

WINTER 2004

Forbes

the good life

EWI

*Bling Bling Bling!*

# The Luxury Express

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**SPLASHY SPA TREATMENTS  
TRAINLOADS OF HOLIDAY JEWELRY  
ELECTRONIC GIFT GADGETS  
HANG-GLIDING ST. MORITZ**

WINTER 2004

## Travel

20 performances—recitals, chamber and orchestral concerts—over the course of ten days.

Staying at the centrally located Sheraton Hotel, I could walk back and forth, across Mirabell Garden's crunchy snow-blanket, to the Mozarteum Grosser Saal for chamber-music concerts and across the Salzach River bridges to the Old City to hear the Vienna Philharmonic and Arnold Schoenberg Choir.

At the mustard-and-white jewel box Grosser Saal I joined an overflow audience—stylistically mixed with velvet Tyrolean dirndls next to white sequins and fur next to downtown-New York standard black—for a rare duo performance by pianist Alfred Brendel and his cellist son, Adrian Brendel. Having, by all reports, avoided the sort of prickly father-son relationship that beset Wolfgang and Leopold Mozart, the Brendels cracked smiles with the audience as they played Beethoven's sly twelve variations on "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen" from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*.

Finding myself among hard-core Mozarteans, I quickly came to think of 11 a.m. as a sensible concert hour, especially when listening to the Vienna Wind Octet whip through seldom-performed serenades. Flawless intonation! Virtuosity! Raucous fun! Between morning and midafternoon concerts there was time for a steamy wurst from a street vendor.

For dinner I discovered the Blaue Gans restaurant in the Old City, which serves a *Salzburger nockerl* for a dessert—an ethereal soufflélike concoction. Coffeehouses, such as Café Bazar, a favorite with musicians, stay open late for after-concert suppers of standbys such as *tafelspitz*. For sipping a Grüner Veltliner wine or several, the Riedel glassware

shop has installed a stylish wine bar. In 2005, the 249th birthday celebrations will include two operas in concert, the rarely heard *Zaide* and *Idomeneo*; the conclusion of András Schiff's seven-year cycle of piano concertos; all the violin concertos in two concerts by Kremerata Baltica; and works by Haydn, Schubert and Brahms with a world

premiere or two. Other artists include pianists Lang Lang and Rudolf Buchbinder; soprano Barbara Bonney and mezzo-soprano Angelika Kirchschrager in a recital of lieder and arias by Mozart, Schumann and others; baritone Thomas Hampson in recital; and Sir Charles Mackerras conducting the Vienna Philharmonic.

—MARGARET SHAKESPEARE

## EYES ONLY

Mozartwoche 2005, January 21-30, Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum, Salzburg, Austria.  
Tickets: about \$20-\$230;  
43-662-87-3154.  
tickets@mozarteum.at.  
www.mozarteum.at. General  
Salzburg information:  
www.salzburg.info.

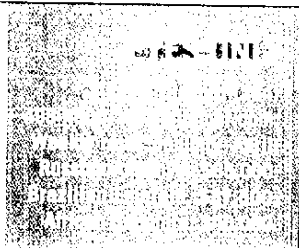


**Anguilla:** Because it's in Anguilla, an island known for hotels and villas of stark-white, fantasy-shape architecture—a little Greek, a little Moorish, a little outer space—**ALTAMER** fits right in. Its three resort villas look like stylized versions of geometry theorems, made all the more striking by being so white alongside the electric-blue water of Shoal Bay West. • Softening the angular lines and soaring 21-foot ceilings are interiors filled with rattan furniture lined with raw silk, cultural artifacts from all over the globe and one-of-a-kind artisan pieces, from wall sconces of Murano glass to forks of hammered Italian silver. The proficient, hospitable staff is led by able chief butler Carl Irish. >>

Photograph: courtesy of Altamer Resort

# Travel

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Add a typical meal—poolside, under starlight, with dishes such as iced plum tomato soup and enormous grilled crayfish with garlic and lime—and you realize that Altamer is going for the perfectionist villa experience. The third villa, the largest and most extravagant of the lot, opened officially in October.

This villa, the 14,000-square-foot “African Sapphire” (so named for the provenance of its furnishings, including a chandelier and table centerpiece handmade in Africa from half a million beads), has eight bedrooms and techno toys such as a home theater with a ten-foot screen, 42-inch plasma-screen TV and a satellite music system with 30,000 songs. It shares the six-acre property with “Brazilian Emerald,” the second villa, which opened last November, a slightly smaller version (13,000 square feet, five bedrooms) furnished with South American finds. The original five-bedroom villa, “Russian Amethyst,” which opened four years ago, has artifacts from Russia, where owners Rebecca and Michael Eggleton lived while he was an investment advisor for the post-Communist government, and from Turkey, where they maintained a vacation house.

Demonstrating their financial acumen, the Eggletons offer many of the items in the houses for sale—among them the hand-stitched Italian linens and glassware, reproductions of ornate 19th-century Russian silver fish knives and forks, and Turkish rugs and robes.

This financial skill is undoubtedly the reason behind the ambitious development of the property. Each successive villa may be an improvement on the previous one, but my only complaint is that there was more privacy when the first villa was the only one. The buildings are artfully angled and landscaped to keep them hidden and apart from the others. Still, the optimal solution is the one demonstrated by the first guest to book African Sapphire—renting all three villas. What a perfect place for a family reunion or a jaunt for you and 35 of your closest friends.—LAURIE WERNER



**SoHo:** The arty-chic **SOHO GRAND HOTEL** in lower Manhattan has combined its original five penthouse rooms into two sprawling, roughly 1,500-square-foot suites. The new two-bedroom spaces were conceived by designer William Sofield to emulate a classic loft or—with their beautiful, furnished terraces—a kind of high-rise urban vacation house. • “If you wanted to feel as if you live in New York in a dream apartment, this would be it,” says Sofield. Here muted colors, lush fabrics and quirky “found” objects compose a look that feels urbane yet exudes comfort. >>

Photograph: courtesy of the SoHo Grand Hotel