final in 1961; to £748 for four damaged ticket stubs from F.A. Cup finals in 1924, 1929, 1934 and 1939 together with an Olympic football stub from 1948.

At Convery Auctions sporting memorabilia sale in Edinburgh on May 14, nine bidders battled for a 1956-1957 gold England league championship medal awarded to Manchester United's phenomenal goalscorer Tommy Taylor. They pushed the final price to £21,000 from an estimate of £9,000-£12,000. Mr. Taylor was killed in 1958 at the age of 26 when a plane carrying a Manchester United team home after a football victory in Yugoslavia crashed at Munich airport. The team was known as the Busby Babes after their manager Matt Busby and because of their young ages.

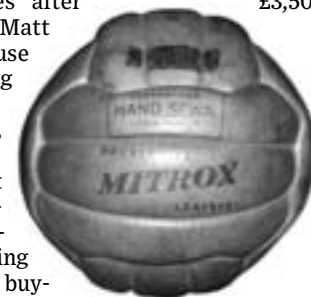
Dan Davis, sporting memorabilia specialist at Bonhams in Chester, says the football market is being pushed by people buy-

ing for investment as well as for hero worship. For example, the value of autographed items related to Brazilian footballer Pelé have risen an average 850% from 1997 to 2008, according to the Fraser's 100 Autograph Index. The index, produced by stamp and autograph collecting specialist Stanley Gibbons in London, tracks the most sought-after autographs. At Christie's South Kensington in 2002, a jersey worn by Pelé when his team won the World Cup in 1970 was sold for £157,750.

At Bonhams on June 4, a pair of Puma boots worn by notable Northern Irish player George Best in matches in both England and America at the end of his career in the 1980s is expected to fetch between £2,000-£3,000. Mr. Best is most known for his time with Manchester United from 1963-1974. The well-used boots are being sold by Mr. Best's agent, Phil Hughes, but for the last four years they have been on display in the National Football Museum in Preston, U.K. The museum has the world's most prestigious collection of football artifacts, including the FIFA World Cup Collection.

Also in the sale: a leather ball signed by the Busby Babes after their triumphant 1956-1957 season is estimated by Bonhams at £1,500-£2,000; and a European Champions Club dinner menu signed by the Busby Babes and members of competitor-team Red Star Belgrade is estimated at £5,500-£6,500.

Early programs, which often have attractive covers, are highly sought-after, and Bonhams will have a number in its sale, including an English football association final program from 1924 (estimate: £3,500-£5,000).



A football signed by the 'Busby Babes' from the winning 1956-1957 season (estimate: £1,500-£2,000).

Photos: Bonhams

Barbera, a wine fit for a summer feast

AS SUMMER APPROACHED last year, we wrote about a few good warm-weather wines. That brought a note from Philip Davidson of New York City, who said, in effect, “Hey, don’t forget Barbera,” the juicy red most fa-

Tastings

DOROTHY J. GAITER
AND JOHN BRECHER

mously from the Piedmont region of Italy, where its unusual combination of low tannins and good acidity makes it a mealtime delight. So this year we got back to Mr. Davidson and asked, hey, what’s so special about Barbera for summer?

“I call Barbera ‘The Happy Wine,’” he replied. “This wine just makes me smile. It has so much adaptability to the broad gamut of summer foods. Depending on the label and shipper, it works with light to medium to even heavier red meats. I particularly love it with hamburgers and chicken right off the grill. It works well with chicken salads and meat salads. I have no hesitation using it with freshly grilled steaks. My preference is to drink Barbera ever so lightly chilled. Sitting on the patio and enjoying the sensation is immeasurable.”

Delicious!

With those words fresh in our minds, we visited an informal Italian restaurant and ordered a Barbera. It was Il Maestro 2005 Barbera d’Asti and it cost \$22. The wine was so charming, easy and hunger-inducing that John immediately asked the waitress to bring us a plate of olives and provolone cheese. The pairing was marvelous and life-affirming.

A week later, at a fancier Italian restaurant, we ordered another Barbera: Scagliola “Frem” 2005 Barbera d’Asti, which was \$38. This was equally good, but different—sleeker, more structured, with darker tastes, yet still with the same earthiness and core of lemony acidity. It paired beautifully with Dottie’s veal shanks, but the big surprise was how well it also matched John’s grilled swordfish. How many wines could dance with both?

So, of course, we decided to conduct a broad, blind tasting to check out the current state of the two best-known Barberas, Barbera d’Alba and Barbera d’Asti.

While Piedmont is known for Barolo and Barbaresco, people there drink Barbera as an everyday treat. Over the years, we have written about and recommended quite a few Barberas from Piedmont because, like Mr. Davidson, we find them fun, easy to pair with food and very real. Their earthiness and acidity, combined sometimes with a charming rustic roughness, make any meal seem like an Italian feast. In general—very general—we have found over the years that the wines from Alba have more heft, power and richness than the livelier, fruitier and more acidic Barberas from Asti, the larger of the two zones. (Barbera d’Alba, by the way, must contain 100% Barbera, while Barbera d’Asti may contain up to 15% Freisa, Grignolino or Dolcetto.)

We also have found in the past that there are other stylistic variations of Barberas on shelves that aren’t region-specific. We found



Anastasia Vesilakis

this time that the trend has continued. Much like our accidental tasting at the two Italian restaurants, where both wines were from Asti, there are delightfully simple, gulp-now Barberas, and there are far more serious, richer, more structured Barberas, made from choicer

parcels of land and treated to expensive oak. Not all of them on either end are successes. Some of the more informal Barberas are so lemony and simple that they taste bitter and slightly harsh. On the other hand, some of the more serious Barberas are far too ripe and oaky, tending to-

Arbitrage

The price of a Nespresso Le Cube coffeemaker

City	Local currency	€
London	£149	€187
New York	\$299	€192
Tokyo	¥33,173	€204
Frankfurt	€229	€229
Paris	€229	€229
Rome	€229	€229
Brussels	€236	€236
Hong Kong	HK\$3,088	€254

Prices, including taxes, as provided by retailers in each city, averaged and converted into euros.



The Dow Jones Barbera index

In a broad blind tasting of Barbera d’Alba and Barbera d’Asti from Italy, these were our favorites. While Barbera is grown throughout the Piedmont region, we focused on these because they are the most widely available and most consistent. Barbera is a food wine, good with everything from grilled fish to veal shanks. Some of the bigger, lustier Barberas, such as the Vietti “Scarrone,” would benefit from age, so if you drink them now, be sure to linger over them to see how they change in the glass.

VINEYARD	PRICE	RATING	COMMENTS
Vietti “Scarrone” Barbera d’Alba 2005	\$41.40*	Delicious	Best of tasting. Serious wine, structured and sleek, full-bodied yet balanced. Reliable name.
Vietti “Tre Vigne” Barbera d’Asti 2006	\$19.99	Very Good/Delicious	Best value. Honest wine, straightforward and unmanipulated, so the fruit and minerals are front and center.
Giovanni Rosso “Donna Margherita” Barbera d’Alba 2005	\$19.99	Very Good	Deep, almost raisiny fruit, with a seamless combination of structure and a lively core.
Agostino Pavia & Figli “Blina” Barbera d’Asti 2005	\$13.99	Good/Very Good	Earthy, fun, grapey and gulpable, with a long, ripe lemon finish. Confident in its simple pleasantness.
Giacomo Conterno “Cascina Francia” Barbera d’Alba 2005	\$36.00*	Good/Very Good	A complete wine, with herbs, minerals, good fruit and a little bit of an edge. Slightly rough, in a good way that gives it authenticity.
La Spinetta “Gallina” Barbera d’Alba 2005	\$35.98	Good/Very Good	Deep, dark, blackberry-like wine, with some chocolate. More tannic than most, but also quite smooth. Could age. A good name to look for.
Scagliola “Sansi” Barbera d’Asti Superiore 2005	\$29.99	Good/Very Good	Big wine. Seriously earthy, with plenty of lemony fruit and some black coffee. Real presence.

Note: Wines are rated on a scale that ranges: Yech, OK, Good, Very Good, Delicious and Delicious! We got these in California, New Jersey, New York and Washington. *We paid \$39.99 for Vietti “Scarrone” and \$44.99 for Conterno, but these prices appear to be more representative. Prices vary widely.

ward heavy and losing the core of lemony acidity that makes Barbera special.

