**FOOD & DRINK**

*Selecto*

It all starts with the bread at Selecto, which was founded in June by chef Olivier Moelard of Le Pain et le Vin fame. Homemaded, the crust is salty, the inner fluff still warm. It tastes essential, like something your grandmother ate.

Selecto serves comfort food, though you wouldn’t know it to look at it. It’s a bright, open space with attention to detail. But as Rue de Flandre’s latest homage to slow food and ‘bistronomy’, the restaurant uses fresh, seasonal ingredients to serve up creative, soul. Its meats are dressed in rich, creamy sauces, the homage to slow food and ‘bistronomy’, the restaurant using salt or butter. At times it lacks refinement, but for those on a tighter budget, they can get your hands on any of the best sides of Selecto, including a glass or two of a surprising and delicious house wine, for around €50 per person. But for those on a tighter budget, they offer a daily two-course lunch for €14.

*Westvleteren*

The ‘world’s best beer’ goes on sale

Colruyt has teamed up with Westvleteren XII, a beer widely considered to be the world’s best, to release a special-edition gift box. Previously, the monk-brewed beer has only been available by pre-ordering directly from the abbey via an oversubscribed telephone reservation system. But for the first time ever, 93,000 units of the gift pack have been put on sale to anyone with a special voucher from the November 2 edition of De Standaard, Knack and Le Vif. Westvleteren has decided to take part in the promotion in an effort to raise money for the renovation of the Abbey. The gift packs will be sold for as long as stocks last, but don’t worry if you’re not able to get your hands on any; that oversubscribed phone line will probably be a little bit quieter.

*Bonnie et Jane*

Everything must go

Bonnie and Jane is a new concept store on Rue Darwin. As well as clothes and accessories, it sells books, furniture and other trinkets from Brussels, Paris and beyond in a rather poetic apartment-cum-boutique. Brands such as My Demoiselles, Fine Collection, Charlotte Sometime, Roos Vanderkerckhove, Kiboots, Alix de Mous, l’Atelier des Dames, Louise Hendricks Vanderkerckhove, Kiboots, Alix de Mous, l’Atelier des Dames, Louise Hendricks are all exclusively available in Brussels at this store. With Christmas just around the corner, it’s a great place to browse and of course, buy.

*The Drinks store at Selecto*

A contemporary jewellery gallery opens in Ixelles on November 17. Françoise Vander-aumen’s Vander A Gallery will showcase the work of young talent, designers who often fall between the two stools of fashion and art. The new space on Avenue des Saisons opens with an exhibition by Patrick Marchal called It is not because you AA, which offers a satirical look at everything from Belgian politics to the politics of violence. The picture below is of a piece called Solidarity, taken from the exhibition which runs until January 7. For more on contemporary Belgian jewellery, see page 58. www.vandera.gallery.be

*Comics Village*

New museum/restaurant/store opens

With Tintin fever rampant in Belgium in recent weeks, what better time for the city’s latest comic shop to open? The Comics Village on the Place du Grand Sablon threw open its doors last month, giving a first glimpse of its cavernous gallery, shop and diner. The enterprise is the brainchild of Francis Slomka, a Parisian surgeon and former journalist with a thing for comics and an impressive collection of artworks by the likes of Herge, Disney and Schulz. Visitors are greeted by a statue of Tintin by Antwerp-born sculptor Nat Neujon – commissioned by Herge and returned from Paris to its home town this year by Slomka. Downstairs, a glass and stone labyrinth is part museum, part gallery and part store. Upstairs, a 200-seater American-style brasserie serves burgers, bagels and milkshakes with young chef Fabrice Nesle at the helm. www.comicscafe.be

*Isabelle Baines: A Knitting Workshop in Brussels*

Renowned knitwear designer Isabelle Baines is exhibiting at the Musée du Costume et de la Dentelle until December 31. As the title suggests, A Knitting Workshop in Brussels provides a rare insight into the world of a city-based knitwear atelier. As well as her Brussels-based workshop, Baines also has a boutique where she sells her unique handmade designs. You can visit the exhibition at the Musée du Costume et de la Dentelle, 12 Rue de la Violette, every day except Wednesday from 10.00 to 17.00 or you can visit her store at 4 Rue de la Longue Haie, tel 02.502.13.73.

www.isabellebaines.com
IN BRIEF

Philips
LED your light shine

Autumn’s here, which means long, dark days and barely enough sunlight to keep us warm and happy. To make up for it, Philips has developed coloured LED lamps that can help create the right light and mood. A set of online tools and apps are available on the See What Light Can Do website to help new users get started.

