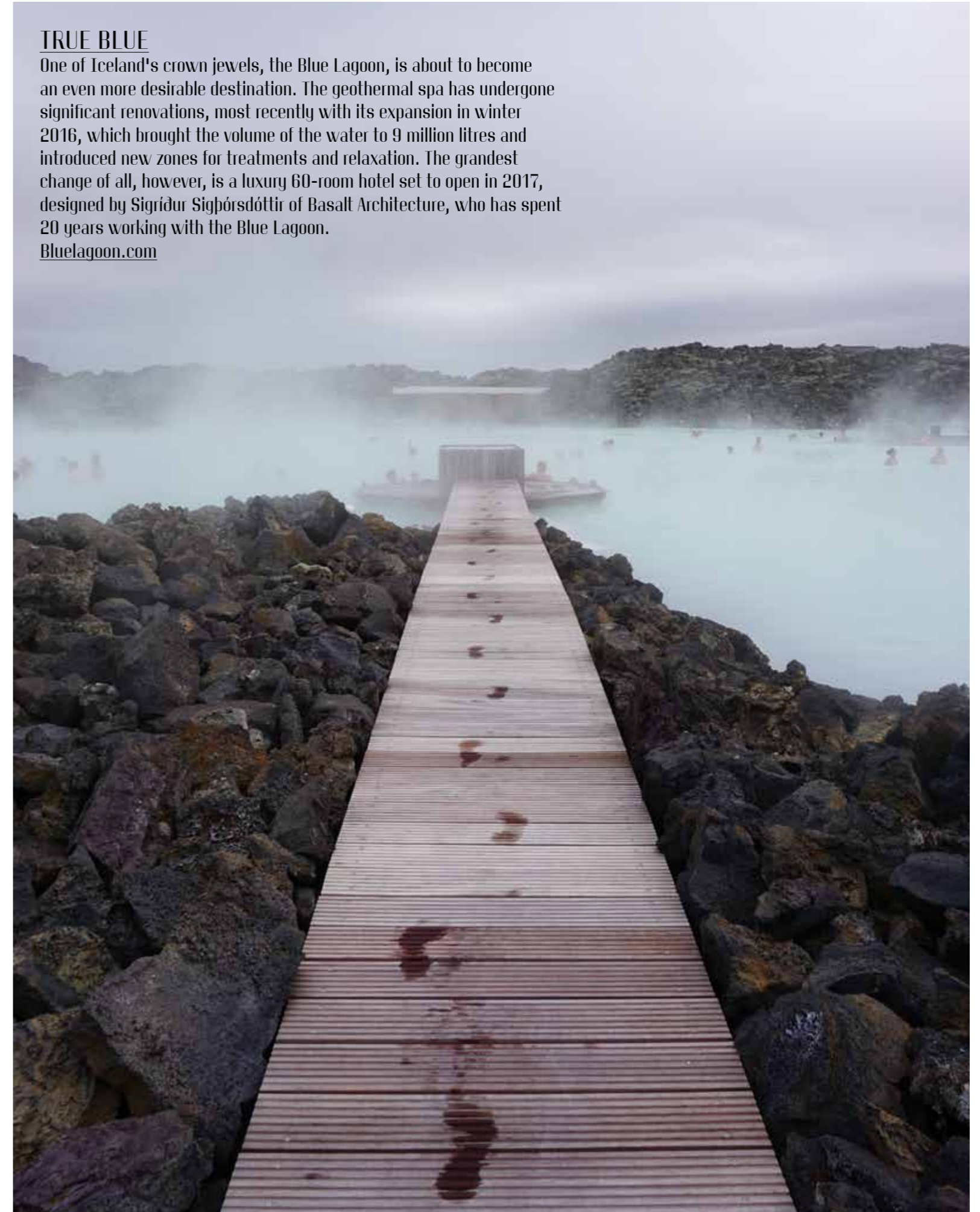

THE GREAT ESCAPES

TRUE BLUE

One of Iceland's crown jewels, the Blue Lagoon, is about to become an even more desirable destination. The geothermal spa has undergone significant renovations, most recently with its expansion in winter 2016, which brought the volume of the water to 9 million litres and introduced new zones for treatments and relaxation. The grandest change of all, however, is a luxury 60-room hotel set to open in 2017, designed by Sigríður Sigþórsdóttir of Basalt Architecture, who has spent 20 years working with the Blue Lagoon.