Fortunately, most of the wines in our tasting were lovely in their own way and there was a way to tell them apart: price. Overall, the wines from both regions that cost around \$20 or less were the charmers, wine that could take a slight chill and would be great with barbecued chicken. The wines that were more expensive had more layers of flavor, richer tastes, more body. They’re steak wines. Consider these notes: “Serious wine. Structure and sleekness (a combination of smooth and racy). Really can stand up to fine Bordeaux in the class department. Not afraid to be grapey (especially blackberries) and lemony, but still with plenty of layers and real power. Big yet balanced. Tastes expensive.” This turned out to be Vietti “Scarrone” 2005 from Alba. This is one of our longtime favorite producers of Barbera, and trust us: At about \$40, this wine is a good value.

Our best value was also Vietti—“Tre Vigne” Barbera d’Asti. It’s interesting how the two Viettis showed the different sides of Barbera, with the “Scarrone” from Alba full-bodied (it got 16 months of oak) and the “Tre Vigne” from Asti lighter on its feet (it’s from young vines and got 12 months of oak). In both cases, though, they tasted like real fruit, with life and zingy acidity.

When we went back and checked our notes from our tasting, the most

surprising result was that while many of our longtime favorites were good—names like Prunotto, Michele Chiarlo, Pio Cesare and Mauro Veglio—they were outshone by some of the little guys. For instance, Agostino Pavia & Figli “Blina” is a terrific deal at \$13.99.

Some U.S. wineries make Barbera, too, of course. One of our first loves—and, as far as we can tell, a first love among many of our readers—was the Barbera made by Louis Martini in California. Martini no longer makes Barbera and, in fact, California’s Barbera acreage is shrinking—down from 11,000 acres in 1997 to 7,500 acres in 2007. The wineries that make it now, in general, produce a small amount. But we found enough for a small sample and tasted them blind, just because we were curious. What we found was that too many American wineries make Barbera into a big, clunky wine that’s not very pleasant, lacks the charm of the Italian version—and is often higher priced to boot. In our tasting, the best was Unti Vineyards 2006, from a cute little winery in the Dry Creek Valley (\$24.99). It tasted like real Barbera, which meant it was time to bring on the olives and cheese.

WSJ.com

Earthy, adaptable
Watch John and Dottie taste
and talk about Barbera, at
WSJ.com/Video

Hangovers and wit, stirred

KINGSLEY AMIS was a hangover artist. Had he written nothing more than his description of Jim Dixon regaining consciousness after a bender, his place in literature would be secure. "He lay sprawled, too wickered to move, spewed up like a broken spider-crab on the tarry shingle of the morning," Amis writes in "Lucky Jim," his first (and best) novel. Dixon's "mouth had been used as a latrine by some small creature of the night,

How's Your Drink?

ERIC FELTEN

and then as its mausoleum. During the night, too, he'd somehow been on a cross-country run and then been expertly beaten up by secret police. He felt bad."

Feeling bad isn't such a bad thing, from Amis's point of view. With its "vast, vague, awful, shimmering metaphysical superstructure" of guilt and shame, the hangover provides a "unique route to self-knowledge and self-realization." In his book "On Drink," Amis recommends a raft of remedies for the Physical Hangover and then gets on to the Metaphysical Hangover, a combination of "anxiety, self-hatred, sense of failure and fear for the future" that may or may not be the result of alcoholic overindulgence. Dealing with the Metaphysical part of the equation entails reading Solzhenitsyn, which "will do you the important service of suggesting that there are plenty of people about who have a bloody sight more to put up with than you (or I) have or ever will have," and listening to Miles Davis, which "will suggest to you that, however gloomy life may be, it cannot possibly be as gloomy as Davis makes it out to be."

"On Drink" is one of three slender books Amis cobbled together from his newspaper columns on the subject in the '70s and '80s, the others being "Everyday Drinking" and "How's Your Glass?" (the British equivalent of the expression that serves as the title for this column). They are back in print, Bloomsbury having gathered them into one delightful volume under the title "Everyday Drinking" that is now hitting bookstore shelves. It is essential reading for any literate bibber.

What sort of drinks scribbler is Kingsley Amis? Quirky, opinionated, wickedly funny, and ever wary of flummery. And not unhelpful, as far as it goes: He punctuates the text with "general principles" of drinking and drink-making, many of which are perfectly sound, such as "G.P. 3": "It is more important that a cold drink should be as cold as possible than that it should be as concentrated as possible." Quite right. It is impossible to get a cocktail seriously cold without prolonged contact with ice, whether through shaking or stirring, which means that some of that ice will melt in the process, thus diluting one's gin-and-vermouth with a little water. Not to worry—the slight dilution is part of the taste and texture of a proper Martini. Amis, by the way, preferred to garnish his Martinis with cocktail onions, which made them, strictly speaking, Gibsons.

Less sound, but more revealing, is the writer's first general principle, which recommends (short of serving some vile Balkan plonk) that one always go for quantity over

quality in drink. Amis drank in amounts that would stagger—and stagger the imagination of—the average person in the early 21st century. It sometimes left him the worse for wear: "After half a dozen large Dry Martinis and a proper lunch," Amis writes, "my customary skill with the commas and semicolons becomes a little eroded." Drink as much as he did and you will need to economize; but if your drinking is rather more moderate, you can afford to drink well.

Some of Amis's general principles hit far of the mark. Take G.P. 7, derived from the novelist's belief that a quick and easy Whisky Collins soda is all one needs in the Collins department: "Never despise a drink because it is easy to make and/or uses commercial mixes." True, there are plenty of fine drinks that are dead simple: This summer I plan to enjoy Dark and Stormies, which entail nothing more complicated than pouring Gosling's Black Seal rum and Barritt's Ginger Beer over ice in a highball glass. But, pace Amis, I don't hesitate to despise drinks made with commercial mixes if the shortcuts result in inferior drinks. And the Collins family is Exhibit A in the category of cocktails ruined by prefab junk.

That said, the back half of Amis's seventh general principle—in which he explains why an "Instant Whisky Collins" is good enough—is worth mulling: "Unquestioning devotion to authenticity is, in any department of life, a mark of the naïve—or worse." This is what separates Amis from the garden-variety cocktail columnist (other than being one of the great writers of the 20th century): His approach to drinking expresses a coherent, compelling worldview reflexively opposed to snobbish pretense.

For Amis, nowhere is such phoniness more abundant than in the posturing of wine connoisseurs. And though he had an abundant knowledge of wine basics (to have any more than that, he says, one must have "a rich father, and I missed it"), he sneered at anyone who dared mention tannin or chalky soil. He was out to make such expertise "seem like an accomplishment on the level of knowing about the flora and fauna of Costa Rica or the history of tattooing—well worth while, but hardly in the mainstream of serious thought."

Then again, when it came to something Amis actually cared about, he could be as punctilious as the archest of oenologists. A Macallan man (at least when someone else was paying), the novelist ponders which bottled water is best for adding a splash to one's glass of single malt, Volvic or Highland Spring. It is a curious palate that finds no important differences among French champagnes but can identify the comparative virtues of a few drops of water in whisky.

Water was all Amis would think of putting in his Macallan (no ice, please). But he was willing to mix garden-variety blended Scotch in the occasional cocktail. One of his own inventions entailed making an Old-Fashioned with Scotch as the spirit and the Italian liqueur Amaretto as the sweetener (with bitters as the bitters). He called it an Antiquato, which "is Italian for 'old-fashioned.' Dead cunning, what?" No doubt, as is the book as a whole.

Email eric.felten@wsj.com.



British novelist **Kingsley Amis** (1922-95), shown in 1975.



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At Paris's wine-centric Il Vino, a

By Christina Passariello

Paris
IL VINO d'Enrico Bernardo, a recent addition to this city's restaurant scene, is attempting to turn the traditional eating-out experience on its head: Instead of ordering food, diners order wine. Then the chef decides what dish to serve with it.

The goal, explains Enrico Bernardo, a wine prodigy who left his post as sommelier at the Four Seasons Hotel George V in 2006 and opened Il Vino in September, is to "make wine drinking fun and not intimidating." The joy has evaporated, he says, as wine has become surrounded by complexity and snobbishness. People focus more on what's on the label than on what's in the glass.

