



# THE SUNDAY TIMES

20 | travel

THE SUNDAY TIMES  
Weekend Edition, March 29/30, 2009

29.03.09

Continued from page 18

### 4 Schweizer Pension

"People sometimes come to breakfast in their bathrobes," grins Anita Schweizer in the dining room of her Steirischhaus guesthouse. Judging by the homeliness of the welcome, you can understand why. The 11 rooms here are simple, bordering on stark, a mix of modern furniture and the occasional loud rug or floral print. Whatever the pension lacks in frills, however, it makes up for in friendliness, as you can tell from the cabinet stacked with kitsch gifts from satisfied guests.

Stirkingly clean, thanks to Anita's work ethic, and above grace (the pension's eco-awards allow no chemical detergents), the Schweizer is in a quiet city-centre neighbourhood and attracts the more mature budget traveller. Don't forget your slippers. Double dm from 400, 200; 1 522154, schweizerpension.com



The Bechies in Rome and, right, Prague's Dosa & Věta's Dosa



spartan feel of the room though they've been up since. The pretty courtyard, dripping hanging baskets, is wrought-iron bannisters black and white floor. The wider chairs of floor are the perfect spot of forward plus. Double from 470, 200; 200 200 200, agneta

### 5 Hotel Goya

The Example north of the city extension to the grid streets and some of it also has two extra.

First is the Goya, a couple of floors, it are bright, corners uncluttered. They & their own television can watch large pla in the two generous while helping your coffee or tea. The excellent English is extremely helpful. townhouse hotels rooms overlooking courtyards are nice but don't get much light. Ask for a street balcony room — No 207 lead onto a quiet. Double from 470, 200; 200 200, boutique

Continued on page 21

### 5 Pension Rindl

Here's another hidden-away Vienna 1068 in a frankly astonishing location. Standing under the art nouveau angles of Otto Wagner's shimmering Postsparkasse building, you'd never know Pension Rindl exists — look for a discreet gold nameplate under the doorbell.

Updates, the lobby feels a bit hotelish like, partly because of the student staff, but the rooms are cool. Six were renovated last year (avoid numbers 1 to 4, which are older), and each has a bold heap of colour framing arty black-and-white photos of Vienna. The new bathrooms, with rainfall showers and mosaic tiles, are especially slick. Refreshed double from 400, room only 1 2 2700, www.pensionrindl.at

### 6R rooms

And now for something completely different — Vienna's first "budget design hotel". It's marketed mainly to business guests, but offers a handy alternative for weekenders who don't mind being a 15-minute metro ride from Stephansplatz. Even if you don't stay, it's worth stopping in to see Gasometer, the beautifully revitalised brick cylinders of Europe's grandest gasworks. They enclose cinemas and shopping malls, and look like Jules Verne rocket ships.

Rooms (eight next door: triple, there are curvy, the TV is fat and a laptop under the arm appears more or less mandatory. The hotel's 34-hour bar-cum-restaurant is perky, and the 102 bedrooms are businesslike and identical. You simply choose your colour scheme — chocolate, pink, blue or grey.

Rate very but a double typically cost 400, 200; at weekend 1 200 270, rooms-vienna.com

### Where to stay

Getting there: airlines flying to Vienna include easyJet (easyjet.com), British Airways (0844 440 070, ba.com) and Austrian Airlines (00 30 124 2626, aa.com).

## BARCELONA



Lucky you. There you are, thinking, "I'd like to keep a lid on the price of my Barcelona break," just as a new kind of superstylish, mid-price hotel makes its mark on the city.

The most exciting of these is the Chikilastic (see below), but there are others, and they offer extraordinary value for money.

### 1 Market Hotel

A lot of style for little outlay: beautifully light corridors lead to attractive rooms on the cosy side of minimalist, with oak furniture, lacquered oriental designs and dramatic splashes of red. The bathrooms mix slate tiles and square sinks to satisfying effect. Ask for a room with a balcony. It's a 30-minute walk to the Old Town through eastern El Raval, but San Antoni Market metro is dead close. Double from 400, 200; 00 94 91 20 200, markethotel.com

### 2 Chic & Basic Bern

In the medieval heart of the city, the recently refurbished district of Bern has designer shops, mesh galleries, modern restaurants — and the expat-friendly Chikilastic hotel. It's a mid-range budget, but worth every penny. The entrance is on the broadest street in the barrio, where helpful staff will direct you up the marble staircase to space-age corridors

and the minimalist rooms. Each is white, with a centerpiece see-through shower, surrounded by a beaded curtain. The lighting can be switched from disco red to chilled lavender, and you get a plasma screen, an iPod dock and free music, along with a handy free guidebook to the city's best

places, produced by the hotel. Check out the hotel's White Bar (thewhitebar.com), too. Double from 420, 200; 91 295 460, www.chikilastic.com

### 3 Banyo d'orientals

On a busy pedestrianised street in the La Ribera district, this

polished, sophisticated hotel punches far above the price tag. The 43 rooms are black, white and grey, with dark wooden floors and architectural sketches and old portrait photos on the walls. There are modern four-poster bed frames and the bathrooms are luxurious.

A knockout option in an unbeatable location, this place gets booked up, so be quick. Double from 490, 200; 91 202 440, boutiquepark16.com

### 4 Hotel Peninsula

Just a few paces east of La Ribera is the exciting enclave

of El Raval. Gentrification is under way, and the car-free street on which you'll find the Peninsula is rather noisy, but the huge lobby makes a wonderful refuge.

It was originally a convent, but was made into a hotel in 1905, which explains the

Sorrento and the Amalfi Coast  
You will be dumbfounded twice.

Special offers to discover the beauty of Amalfi and Sorrento.  
Discovering coast shaped by the sun and waves breaking on the rocks has never been so easy. Thanks to the valuable locations offered in Campania you can fill in time with the amazing panoramic traditional cuisine, authentic wine and enchanting towns under the deep gaze of Vesuvius. Discover all the beauty of the Amalfi Coast and Sorrento, discover a masterpiece of coasts.

ENIADGLOM

campania  
Discover an infinite variety

MADE IN ITALY  
HAS NEVER BEEN  
SO AFFORDABLE.

ITALY  
from  
€89  
Return, all taxes  
and charges included.

Purchase by 5 April 2009 and travel between 29 March and 20 September 2009 advantage of special fares from London to 23 destinations in Italy. For more info and bookings visit [www.italy.com](http://www.italy.com), call 08714 24 14 24 or contact your local travel agent.

italy.com

Alitalia

Subject to availability. Prices shown are for return economy class based from London Heathrow and London City airport. Italian destinations on Alitalia and Air One operated flights. The offer is valid for travel between 29 March and 20 Sept. Best return date. Tickets must be purchased no later than 5 April 2009. The maximum stay is 21 days. Refunds, changes are not permitted. Offer is not applicable to code-share flights operated by partner airlines. Other restrictions apply.