Bluelagoon.com





ODD ONE INN

At new hostel Oddsson, they like to do things differently. Designed by creative agency Dödlur and inspired by the idea of contrast and slowness, West Reykjavik's colourful budget hotel has a slightly surreal atmosphere. We're talking luxurious hotel rooms across from bunk beds, caviar on the take away menu and custom-made furniture next to an extremely rare Pierre Jeanneret chair or a Tomasso Barbi floor lamp. "The concept behind Oddsson is high meets low, taking different extremes and mixing them together," says Dödlur's creative director Daniel Atlason. "It's a variegated mix of minimalist and brutal." Built on the site of a 1940s warehouse, it can accommodate up to 250 guests across a variety of rooms, which include dormitories, pods with a view on Faxaflói bay, private rooms and a penthouse suite. Will suit "thrifty travellers with expensive taste", in the words of Atlason.

Oddsson.is

ART TO SEA

A new season of exhibitions at southern Norway's Kunsthall Stavanger looks very promising. The season's major exhibition comes from Morten Norbye Halvorsen, a Stavanger native who lives and works in London, he'll be presenting an immersive exhibition of sound works in the main gallery. The other galleries will house work by Jessica Warboys, a multidisciplinary British artist who works across painting, sculpture, film and performances. Her solo show at Kunsthall Stavanger will feature new films and the results of her on-site residency. Also on show are the artist's signature series of Sea Paintings, large-scale canvases which were literally painted by the ocean. "We are constantly working to bridge the local and international," explains exhibitions manager Heather Jones.

27 October - 8 January 2017

Kunsthallstavanger.no



SECRET GARDEN PARTY

City and garden become one at Vækst, a new restaurant that is also a lush greenhouse in the heart of old Copenhagen. The restaurant's name translates to "growth" in English, and both the menu and the interiors take this very seriously. Head chef Jonas Christensen's seasonal three course menu is built on fresh Nordic produce grown in house, and branches out to include meat and seafood dishes. Natural light pours in through the top floor of the restaurant, with the greenhouse built through both floors, extending down into the basement so that diners are surrounded by an enchanting display of green foliage, no matter where they sit. The garden party reminiscent interiors are the work of Genbyg, a Danish studio and retailer that has used recycled building materials to create a calming, modern interior. Book a table to see how the garden grows. Sankt Peders Stræde 34, 1453 København K, Denmark Hostvakst.dk

SWEAT IT OUT

You would think that in a country of three million saunas, there would be little reason to celebrate a new one. But Helsinki's new Löyly sauna has a special place in Finnish hearts, and not just because of its inspired wooden design and prime location on the city's waterfront. Löyly is one of the country's few public saunas, a rarity in a place where even apartment-dwellers have private saunas. Given the sauna's integral role in the Finnish national identity, that makes Löyly a key place for residents to commune over wellbeing and relaxation rituals. Built by Helsinki-based Avanto Architects with sustainability in mind, the angular building's wooden pine slats are made from waste wood, while the restaurant serves local sustainable fare. Inside the sauna, three atmospherically lit rooms are divided by leather curtains and heated to different temperatures, with small nooks built in to provide a view of the sea. It's easy to see why Löyly has received so much attention and inspired plans for more public saunas to come – making relaxation an integral part of city life is urban planning that promises play out in the most unexpected ways.

Loylyhelsinki.fi/



Hyvää syntymäpäivää, Suomi!

Most people settle for a birthday card through the door from their neighbour, but one Nordic country might get something a bit bigger for its centenary: a whole mountain. Norway's sweet, enormous plan to shift its border with Finland 60 metres to the west, thus bringing the peak of Halli inside Finland's borders made headlines this summer. That said, the moving of a mountain is far from the only newsworthy event taking place to mark the 100th anniversary of Finnish independence. Throughout 2017, the centenary will be marked by the launch of a satellite to observe the Northern Lights and the Nordic ski championships. Celebrations of the country's unique visual culture will take place throughout, from the opening of the Moomins Museum to a film dedicated to heroic master Tom of Finland, while home comforts like Finnish food and, of course, saunas will be enjoyed in the lead-up to the big day, the 6 December 2017. Happy birthday from all at Oak, Finland

– or should we say *Hyvää syntymäpäivää, Suomi!*

Suomifinland100.fi



ROOM WITH A STUE

The boutique hotel, Das Stue, is in a stately building constructed to house the Danish embassy in Berlin, and it was originally designed by German architect Johann Emil Schaudt in 1938. Heavily inspired by Danish classicism, Das Stue takes its name from the Norwegian name for living room. With 78 guest rooms and experimental styling by Spanish architect Patricia Urquiola, it's a very grand living room indeed.