Mr. Bernardo, 31 years old, is trying to redirect people's attention by switching the traditional roles of food and wine. The menu at Il Vino lists only wines. Finding the perfect pairing—of food—is left to the kitchen.

It was in the George V's gilded dining room that Mr. Bernardo stumbled upon some problems with wine and restaurants: It is impossible to recommend a single wine that will suit all the dishes—fish, meat, game—a table might order. And if only one person chooses the wine, everyone else is relegated to a passive role. Mr. Bernardo's vision for Il Vino was a place where everyone at the table would be contemplating and discussing the wine. "People go to restaurants to eat," Mr. Bernardo says. "They come to us to drink."

The tables are set with glasses of several different sizes and shapes crowding the center. Waiters pour the wine a few minutes before the food arrives to give diners a little time to enjoy it. And they don't hesitate to top up a glass if someone drinks a little faster than he eats.

The à la carte menu lists selections of several different wines, served by the glass, that can accompany each of several blind courses: starter, main course, cheese, dessert. Several prix fixe tasting menus are more ambitious: There is a four-course blind tasting menu (€95), a seasonal tasting menu currently highlighting asparagus and morels (€190) and the "Grands Terroirs de France" menu, featuring vintages such as Salon champagne, Pétrus from Bordeaux and Château d'Yquem with dessert (€1,000). At lunch there's a three-course tasting menu, for €50.

The most popular option offers



Left, restaurateur-sommelier **Enrico Bernardo** samples a 2004 Barbaresco Vanotu from Georgio Pelissero; above, stemware at Il Vino, including **opaque glasses** used to mask the color of wine during tastings.



Baby leeks with sautéed chanterelles and mushroom sauce, a dish Il Vino pairs with a 2004 **Chassagne-Montrachet** from J.M Boillot

diners no choice in wine or food: the blind tasting menu leaves the entire meal in Mr. Bernardo's hands. A waiter explains to customers how it works and inquires about any food allergies or aversions. On a recent spring evening, Mr. Bernardo brought four opaque wine glasses, filled away from the table to keep the bottle's label secret. "Do you like it?" he asked before revealing it was a red Burgundy, a 2005 Vosne-Romanée from David Duband. Then he announced the dish that would be served with it: pigeon breast.

Several other Paris restaurants have begun highlighting pre-selected pairings on the menu and reserving the full wine list as a fallback option. L'Astrance, a restaurant across the river from the Eiffel Tower with seating for 25, made a surprise tasting menu the only dining option three years ago. As a result, the Michelin three-star restaurant hired sommelier Alexandre Jean from Sendrens, another restaurant known for its cellar, to help find wines by the glass to go with each course. At lunch at L'Astrance, a modestly priced menu with wine pairings costs €110; at dinner, the signature tasting menu with wine is €290. The vast majority of tables order the wine pairing with the menu.

Il Vino and L'Astrance's wine experimentation comes as critics worry that the formality surrounding wine drinking in France has begun to turn people off the experience—and may even explain a recent decline in popularity of wine in France.

Consumption there fell by more than 10% from 1995 to 2006,

to 54.4 liters a person annually, according to French agricultural agency Viniflor. Over a 20-year period, the decline has been even steeper—down 40%, according to Inserm, France's national health institute. Many factors have played a role—fewer long lunches, a crackdown on drunk driving—but a 2006 government report also lays some of the blame at the door of French wine culture.

Under the French appellation system, wines are identified according to 450 wine-making regions; by contrast, New World wines (from, say, Australia, California or South Africa) are named for one of just a few grape varieties (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Chardonnay, etc.). "It's hard for people to understand wine because it's mysterious," says Mr. Jean, the sommelier at L'Astrance. "It's alchemy, not science."



new way to order a meal



Above, sautéed sea bass and caramelized endive with sweet-potato puree, paired at Il Vino with a 2006 Riesling-Hochrain from Franz Hirtzberger; left, bottles of wine on display at Il Vino; below left, the restaurant's dining room.

Jean-Pierre Perrin, owner of the prestigious Château de Beaucastel winery in the Châteauneuf-du-Pape region of the Rhône valley, says after 40 years of wine making, he couldn't stomach another formal tasting. "I would do tastings at 11 o'clock in the morning, and I was always obliged to tell the same story: how many months it aged in the barrels, the percentage of grape varietals in the blend," he recalls. Wine "should never have been taken off the dining-room table. That's where it's pleasurable."

Three years ago, Mr. Perrin decided to reunite his wines with the foods they were originally created to accompany. He hired a young chef from Senderens to create recipes to go with his different vintages, and now he hosts private dinners, instead of formal tastings, at his chateau. France's top

A sommelier-turned-restaurateur customizes a menu to match your choice of wines

chefs are among his frequent guests. "When you have a good match, it makes everything taste better," Mr. Perrin says.

At Il Vino, Mr. Bernardo is making this idea accessible to the public, including wine novices. A native of Milan and the son of a building contractor, Mr. Bernardo says he quickly picked up on wine's acidic, earthy and fatty tones when he trained as a sommelier in restaurants and tasting courses in France. It doesn't take superhuman tastebuds, he says—just practice. After all, he re-

marks, sipping on lemon tea, "nobody taught us how to taste food—whether it's acidic or spicy or sweet enough." Once he learned to locate those flavors in wine, he says, he found he could better savor flavors in food. With his finely tuned palate, Mr. Bernardo soared in the world of Michelin-starred restaurants. In 2004, he won his profession's highest honor, the World's Best Sommelier award.

Food is seasonal, and so is wine, says Mr. Bernardo. The menu at Il Vino changes about every two weeks. In the spring, it

leans toward the mineral flavors of Riesling wines, which go with asparagus, fresh peas and citrus. During truffle season, he pairs a Grimaldi Barbera d'Alba from Italy with a plate of homemade pasta and white truffles from the same region. When he tastes a new vintage, such as his recent discovery of a Château l'Hermitage 2004 from Saint-Emilion, Mr. Bernardo asks his chef to create a dish to match. Some creations such as risotto and home-made pasta become regulars, with seasonal variations.

The food helped Il Vino win a Michelin star in March, and now the restaurant is often booked weeks in advance. Three months after opening Il Vino in Paris, Mr. Bernardo in December opened a second branch of Il Vino at the French ski resort Courchevel; it operates only in winter. He is con-

templating a third restaurant in London or New York.

Mr. Bernardo hopes diners will leave Il Vino buzzing with ideas about how to pair wines with food. Two women who came to dinner recently told him they were surprised that the restaurant served a veal dish with white wine. Then they asked for a wine recommendation for a chicken dish they were planning to cook the next day. "That's a very good result for me," Mr. Bernardo said, smiling.

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Focus on wine

Hear Christina Passariello discuss the Il Vino experience and new concepts of pairing wine and food at

WSJ.com/Podcasts



Other restaurants in Paris are putting a priority on wine. Left, **L'Astrance**, and (below) its marinated foie gras with mushroom pancake and lemon confit; right, **Senderens**.



Harrison Ford and Cate Blanchett in 'Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull.'

'Indy' without the thrills

NEAR THE VERY END of the very nearly interminable "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull," an old colleague of Indy's who has been half-mad and speaking gibberish suddenly turns lucid and philosophical. "How much of human life," he muses, "is waiting." How true, how true. Sitting through Steven Spielberg's slog down memory lane

Film

JOE MORGENSTERN

means waiting for surprise, waiting for delight, waiting for daylight after turgid trudges through Peruvian caves, and waiting for an abstract story to coalesce. Most of all it means waiting, in vain, for the sort of dazzle, dash and clarity that made us love the series in the first place.

It's been 27 years since the first installment and 19 years since the last one: Harrison Ford, still snapping Indy's whip at the age of 65, is no longer a whippersnapper. He's not the problem, though. Both the actor and the character draw on deep reservoirs of goodwill. You want them to be wonderful from the moment Indy makes his entrance—actually he's preceded by a witty shot of his fedora—and it's great to see him looking like a grizzled desert rat with a glowering smirk, or, moments later, a smirky glower. (The film, set in the 1950s, is distinguished by witty entrances, if little else: Cate Blanchett's villainous Soviet agent, Irina, looking like Garbo in "Ninotchka," Shia LaBeouf's pompadoured biker, Mutt, looking like Brando in "The Wild One.") It's also touching to see Indy coping as well as he does—very well indeed—with the knock-down, drag-out challenges of being an action hero at an advanced age.

