

BCD Travel and routeRANK for environmentally responsible and productive travel

BCD Travel has announced a partnership with routeRANK, a technology company for the travel industry. The partnership brings solutions for business travellers to maximise their productivity during their journey, while also being able to measure the environmental footprint of their trip, depending on their choice of route.

Through a single search, routeRANK gives a comprehensive overview of all possible routes and transportation options to get from point A to B. It combines the usual travel options with less obvious alternatives, such as routes and timetables of public transport or use of the private car for part of the journey. This gives a better picture of the travel options and offers the choice of the best option, based on price, travel time, the ability to move work or sleep and the impact on the environment.

For example, a business traveller may find that the first part of his journey is cheaper if he uses his

own car, but that if he takes the train instead he will be able to work for an extra two hours. The search capabilities include air, rail, other public transport, car travel and locations with video conferencing.

“Until now, there was no single solution that offered businesses the possibility to choose between commercial, public and private modes of transport. This alternative planner allows travellers the various options combined in the way that suits them best, while they can still book through their favourite channels” said Diederik Banks, Vice President Commercial at BCD Travel Benelux.

BCD Travel Benelux has integrated the solution with its online booking system for customers, while BCD Travel’s telephone booking support teams have the same information. The public version of routeRANK is viewable on www.routerank.com.

Focus on savings means more Benelux companies are establishing travel policies

More and more companies in the Benelux region are establishing business travel policies. The biennial ‘Continuous Research Business trip’ conducted by NBTC-NIPO Research, and in which BCD Travel participated, reveals that 44 percent of business travellers have a travel policy in place in their company.

“We see that more and more companies are drafting travel policies” said Derrick Banks, Vice President Sales at BCD Travel Benelux. “This is partly the consequence of the economic crisis, which has hit business travel. At the same time we see that other companies are tightening their existing travel policies. It is important that both companies and business travellers are aware of the importance of a travel policy. It can provide significant cost savings, as it means spending is better managed and price agreements can be made with suppliers. In addition, the company also benefits in terms of travel risk management. Often we see that companies take too much of a reactive attitude to emergency situations. A Travel Risk Management program avoids confusion about responsibilities and guarantees rapid intervention. “

The research also showed that many companies have agreed and negotiated discounts with airlines or hotel chains. However a large majority of business travellers are not aware of these agreements, so there is clearly room for improvement.

Historium Bruges to open its doors in November

Bruges is set to become an even more attractive tourist destination, with the launch of Historium. While the details of the new project have been public for some time, the official opening date has now been fixed for November 25th.

Historium has all the signs of being a great success story. Its concept is not to be a museum but to be an experience centre where visitors make a fascinating journey to the distant past, to the glorious world of Bruges in the year 1435. Visitors to the Historium will step into a time machine that transports them to the streets of medieval Bruges where snowflakes are gently falling, to the bustle of a world sea port and the studio of Van Eyck. Film clips, beautiful decor, a compelling love story, special effects and

atmospheric music all combine to create a unique total experience.

Historium is destined to be a success not only on account of the content and historical setting but also due to its fantastic location on the old market square of Bruges. There could not be a better location given that the 600 year old story portrayed in the Historium took place exactly on this spot. Furthermore the close cooperation with the Tourism Office for Flanders, Toerisme Brugge and the tourist guide associations is a major asset. There will also be an after show and a Historium city walk that perfectly complement the visit to the experience centre.

Historium will be open daily, except 1 January and 25 December, from 10 am to 6pm.

airberlin celebrates three millionth topbonus member with competitions

Dr Albina Boyarkina from Saint Petersburg has become the three millionth member to join airberlin’s topbonus frequent flyer programme. Marcus Puffer, airberlin’s Vice President Loyalty & Partnerships, presented her with the gift of a long-haul flight voucher for two within airberlin’s route network.

All other frequent flyers also have an opportunity to win prizes with topbonus, as there are currently two competitions for members. The first competition can be found on the airberlin.com/3millionen promotional page, where there will be a prize draw for a total of 3 million miles, with 1 million award miles allocated as first prize. Topbonus partners Marriott, Starwood Hotels, Avis and Europcar are also organising a competition, at facebook.com/airberlin, where exclusive prizes will include hotel accommodation and car rental vouchers.

KLM strengthens African network with services to Harare, Zimbabwe

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines will begin operating services to Harare on 29 October. The Zimbabwean capital will be served in combination with the new KLM destination Lusaka, Zambia.

KLM will operate services from Amsterdam-Schiphol to Harare International Airport three times a week. KLM will also offer eleven weekly services to Harare via Nairobi in cooperation with Kenya Airways.