Das-stue.com

TEXT BY CHARLIE ROBIN JONES, GIULIA ARCIDIACONO MUTTI, KAREN ORTON, JULIE VITTO, ATHENA WISOTSKY PHOTO BY JARLE WIEHLER / STATENS VEGVESEN, KUNSTHALL STAVANGER, TREEHOTEL



IN THE PINES

Anyone who grew up in the countryside will know the sense of freedom that comes from climbing a tree just a little bit taller than the last time, or the dream of staying the night in a treehouse, high in the woods. We may grow up, but that doesn't have to mean saying goodbye to our dreams: Treehotel in Sweden has built a set of canopy-set lodges, all designed by Scandinavia's leading architects. This year they're unveiling a new cabin designed by a Norwegian firm used to rather more monumental projects: Snøhetta, architects of Oslo's iconic opera house, the redevelopment of Times Square in New York, and the expansion of San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art. Cold-weather visitors will want to explore the surrounding nature with excursions like horse-pulled skiing, indulge at the snowy forest spa or take a Northern Lights photography workshop, or just curl up with a good book and enjoy the view.

Treehotel.se

COMING HOME

Danish restaurant Kadeau became one of the leading lights of the New Nordic movement when two native Bornholm boys, Nicolai Nørregaard and Kasmus Koføed created a restaurant with a seasonal menu inspired by their home island. Now, nine years later, they haven't looked back, with a Michelin star under their belts, two hugely successful Kadeau locations, and a sister restaurant, Pony. Proving that their love of home knows no boundaries, Kadeau's founders recently worked with Danish design studio OeO on their new Copenhagen location, striving to create a dining experience that feels like an invitation to an intimate dinner at home with friends. As guests ring the bell and step into the Kadeau, they are welcomed into an inviting, cosy space. Here, the open oakwood kitchen is warmed by a log fire and a library lounge filled with books awaits, while dinner is served in the dining area courtyard facing the courtyard. On one hand, dinner among friends, on the other some of the best food in the world - it seems Kadeau have created an all around winner.

Wildersgade 10b, 1408 København K, Denmark
Kadeau.dk



You cannot go wrong visiting Iceland in the summer with its long days, pony-and-sheep studded fields and other-worldly beauty at every turn. But the island's character shines in the off-season, too, and every autumn Reykjavik plays host to a city-wide music festival that is worth the icy air and 5pm sunset. Iceland Airwaves, started in 1999, is known for its intimacy and wealth of incredible performers, both local and international, with Haim, TV on the Radio, and Clap Your Hands Say Yeah all early performers. Among the highlights this year will be the stage run by *i-D Magazine* dedicated to women artists, joint-headlined by Warpaint and Santigold, elsewhere, PJ Harvey, Dream Wife and Julia Holter will play. See you down the front.

Festival runs from 2 to 6 November
Icelandairwaves.is

POLES APART

Polar adventurer Børge Ousland (who made the first unsupported ski trek to the North Pole in 1990) bought the Norwegian island of Manshausen in 2010. The island on the north west coast was a trading post as far back as the 1600s, but is now prized for its dramatic wilderness and prime positioning for Arctic Circle explorers – and it's now getting a new hotel. Architect Snorre Stinesen designed the resort's cabins – which won four 2016 Architizer A+ Awards – to jut out above the water, with a glazed glass wall that gives gorgeous views of the sea, mountains, weather and the Northern Lights. Besides the private cabins, outdoor enthusiasts who make the trip will be rewarded with white sand beaches, tall mountains, and everything from cycling and diving, to hiking and canoeing.