Ever since the old incandescent bulb went out of production, LED lighting has become a lot more accessible. The Living Colour light range contains a remote-controlled LED light source which provides a spectrum of colours, allowing users to create whatever atmosphere they want. Coloured light can change a room, Philips has created an online tool where you can recreate your interior and then start adding coloured light. There’s also a smartphone app which acts as a guide to users to the right light sources based on their needs and expectations. For more information on what light can do for you, visit the website, www.sethallengrands.philips.com

Patrick Cox and Geox
New shoe collaboration puts best foot forward

Italian brand Geox is renowned for its innovative shoemaking and, specifically for him to wear on stage. The firm has teamed up with British shoe designer Patrick Cox and Geox, which has just opened currently based in Brussels, has invited Cox to design a shoe for Summer 2012. All designs for men, women and children will come in avariety of metallic leathers including gold. The bad news is that you won’t be able to buy them, but Cox and Patrick Cox are collaborating on a capsule collection for Spring/Summer 2012. All designs for men, women and children will come with a dashing Scot, and set off to start a new life with a shiny new companion to guide users to the right light sources

www.geox.be

January.

www.salonzenith.be

Saturday. Tickets cost €8.

Byström (Mathilde). PL

Osborn (Arnold), Marie-Nicole

claire Louise

patricia

Humpty Dumpty Records

Clare Louise is a young folk singer from France who is standout favourite in Brussels and sounds like she was born in the wilds of the Irish county that shares half of her name. The first album Cæsurs in the Sky is an impressive first offering that provides a rich but delicate canvas for her haunting, Dolores O’Riordan-style vocals. The title track is a standout favourite but there is plenty else to get swept into.

If you’ve ever wondered what comes after William Tell’s famous overture, now is your chance to find out. Rossini’s Guillaume Tell is a striking masterpiece, a grand Romantic, French language work written for the Paris Opéra which has it all: Austrian soldiers, Swiss shepherds, a natty villain, idyllic choruses, furious storms, a noble hero and his son, as well as the inevitable couple of lovers. Excellent orchestral and choral contributions from the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia directed by Antonio Pappano and fine solo singing by Gerald Finley (Tell), John O’Keeffe (Arvedi), Marie-Nicole Lemieux (Hedwige) and Malin Byström (Mathilde). FL.

Clare Louise

Castles in the Air

Humphry Dumpty Records

MUSIC

DIY

New collaboration puts foot forward

Stephen Coates is collaborating on a capsule collection for Spring/Summer 2012. All designs for men, women and children will come with a dashing Scot, and set off to start a new life with a shiny new companion to guide users to the right light sources

THE AMERICAN TREAT

The unlikely tale of a Prussian cavalry officer who becomes the first king of modern Romania is told by His Highnessess. With a wonderfully exotic cast that includes feuding politicians, enigmatic Romanian exiles, a poet and the happy hookers at the Ti Tittes bordello, this is a thoroughly entertaining way to learn something about Balkan history. FL.

BOOKS

Devisches mit Wagen

Harvey Black, Metador

302 pages, €8

The real problem with these new arrivals is that they make me long for more Anglo-Saxon goodness. When will be able to buy a bagel that isn’t just an optimistically shaped brezel? A cheap, brilliant manure from a brouseque Vietnamese lady? Or burritos. I have developed a frankly unsustained passion for the cheap and cheerful burrito shops that are so brilliant in the States and have now started popping up all over London. Now I want my foil-wrapped cylinder of nirvana, at home, in Brussels. Don’t even get me started on coffee. The American treat I want most, though, I really can’t have. The American invasion is a striking novel about the leave-taking, saying goodbye to people you’ve grown to love.

The American invasion

As one door closes, another one opens, or so the saying goes. Although Emma Reddington is happy with her new American arrivals, the one Yank who really matters isn’t here.

T here’s a distinctly transatlantic feel to recent developments in the Brussels retail landscape. I shouldn’t actually be going anywhere near the Brussels retail landscape given the current state of my finances, but even so. With my face pressed up against the tram window I can see what’s going on. Starbucks, Urban Outfitters, Marc Jacobs, Bobbi Brown, Abercrombie & Fitch... it’s an American invasion. I’m half-expecting a handsome Gil to offer me a stick of chewing gum at any minute.

It’s a good thing, of course. Marc Jacobs accessories are brilliant for presents that look far more expensive than they really are. Bobbi Brown in eyeliner nirvana and although I’m hardly the target demographic, Abercrombie staff are famously easy on the eye.

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www.ceranum.com

Belgian Waffle

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