No, the problem is all around him, and it's movie fatigue, which can be just as damaging as metal fatigue. A couple of early set pieces dispense spasms of excitement at the expense of plausibility—an atom-bomb test that trivializes the force of nuclear weapons for the sake of lame comedy, a chase that skids to an awkward finish in a university library. But then the movie, seemingly weary of itself, settles into a soporific succession of episodes having to do with a search for

the skull of the title, plus extrasensory perception, extraterrestrials and, ever so fleetingly, flying saucers. All of it amounts to a been-there-done-that-better recapitulation of Mr. Spielberg's career.

One unwelcome surprise is the level of craftsmanship—widely variable cinematography, continuity glitches, characterizations ranging from perfunctory to nil. Another is the level of performances. Ms. Blanchett, a movie star of rare intelligence and grace, gets to carry a sword, read minds, fight fights and strike one sultry pose after another, but she's only a decorative presence, and a charm-free one. It's good to see Karen Allen back as Marion Ravenwood, the love of Indy's earlier life; it would have been better if she'd had something livelier to do than drive an amphibious truck on a chase through trackless jungles. Mr. LaBeouf, a manifestly talented young actor, isn't funny, and there's no sign of him having been helped by his director.

The least surprising aspect of the lumbering production is its abuse of computer-generated images—what were generally called special effects until they stopped being special. Even in that department, though, the banality is striking—all those clattering digital ants and groaning stones. I was equally struck by the movie's disrespect for the physical world. Sure, computers can do anything these days, but do we want them to? There's no logic, and therefore less drama, in Indy's escape from a mock town that's about to be atom-bombed, or in that

amphibious truck finally going over a series of stupendous waterfalls.

None of the complex CGI sequences in "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull" can hold a candle, in fact, to the moment when a conspicuously youthful Indy, confronted by a black-robed warrior chuckling ominously, watched and waited while the guy twirled his scimitar, then pulled out his revolver and simply popped him with no further ado. But that was a long time ago, in a film that feels far, far away.

'Prince Caspian'

In "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," the first installment of the Chronicles of Narnia that came to the screen three years ago, the young protagonists, refugees from the London blitz, traveled to another world through a magic wardrobe. In the sequel, "Prince Caspian," their gateway is a subway. As the four Pevensie children stand waiting at a station in London's Underground, a train comes roaring through at warp speed, they're whooshed out of the tunnel and deposited on a sunstruck beach in Narnia, where 1,300 years have passed since their last visit. The transition is thrilling in a film that's short on thrills, though long on clanging swords, conventional battles and spectacular scenery.

I wish I could be more enthusiastic about "Prince Caspian," an honorable and attractive adventure for children and families. But scenic beauty and spirited action can't conceal its dramatic defects—the novel wasn't the strongest in the C.S. Lewis series—or tighten the slack in Andrew Adamson's direction of his live actors. As before, the talking animals deliver, dare I say it, the lion's share of the fun.

The prince of the title, forced into exile by an evil uncle, is played by the young English actor Ben Barnes. Caspian's allure is quickly apparent but slow to develop, since he's essentially passive for much of the film's 144-minute running time. Similarly, the reappearance of Tilda Swinton's White Witch promises to be more than the brief icebreaker that it is. But "The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian" finds its footing as an old-fashioned action adventure when the Prince and the Pevensies lead an army of liberation to return Narnia to the Narnians.

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Opening this week in Europe

- 21 Austria
- Charlie Bartlett Italy
- Definitely, Maybe Denmark
- Funny Games Germany, Netherlands, Romania
- Leatherheads Netherlands, Sweden
- Paranoid Park Romania
- Shine a Light Belgium, Greece
- The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian Poland
- Things We Lost in the Fire Germany
- Untraceable Hungary

Source: IMDb

WSJ.com subscribers can read reviews of these films and others at WSJ.com/FilmReview

Art and identity clash in a Taiwan museum

BY IAN JOHNSON

Taipei, Taiwan

ONE OF THE WORLD'S great art museums has become a chess piece in a simmering dispute over this Pacific island's cultural identity: Shall it look toward China or away?

Nestled in the hills north of this gritty city, the National Palace Museum harbors the Chinese emperors' personal collections of paintings, vases, carvings and other valuables, stretching back to the fourth century. Experts consider it the most important museum of Chinese art in the world.

The palace museum is in the midst of an ambitious expansion. But critics say the museum has made the expansion into a statement of independence and non-Chinese identity. The new extension, in a relatively remote part of Taiwan, is being called an Asian art museum and will feature art from the Middle East to Japan, cementing the island's links with other Asian countries—and specifically not with China. The move won't make more of its Chinese masterpieces available to the public. (Currently, for space reasons the museum can show only a handful of its monumental landscape scrolls, many of which date to the 10th century and are its most famous holdings.)

The new museum is being used to push Taiwanese independence, says Taiwanese art critic and exhibit curator Victoria Lu. Using the museum to promote Taiwanese identity, she says, is purely "politics."

The pan-Asian theme of the museum extension reflects concerns shared by many Taiwanese. More than 90% of them are ethnically Chinese, but most migrated centuries ago and have few roots on mainland China. Some Taiwanese think of themselves as having more in common with the "earthquake belt" of archipelagos and islands that run along the eastern Pacific Rim from Japan to Indonesia. Taiwan hasn't been under control of China's central government for more than a century. Taiwanese schoolbooks emphasize the island's history apart from the rest of China.

"The island is still figuring out what it is culturally," says Ping Lu, a Taiwanese writer living in Hong Kong. "Seen historically, it's probably a necessary process, but it can be very messy at times."

The modern history of the collection started in Beijing, where it was housed in the emperor's palace, the Forbidden City. After China's emperor left the throne in 1911, the Nationalist Party took over and made the collection pub-



Buddhist statues in the museum's collection.



Ju porcelain from the National Palace Museum in Taipei.

lic. When Japan invaded in 1932, the Nationalists fled to China's hinterland, along with most of the collection.

A civil war followed World War II, and when the Communists gained the upper hand, the Nationalists shipped the cream of the collection, 2,900 crates, to Taiwan. The museum now has about 650,000 items.

"Having this collection legitimized the Nationalists' claim to have political authority over China," says Marc Wilson, head of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri, one of the leading Western collections of Chinese art. "They saw themselves as guardians of the true Chinese past." China still claims Taiwan as its territory but never has asked for the collection back, because that would imply that Taiwan isn't part of China.

Over time, the Nationalists' grip on power in Taiwan slackened. While Beijing continued to consider Taiwan part of its territory and to oppose any move by Taiwan toward joining international organizations, the Nationalists in 2000 lost the presidency to the Democratic Progressive Party, a strong advocate of an independent Taiwan with a cultural identity separate from China. Two years ago, the president appointed Lin Mun-lee as palace-museum director.

Ms. Lin first drew controversy with a renovation of the 40-year-old building. The overhaul added cafés and gift shops but cut the number of objects on display and the viewing space around tall vitrines housing the collection's famous monumental landscapes. That has made it hard to spend time contemplating the gigantic paintings—a sign, critics said, that the staff has no appreciation for how Chinese art should be viewed.

The expansion plans caused far more hostility. The new branch will be in Jiayi, a southern Taiwan city off the main train line, only because it is a stronghold of the Democratic Progressive Party, says Victoria Lu. Ms. Lin says the government wants only to spread culture outside the capital region of Taipei.

Ms. Lin defends the expansion's emphasis on non-Chinese art. Because the main branch is focused solely on Chinese art, it can't show gifts to Chinese emperors from other countries. They will form roughly half of the new museum's collection, with acquisitions making up the rest.



Peaks, spa, suspicion: North Korea road trip

BY SUNGHA PARK

Demilitarized Zone, Korea

IT TAKES JUST A FEW MINUTES to cross the world's most fortified border, the mile-wide demilitarized zone separating South and North Korea. The countryside is lush and green; there are no signs saying "Welcome" or "Come Back Soon."