Manshausen.no



THE NEW ROAD NORTH

There is not much that could improve on the spectacular views across Norway's mountain ranges, which are cut through by waterfalls, deep gorges and spectacular fjords - but daring, innovative architecture certainly doesn't hurt. Norway's National Tourist Routes are creating 18 roads through the country's remote wilderness, and they're sprinkled with stunning architectural viewpoints, artworks, bridges, picnic spots and restaurants - giving visitors even more opportunity to stop and appreciate the panoramic views. The latest is a case in point - the triangular concrete viewing platform, Utsikten, has been moulded onto the Gaularfjelle mountain range and juts across the valley. Built by Norwegian architectural firm, Code, the view from 700 meters above sea level, of the surrounding mountains, deep valleys and the Likeholefossen waterfall, will reveal their secrets to travelers. Norway's National Tourist Routes will be completed in 2023, and over the next couple years, eight new works will be added to the existing plethora of architectural gems. Primarily it is exciting young architectural firms from across Norway who are behind the projects, but non-Norwegian architects have also gotten involved. Swiss architect Peter Zumthor designed the Allmannajuvet Zinc Mine Museum in Western Norway, which is built on the side of a ravine and will open in autumn 2016. Even the most jaded urbanite will be impressed by Norway's veritable treasure trail of beauty.

Visitnorway.com
Nasjonalaturistveger.no

RAISING THE BAR

Brooklyn clearly has a taste for Danish beer, if the popularity of Tørst is anything to go by. The hip beer bar and restaurant in Greenpoint, whose name translates as thirst, is run by Danish "indie-beer maestro" Jeppe Jarnit-Bjergsø. You'd be hard pressed to squeeze through the door if you come after 8pm on a Friday night, so clearly Jarnit-Bjergsø is onto a good thing. The Danish brewer is the founder of Evil Twin Brewing, and not coincidentally, the twin brother of Mikkeller Brewing founder, Mikkel Borg Bjergsø. Tørst is a vision of mid-century Danish modernism, with its white marble bar top, wood paneling and multi-toned herringbone patterning that covers the communal wooden tables. But the beer menu is anything but retro, with Tørst representing a bold new generation of brewing. Twenty-one alternating drafts are on tap, and a curated menu of more than 100 bottles of the best and most obscure beers are held in a beer cellar. The experience is only complete with a visit to Luksus, the beer-pairing restaurant found behind a sliding wall in Tørst. Here, Chef Daniel Burns, formerly at Noma, has skillfully created a taste-testing menu featuring seasonal flavours, that is of course, best enjoyed with a side of craft beer.

Escape into a world of taste, one sip at a time.

615 Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11222, USA
torstnyc.com





A FINN IN PARIS

Soon it will be possible to find a bit of Finnish life in the heart of Paris – through a summer cabin. Koti Bed & Breakfast, a set of six spruce cabins hosted by the Finnish Institute and designed by by Finnish architect Linda Bergroth, will open for 100 days next year. Imagine sleeping in a slatted pine lodge, and waking up to custom-lighting designed to mimic a summer sunrise. For breakfast, a spread of salted butter, berries and rye bread, presented on gorgeous ceramics by Nathalie Lahdenmäki and – of course – coffee from a set by design duo Wesley Walter and Salla Luhtasela. While it's not exactly the same as a summer in the Finnish countryside – there's no lakes after all – it's a good start.

Beginning on 10 October, guests will be able to book their own cottage. The installation is open January to May 2017.