Early last month, I drove with an American colleague, Julie Yang, to a rest stop near the border, about 4½ hours northeast of Seoul. We had an 11:30 a.m. rendezvous with 37 South Koreans, who, like me, were excited to be driving cars across the border into North Korea—something tourists haven't been able to do for more than 50 years. Our destination: a scenic vacation resort on the east side of the Korean peninsula, at the foot of Mount Kumgang.

The border opens briefly just a few times a day, and no more than 20 tourist cars a day can enter. Motoring tourists must travel in a convoy; ours was nine cars long. An employee of Hyundai Asan Corp., the tour company organizing our trip, made sure each car had enough gasoline, as we wouldn't find any service stations for tourists along the way.

Guides collected our cellphones, navigation systems, voice recorders, newspapers, books and national flags—anything that might inadvertently expose North Koreans to the outside world. Shooting photographs and video would be prohibited within the DMZ and on the other side, on the road to the resort. Each visitor received a photo identification card listing his or her name, sex, birth date, occupation, address and dates of visit. The guides placed an orange flag atop each car and passed out walkie-talkies, so we would be able to hear the guide, riding as a passenger in the first car of the convoy, give instructions if necessary to speed up or slow down.

Once we'd passed through the DMZ, it was like going from color TV to black and white. The hills were bare and gray. Every few hundred meters along the road, we saw North Korean soldiers standing at attention. There were short beige houses, skinny goats and an ox-drawn cart. Crops grew right up to the edge of the road. We'd spent two hours preparing for this road trip. So it was a surprise when, after passing through North Korea immigration, we drove for 15 minutes and arrived at the resort. The road trip was over.

Mount Kumgang, considered the most beautiful peak on the Korean peninsula, is a popular vacation retreat for South Koreans. Hyundai Asan has operated the resort since 1998. It is one of the few places in North Korea, outside the capital, Pyongyang, where foreign visitors are allowed. The government of Kim Jong Il—and of his father, Kim Il Sung, before him—has kept North Korea cut off from most contact with the West since the late 1940s. Although tourists are permitted in for commemorations and other occasions, Americans and South Koreans generally haven't been as welcome as other foreigners. In March, the North Korean government opened the door to tourism slightly wider and began allowing tourists to drive their own cars across the border.

The resort is a nearly 2,000-hectare compound surrounded by a lime-green fence. There are four large hotels and six scenic hiking trails; a golf course opened earlier this month, and there are plans to open a family re-



Top, a view of North Korea's **Mount Kumgang**; above, the Samilpo Lake trail at the Mount Kumgang resort; right, North Korean folk singers.

union center later this year. Visitors aren't permitted outside the fence, and we had to surrender our car keys upon arrival. Once inside, we were free to move around the hiking courses and between hotels, which are set about five to 25 minutes apart by shuttle bus. The only North Koreans we encountered at the resort were workers.

Just outside the resort is a village, Onjeong-ri. Hyundai Asan has paved its roads and helped provide coal briquettes for heating fuel, instead of wood. Tourists can't go in or take pictures: Glimpses through bus windows are the closest most resort guests get to seeing what daily life might be like in North Korea. Most villagers were on foot; a few rode bicycles with red license plates on the front baskets. A guide said the North Korean government gave the bikes to "good" workers.

Growing up in Seoul in the 1980s and '90s, I was taught that North Korea is always ready to attack. When I was 5 years old, I remember an afternoon when a loud siren went off. A voice on the radio said unidentified planes were flying above and could be from North Korea. I knelt down and prayed that we wouldn't go to war. I was relieved that it was a false alarm. "It's still unbelievable that I'm here," said Lee Chang-woo, a 55-year-old tourist, who drove from Incheon, South Korea. "When I was a middle-school kid, I thought that a war could occur any time soon."

The Oekumgang Hotel, where we stayed, was built in 1984 to honor Kim Jong Suk, Kim Jong Il's mother, and for many years accommodated students and other visitors to Mount Kumgang. It also was a reunion site for families separated between North and South, who were reunited at government-approved meetings in 2007. The 12-story hotel, remodeled in 2006, is comfortable but offers few frills.



Photos: SungHa Park/WSJ

There are no tennis courts or swimming pools. A spa building in the compound features public and private hot springs, an exhibition hall for North Korean paintings and a massage room. There are evening performances by Filipino singers at a café lounge.

The big draw at Mount Kumgang is hiking. Trails range from a path by a lake to a steep course rising more than 900 meters above sea level over a series of rock peaks. One of the most beautiful trails is Manmulsang, which means "10,000 images"—a reference to promontories resembling a bear, a human face, a hand pointing to the sky. Another trail leads to a long, narrow waterfall called Kuryong, or "nine dragons"—which, according to legend, lived at the bottom. A vantage point nearby offers a view of eight jade-green ponds, where the legend says eight nymphs came to take a bath.

Photography is a sensitive issue. North Korea prohibits telephoto camera lenses 160 millimeters or longer and video lenses 24X or longer. (My camera bag was the only one of mine that North Korean customs officials bothered to open.) One day, I saw a remarkable mosaic, a portrait of Kim Jong Il and Kim Il Sung composed of 250,000 tiny colored stones. Just as I snapped a photo, a whistle blew. Two hotel employees came over and asked for my camera. Later, a Hyundai Asan staffer explained my potential offense: Chopping off the leaders' heads. Fortunately, I had captured the whole mosaic and was allowed to keep the shot.

Many North Koreans seemed eager to strike up an acquaintance. A young guide on a hiking trail was curious when he learned I'd driven to



Trip planner

Arranging the trip: No visa required. Reserve at least a month in advance, through Seoul travel agencies (Go&See, ☎ 82-2-6243-7071, or US Tour, ☎ 82-2-720-1515) or at www.mtkumgang.com.

Getting there: Fly into South Korea's Incheon Airport. Buses to the resort depart daily from points in Seoul. Or drive along Route 7, toward the Unification Observatory, to the meeting point, the Hwajinpo Asan rest stop in Goseong, Gangwon Province.

Where to stay: The Oekumgang Hotel is close to buses to the trails. The Kumgangsan Hotel has a mural of Mount Kumgang on the second floor. Rates start at \$290 for a two-night stay, with breakfast, guides, two sightseeing tours and traveler insurance.

Where to eat: The Kumgangwon restaurant serves black pork (\$25), steamed and stewed dog meat (from \$150) and North Korean alcohol, such as blueberry wine (\$12). Dinner only.

What to do: Breathtaking acrobats perform daily at the Cultural Hall (\$30-\$35); folk musicians perform at Kumgangsan Hotel (\$10). After a hike enjoy the outdoor hot springs (\$12) or a massage (\$49 for 60 minutes).

—Julie Yang

the resort. "It only takes six hours to drive to Pyongyang from here," he said, revealing he had grown up and trained as a gymnast there.

Lee Kyong-ae, a 78-year-old South Korean returning to Mount Kumgang after a visit in 2000, said she was struck by how friendly everyone was. On her first visit, she recalled, "we couldn't really talk to North Koreans. There were psychological barriers between the two sides. I felt danger in their eyes."

When it was time to leave, the drive back through the DMZ wasn't so intimidating. We rolled down the window and fiddled with the radio, settling on a North Korean station pumping out a song that went, "Oh General! Oh Leader!" Soon the colors returned and, as we left the DMZ behind, I surprised myself by letting out a sigh of relief.

—Julie Yang contributed to this article.

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Scenic route

See a video of SungHa Park's trip to North Korea, plus a slideshow of the resort at Mt. Kumgang, at WSJ.com/Europe

Hi-Diddly-Ho

No one would mistake Ned Flanders, the goofy next-door neighbor in "The Simpsons," for a polished televangelist like Joel Osteen. But over the past two decades the zealous cartoon character has become one of the best-known evangelicals on the small screen. With Americans spending exponentially more time on their sofas watching television than in pews listening to sermons, this is no insignificant matter.

So, in the inevitably intertwined world of religion and commerce, it's only natural that the man portrayed as "Blessed Ned of Springfield" on the cover of Christianity Today magazine should have his own "new testament." And so he does. "Flanders' Book of Faith," by "Simpsons" creator Matt Groening, is a slim, illustrated entry in the show's "Library of Wisdom" series.

For years, the TV show's writers, fiercely protective of their reputation for irreverence, denied that they were in any way soft on sincere belief, as embodied by the Flanders character. But releasing the book under Mr. Groening's name puts an imprimatur on that interpretation, long held in younger evangelical circles.

A fundamentally decent true believer, Ned is firmly in the theological tradition of Mr. Osteen, Robert Schuller and Norman Vincent Peale in at least one respect. He, too, is an irrepressible apostle of optimism. The only time his faith was shaken, and then only briefly, came in 2000 when his wife, Maude, was killed in a freak accident (following a pay dispute between the show's producers and the actress who supplied her voice). As his neighbor Homer Simpson puts it during one service at Springfield Community Church: "If everyone here were like Ned Flanders, there'd be no need for heaven. We'd already be there."

Naturally, Ned's view of the Almighty is central to the book: "God is the Alpha and the Omega, maker of Heaven and Earth. . . . God is the creator of the universe and the source of our knowledge of right and wrong. Ned maintains a very close relationship with Him, communicating His desires to anyone who will listen and asking Him favors on a minute-by-minute basis." Among God's attributes are his love for everyone, but readers are advised to "watch out for His temper."

This is not simply a book of wacky systematic theology. There is almost as much about Flanders's personal life, which, like that of most evangelicals, is inextricably tied to his faith life. His recipe for Devil's Food Cake, for example, includes a quart of holy water and

an exorcism. Like many modern, suburban believers, Ned embraces popular culture in a modified form rather than simply rejecting it. He reads the novel "Harry Potter and the Consequences of Dabbling in Magic" to his kids before bed, and he listens to a Christian rock station, 102.7 BLISS FM.

Ned Flanders made religion safe for television.

Prayer and thanksgiving are a big part of Ned's life, the book explains. He allows a full 30 minutes for grace before dinner in his daily planner, and he gets to No. 143 in counting his blessings before nodding off. Ned's favorite things include his Rapture-ready tote bag and the "I ♥ Jesus" bumper sticker on his 1992 Geo Metro. In the book, Lisa Simpson, Homer's brainy, skeptical daughter—who before converting to Buddhism often served as the voice of mainline Protestantism on the show—asks Ned about the literal truth of the Bible. "How do we know the writers really wrote the word of God and didn't just make up a bunch of stuff?"

It's all true, Ned insists, sounding like he's been reading C.S. Lewis: "If it were false, then the fellas who wrote the Scriptures would have been lying, or insane, or both."

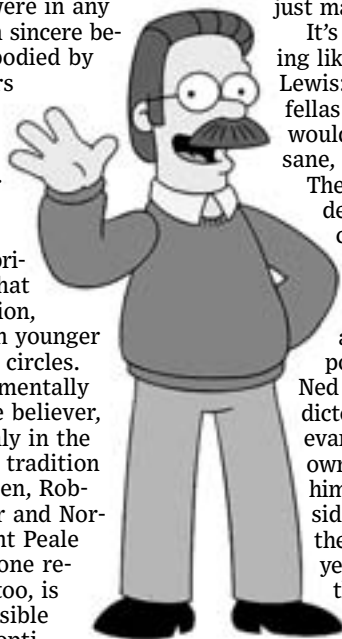
The "Simpsons" writers have deftly drawn on the Divine in creating the Flanders character, and in the process they have managed to navigate the tricky space between animation and caricature in portraying his Christian faith. Ned has a dual, almost contradictory appeal. College-age evangelicals see many of their own well-intentioned foibles in him. And secular viewers outside the Sun Belt suburbs and the heartland—who may have yet to meet an evangelical in the flesh and may be puzzled by

and hostile to the political and cultural rise of religious conservatives that has tracked the tenure of the show—find him to be an accessible and even sympathetic exemplar of American evangelicalism.

"The Simpsons" has left an indelible mark on the culture. Bart Simpson is a float in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, and the show's catch phrases have joined the lexicon, both formally (Homer's "D'oh!" is now in the Oxford English Dictionary) and informally (Bart's "Don't have a cow, man!"). In the past couple of weeks, the show has become a theme park ride at Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida, and Los Angeles.

In the early decades of commercial television, networks shunned prime-time portrayals of religion as part of Americans' everyday life, largely for fear of offending viewers. The most important contribution of "The Simpsons" to the national conversation may be that it made religion safe for television—thanks to a lovable evangelical named Ned Flanders.

Mr. Pinsky is the author of "The Gospel According to The Simpsons: The Spiritual Life of the World's Most Animated Family" (Westminster John Knox, 2001).



The Pushkin Museum Plans

By Konstantin Akinsha

Russia has been bitten by the museum expansion bug.

On May 5, two days before being sworn in as president of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev announced that the government would allocate more than 4.2 billion rubles (\$176.9 million) to upgrade the venerable Pushkin Museum in Moscow. The museum will close next year and reopen in 2012, in time to celebrate its centenary.

The Pushkin is the only museum in the Russian capital with a substantial collection of Western art from antiquity to the 20th century. The main neoclassical building hasn't seen major repairs since it opened in 1912.

In a design by British architect Lord Norman Foster, the Pushkin itself and the surrounding group of 12 historic mansions will be renovated and refurbished. An exhibition building, a commercial office building, an administrative building and a 600-seat concert hall will be constructed. There will also be impressive underground facilities housing cafés and restaurants. According to the plan, the museum's exhibition space will be quadrupled to about 428,000 square feet. Compare that to the space in New York's expanded Museum of Modern Art (125,000 square feet) or in London's Tate Britain and Tate Modern (a total of 222,812 square feet between them).

The full price tag of the project has not been announced yet, but some sources estimate it at about \$380 million. Today Russia is riding the oil wave and thus can afford such extravagances. Nonetheless, this ambitious undertaking will also require private sponsors. The museum has struck a deal with Mikhail Kusnirovich, the head of Bosco di Ciliegi Russia, a company operating a chain of boutiques selling luxury goods. He will get the commercial office building for his headquarters in exchange for providing generous, though unspecified, support.

And what will go into the new museum complex? Good question.

The Pushkin is a strange institution. Unlike the Hermitage in St. Petersburg or the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, it was created not by czars or merchants but by Soviet power. Its collection today is an odd mixture of artworks that once belonged to other museums or to individuals and were taken from them.

The main building was built as the museum of Moscow University, whose collection was mainly plaster copies of classical sculpture. In 1924 the government turned it into Moscow's Museum of Fine Arts, so the plaster statues were moved aside to make room for canvases from the Rumyantsev Museum, a collection of Russian and European paintings and antiquities in the nation's capital that was disbanded by government decree, and private collections that had been nationalized after the Revolution.

Then, in 1930, the collection of

Old Masters, which could hardly compete with any important European museum, was enriched by the addition of paintings by Botticelli, Cranach, Poussin and David transferred from the Hermitage to improve the Museum of Fine

Arts' standing. Seven years later, Stalin's government decided to celebrate the centenary of the death of the poet Alexander Pushkin by naming the museum after him.

The most important "enrichment" of the Pushkin's collections, however, occurred at the end of World War II, when hundreds of thousands of artworks were seized by the Red Army from defeated Nazi Germany. Among

A questionable expansion.



Norman Foster's design for the estimated \$380 million upgrade of Moscow's Pushkin Museum, which will close next year and reopen in 2012, in time for its centenary.

them were most of the Dresden Gallery's paintings, as well as Priam's Treasure, a hoard of gold and other artifacts that the 19th-century archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann claimed to have found at the site of ancient Troy.

Early in the 20th century two Moscow merchants, Sergei I. Shchukin and Ivan Morozov, had been among the earliest collectors of Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso and other modern artists. After the Revolution, their collections were nationalized and became the foundation of the Museum of the New Western Art. But by the early 1930s modernism had been dismissed as "decadent bourgeois art"; the museum was closed. In 1948, its collection was divided between the Pushkin and Hermitage museums, further increasing the Pushkin's holdings.

A year later, the Pushkin was turned into the Museum of Stalin's Gifts to display all the presents given to the Great Leader by the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and foreign countries in honor of his 70th birthday. The exhibition, which included about 250 statues and 500 busts of Stalin and such rarities as his portrait engraved on a grain of rice presented by Chinese communists, ran until his death in 1953.

Two years later the Dresden Gallery collection, its whereabouts having been kept secret for a decade, was displayed at the Pushkin and then returned to the East German government. The majority of the other trophies taken from East Germany soon followed. However, the treasures belonging to West German museums and private collections were stored in depositories whose existence remained a secret until ARTnews magazine revealed their existence in 1991. Some were exhibited in 1995, but unlike the works from Dresden, they were

incorporated into the permanent collection at the end of the show instead of being returned.