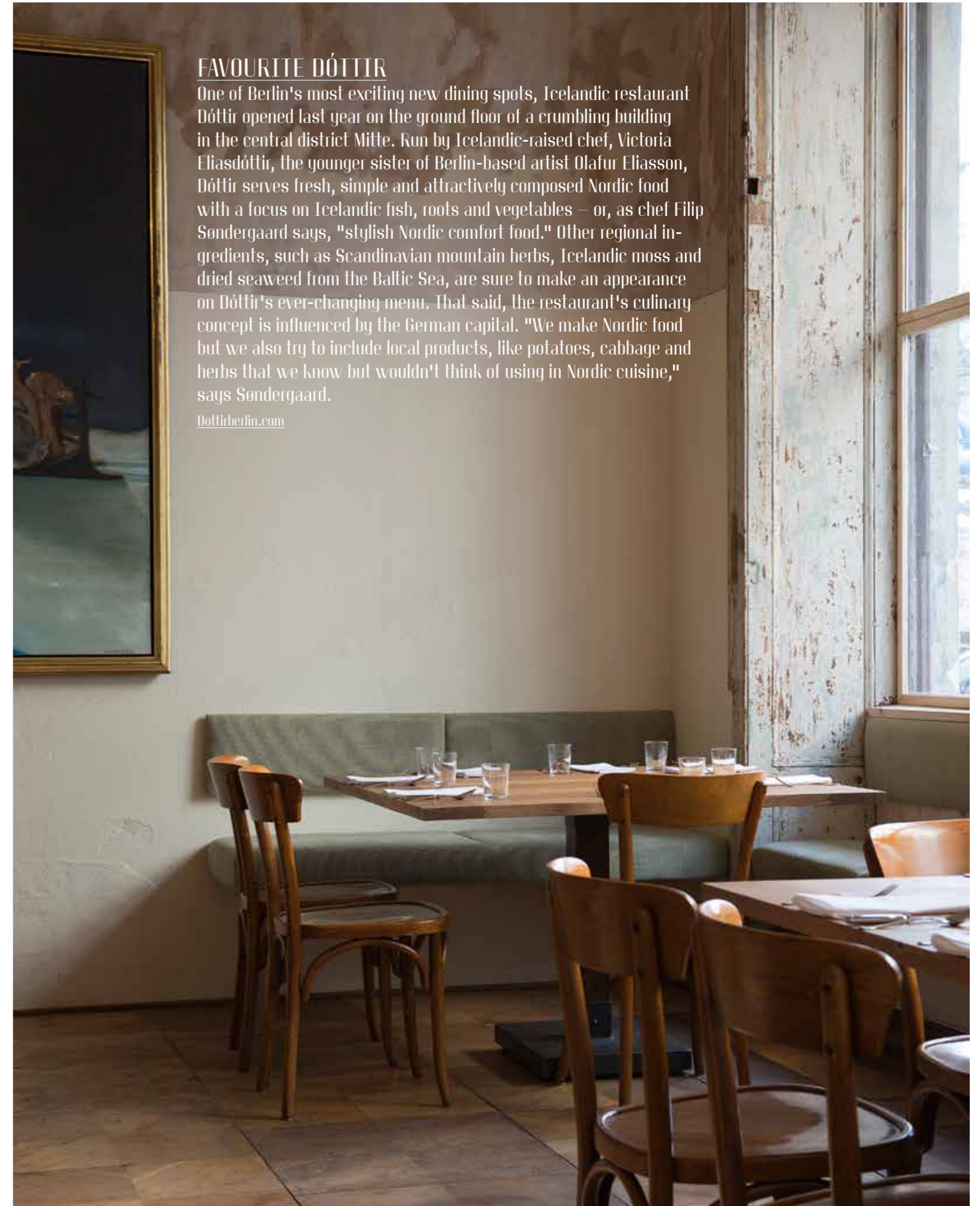
Kotibedandbreakfast.com



HUUS AND HOME

Imagine the welcoming comfort of a friend's home. Now imagine if your friend is one of the world's best interior architects, and their place is in the Swiss Alps. That's approaching the situation with Design Hotels's new Gstaad destination, which has just received a fresh concept and renovation from Erik Nissen Johansen of Swedish design studio Styllt Trampoli. The chalet is re-opening this December as Gstaad Huus, and it comes complete with 135 rooms, a robust après-ski scene and utterly breathtaking views at every turn. "Huus means house or home and the ambition has been to create the feeling of visiting a friend's place. We took all the functions and stirred them together into one space, with the majestic view as a backdrop in a very inclusive and democratic way."

Huusgstaad.com



FAVOURITE DÓTTIR

One of Berlin's most exciting new dining spots, Icelandic restaurant Dóttir opened last year on the ground floor of a crumbling building in the central district Mitte. Run by Icelandic-raised chef, Victoria Eliasdóttir, the younger sister of Berlin-based artist Olafur Eliasson, Dóttir serves fresh, simple and attractively composed Nordic food with a focus on Icelandic fish, roots and vegetables – or, as chef Filip Søndergaard says, "stylish Nordic comfort food." Other regional ingredients, such as Scandinavian mountain herbs, Icelandic moss and dried seaweed from the Baltic Sea, are sure to make an appearance on Dóttir's ever-changing menu. That said, the restaurant's culinary concept is influenced by the German capital. "We make Nordic food but we also try to include local products, like potatoes, cabbage and herbs that we know but wouldn't think of using in Nordic cuisine," says Søndergaard.

Dottirberlin.com