Today the museum is in a strange position. Both the Schliemann gold and the remaining trophy paintings are subject to claims by Germany and other governments as well as by heirs of Holocaust victims. Irina Antonova, the museum's director since 1962, has stated many times that they will never be returned.

Similarly, since the 1950s the Shchukin and Morozov heirs have been trying to recover their families' masterpieces. Strange, then, that Ms. Antonova should in 2006 have attacked Dr. Mikhail Piotrovsky, the director of the Hermitage, demanding that he turn over his share of the

Shchukin and Morozov collections to her. Though Ms. Antonova was trying to enrich her collection, this move was also widely seen as a ploy to appease the heirs, who have stated they will drop their claims if the collection can be restored in its totality and displayed in Moscow.

It is hard to predict whether the Iron Lady of the Russian museums will

succeed in these battles. It is highly unlikely that Germany would be reconciled to the idea of a permanent Moscow address for Priam's gold and its other masterworks. It is equally hard to imagine that the Hermitage will willingly surrender its Matisse and Picassos to Ms. Antonova.

If she fails in her efforts, the new museum complex is doomed to house the plaster copies, assorted Old Masters of uneven quality, and part of the Shchukin and Morozov collections—and possibly not even those last holdings if the heirs have their way.

Thus diminished, what would the Pushkin display in its sprawling 428,000 square feet of exhibition space? Perhaps the vacant galleries could be used for the Museum of Gifts to Vladimir Putin or, in due course, to its former board chairman, President Medvedev.

Mr. Akinsha, an art historian and journalist, is the author, with Grigory Koslov and Sylvia Hochfield, of "The Holy Palace: Architecture, History and Ideology in Russia" (Yale University Press).

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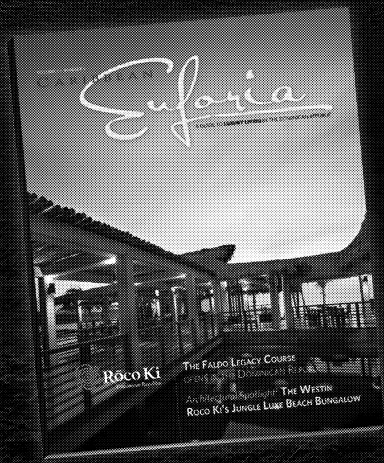
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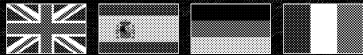
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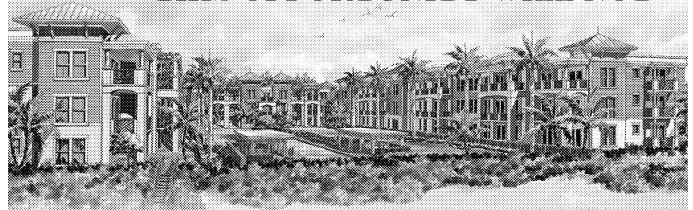
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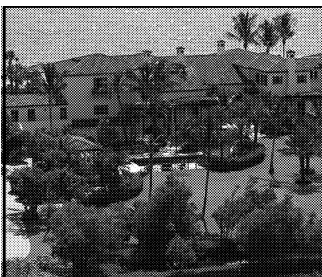
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❖ Top Picks

Britain pays tribute to American prints

London ■ art

The British Museum has the finest collection of American works on paper—from the late 19th century right up to the 1960s—of any institution outside the U.S. Indeed, it surpasses American museums in at least one area: the surprisingly avant garde, colorful pieces commissioned by the Works Progress Administration during the Depression, an impressive group of which is included in "The American Scene: Prints from Hopper to Pollock."

The show's curator, Stephen Coppel, explains that he and his canny predecessors at the British Museum bought these exciting graphics of grimy miners and struggling farmers at a time when they were ignored by American collections—not because of disapproval of the artists' leftist politics (though several were in fact communists), but because the work simply didn't fit in with the prevailing narrative of American art.

The BM's collection began in 1926, with the gift of what are still its gems: four great etchings by Edward Hopper, bought by the donor for \$20 each. This exhibition of 174 works by 74 artists includes images known almost universally, such as these Hopper scenes of New York at night and George Bellows' prize fight "A Stag at Sharkey's," as well as a generous helping of works by others from the Ashcan School of gritty urban realism, especially John Sloan.

But it is the unexpected that arrested my gaze: remarkable color woodcuts by the cubism-influenced women artists Blanche Lazzell and Grace Martin Taylor; some glorious figurative prints by Milton Avery; and some crazy images by the Philadelphian Benton Spruance, a genuine eccentric whose work turns up in three different sections of this beautifully organized show.

—Paul Levy

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'The Blue Vase; The Blue Jug,' from 1927, by Blanche Lazzell, in London.

20th-century archaeological digs, and then with the mythical idea of Babylon fed by Biblical tales and romantic fantasy.

In fact, the historic Babylon, founded in the late third millennium B.C., was steeped in legend almost from the beginning. Located on the Euphrates River about 90 kilometers south of modern Baghdad (near the city of Al-Hillah in what is now Iraq's Babil Province), the city was named Bab-ili, the "gate of God," and was considered the link between heaven and the world below. During centuries of wars and occupations, Bab-il (or Babel in Hebrew) knew two great periods of glory: the reigns of Hammurabi (18th century B.C.) and Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 B.C.).

The great two-meter black basalt stele that opens the show, inscribed with Hammurabi's renowned legal code, was found by a French archaeological team in 1902. Among the other superb artifacts of Hammurabi's paleo-babylonian era are small bronze statuettes trimmed in gold, and a large terra cotta bas relief of a nude winged goddess

whose raptor-like claw feet stand on a pair of lions, thought to represent either Ishtar, the goddess of heaven, or her sister Ereshkigal, the queen of hell.

Twelve centuries later Nebuchadnezzar II (who is often called Nebuchadnezzar) turned his double-walled capital into a palatial showcase whose main entrance, the Ishtar Gate, was paved with blue-glazed ceramic tiles adorned with immense figures in relief: dragons representing the city's principal god Marduk, lions symbolizing Ishtar and bulls for Adad, the god of the sky. Four of the panels here, three lions and a dragon, give only a hint of the magnificence that must have been. On the opposite end of the scale, but no less impressive, is the small alabaster figurine of a nude woman with ruby eyes, gold earrings and a gold crescent headdress, perhaps representing an acolyte of Nanaya, daughter of the moon god Sin.

There is such a fascinating wealth of steles, wall paintings, statues and figurines, tablets and amulets here—including the growling head of a terra cotta lion (circa 2000 B.C.) that looks curiously like Bert Lahr's Cowardly Lion in "The Wizard of Oz"—that the second half of the show, documenting the Babylon of legend, pales in comparison. There are splendid illuminated manuscripts on view, and a few too many paintings and drawings of the Tower of Babel and its destruction, by artists from Bruegel the Elder to 19th-century Romantics. It's all rounded off by a clip from D.W. Griffith's 1916 film "Intolerance," whose epic Babylonian scenes were partly based on the latest archaeological finds of the day and partly on sheer Hollywood chutzpah.

—Judy Fayard

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London ■ theater

A new musical by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg, the team that wrote "Miss Saigon" and "Les Misérables," with the bonus of music by Michel Legrand ("The Windmills of Your Mind") is an exciting prospect. "Marguerite" has a great story—that of the courtesan whom the composer Liszt fell for, and

whom Dumas fils (himself in love with her) made into the heroine of "La Dame aux Camélias," and Verdi immortalized as Violetta in "La Traviata." The writers have set the tale of a bad girl undone by true love in Occupied Paris, so that she is the mistress of a Nazi general, Otto, who is responsible for deporting the Jews from France. The friends she parties with every night are, as Otto says, "black marketers, profiteers, scum."

Marguerite's younger lover, Armand, is a jazz pianist, eventually caught up in the Resistance, whose moment of truth and nobility begins with the refusal of the Jewish Lucien, his sister Annette's lover, to wear the yellow star as ordered by the puppet Vichy government, exceeding even the demands of their Nazi masters. This is a subject very much of the moment. The recent publication of Carmen Callil's "Bad Faith" has revealed much that is new and shocking about the behavior of French collaborationists like Marguerite and her friends, and French intellectuals and media are now talking more openly about this dishonorable era of recent French history.

Jonathan Kent's production of "Marguerite" in his Theatre Royal Haymarket season ought to have been a bombshell, like the blast from British bomber planes early in the show that impressively destroys the back half of the stage. But the best thing about this damp squib is its brief two-hour length. Its first sin is laziness—Messrs. Boublil and Schönberg ought to have worked a little harder and then engaged Mr. Legrand to make it a sung-through piece; at least they would have been forced to concentrate their minds on the story, and not pushed the plot creakily along with truly terrible dialogue.

Mr. Legrand's score is not complete rubbish—it has a couple of memorable moments, such as Marguerite's ballad "China Doll," sung poignantly by Ruthie Henshall in the title role, and a fine swing piece, "Jazz Time," when Julian Ovenden as Armand, gets to show off his v-shaped torso and strong tenor voice as well as his keyboard skills. At least it's well-dressed: This musical's strongest points are Paul Brown's splendid '40s women's frocks and stunning Paris stage sets.

—Paul Levy

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Black Bluffs on the Yellowstone River

Carbon County, Montana • 1,507-acre fly-fishing and wingshooting mecca includes 2.5 coveted miles of river frontage • U.S. \$5.75 million

Turkey Pen Retreat

Monroe County, Tennessee • 3,259-acre, premier sporting property encompasses some of the best vistas in the Blue Ridge Mountains • U.S. \$22 million

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time off

Amsterdam

art

"Willem—In Colors and Smells" shows the newspaper, book and magazine work of Dutch cartoonist Willem (Bernhard Willem Holtrop, born 1941).

Persmuseum
Until Aug. 31
☎ 31-20-6928-810
www.persmuseum.nl

Berlin

communication

"Misunderstandings—Stumbling Blocks of Communication" showcases modern and historical examples of miscommunication in advertising, art, literature and film.

Museum für Kommunikation Berlin
Until Oct. 5
☎ 49-30-2029-40
www.museumsstiftung.de/berlin

Brussels

art

"Expo '58, Contemporary Art in the World Fair" revisits the 1958 exhibition "50 Years of Modern Art," which gathered international masterpieces.

Museum of Modern Art
Until Sept. 21
☎ 32-2-5083-211
www.fine-arts-museum.be

jazz

"Brussels Jazz Marathon 2008" offers more than 160 free performances of jazz, Latino, funk, rock and blues by about 400 artists on the Grand' Place and other venues.

Brussels Jazz Marathon
Until May 25
☎ 32-02-4560-486
www.brusselsjazzmarathon.be

Edinburgh

art

"Maternity: Images of Motherhood" shows representations of motherhood from the Renaissance to the present through works by Sandro Botticelli, George Romney and Pablo Picasso.

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art
Until June 22
☎ 44-131-6246-200
www.nationalgalleries.org

Florence

biology

"Under the Sign of the Fish" shows different freshwater ecosystems—their fish, plants and organisms—allowing visitors to discover the human threats to these delicate ecosystems.

Museo di Storia Naturale
Until June 8
☎ 39-055-2756-209
www.pianetablau.info

Frankfurt

history

"Father Courage"—Oskar Schindler—Unrecognized in Frankfurt" celebrates the 100th anniversary of the birth of Oskar Schindler, who during World War II saved the lives of more than 1,200 Jewish people. The exhibit explores Schindler's life in Frankfurt from 1957 to his death in 1974.

Jewish Museum
Until Aug. 31
☎ 49-69-2977-419
www.juedischesmuseum.de

art

"Max Beckmann: 8 Bronzes" is the



Private Collection/Courtesy of Helen Druet; photo:Kuva Rauno Träskeläin

first show in any German museum to include all eight sculptures produced by Max Beckmann (1884-1950).

Städel—Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie
Until Sept. 21
☎ 49-69-6050-980-200
www.staedelmuseum.de

The Hague

art

"Les Nabis—Works from the Triton Collection" shows paintings by the 1890s French avant-garde group known as Nabis, which aimed to paint nature from memory and in pure colors.

Gemeentemuseum Den Haag



'Self-Portrait with Cooking Pot' (1995), by **Maria Lassnig**, on view in London.

Courtesy the artist © 2008 Maria Lassnig

Until Nov. 30
☎ 31-70-3381-111
www.gemeentemuseum.nl

Helsinki

jewelry

"Symbiotic Realms—Robin Kranitzky & Kim Overstreet" exhibits the works of collaborative jewelry designers Robin Kranitzky (born 1956) and Kim Overstreet (born 1955), also known by the brand name "Lost & Found," who use found and bought materials.

Finnish Museum of Art and Design
Until June 1
☎ 358-9-6220-540
www.designmuseum.fi

Liverpool

comedy

"Liverpool Comedy Festival 2008" features performances at various venues around the city by U.K. comedians Jimmy Carr, Frankie Boyle, Simon Amstell, Gina Yashere, Nina Conti, Paul Merton, Dylan Moran, Ardal O'Hanlon and Tommy Tiernan.

Liverpool Comedy Festival
From May 28 to June 8
☎ 44-8704-4309-55
www.liverpoolcomedyfestival.co.uk

London

art

"Maria Lassnig" showcases works by Viennese avant-garde painter Maria Lassnig (born 1919), who uses bold

forms and strong colors to investigate emotions and bodily sensations.

Serpentine Gallery
Until June 8
☎ 44-20-7402-6075
www.serpentinegallery.org

engineering

"Unseen Hands—100 Years of Structural Engineering" explores the engineering of some of the most iconic buildings of the past 100 years, including New York's Empire State Building, Switzerland's Salginatobel Bridge and Poland's People's Hall with models, drawings, video and photography.

Victoria & Albert Museum
Until Sept. 7
☎ 44-20-7942-2000
www.vam.ac.uk

Milan

art

"Eugenio Quarti—The 'Prince of the Cabinetmakers' at the Universal Exhibition" presents a dining room created by cabinetmaker Eugenio Quarti (1867-1929), one of the leading Italian Art Nouveau artists.

Museo delle Arti Decorative
Until Oct 26
☎ 39-02-8846-3700
www.milanocastello.it

Munich

photography

"Martin Parr: Parrworld" presents the



© Museum für Kommunikation Berlin

Illustration for **'Misunderstandings'** (2008), by Gema Aparicio, on view in Berlin. Left, **'Divine Eye'** (2005), by Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet, on view in Helsinki.

new series "Luxury" by British photographer Martin Parr (born 1952) along with his collection of photography books, objects and photographs.

Haus der Kunst
Until Aug. 17
☎ 49-89-2112-7113
www.hausderkunst.de

Paris

art

"Hokusai 'mad about his art' From Edmond de Goncourt to Norbert Lagane" shows 120 works signed by or attributed to Hokusai (1760-1849) or his studio, including prints such as "36 Views of Mount Fuji," preparatory drawings, sketches and paintings.

Musée National des Arts Asiatiques Guimet
Until Aug. 4
☎ 33-1-5652-5300
www.guimet.fr

Venice

art

"Jacopo Bassano, 'Rest on the Flight into Egypt'—Returned and Restored. Venice 1612-2008" marks the temporary return of Jacopo Bassano's recently restored painting "Rest on the Flight into Egypt" to Venice.

Fondazione Querini Stampalia
Until July 13
☎ 39-041-2711-411
www.querinistampalia.it

art

"Giuseppe Santomaso and the Abstract Option" is a retrospective of Venetian artist Giuseppe Santomaso (1907-1990), tracing his style from early impressionist works through cubism to late abstractions.

Giorgio Cini Foundation
Until July 13
☎ 39-041-5289-900
www.cini.it

Vienna

sports

"Where the Ball Flies—Legendary Viennese Football Venues" presents historic football photographs and memorabilia on the occasion of the 2008 European Football Championships, with a focus on the country's "wonder team" of the 1930s.

Wien Museum Karlsplatz
Until Aug. 3
☎ 43-1-5058-7470
www.museum.vienna.at

Source: ArtBase Global Arts News Service, WSJE research.

WSJ.com

What's on

WSJ.com subscribers can see an expanded version of the European arts-and-culture calendar at WSJ.com/Europe