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ATHENS

insider



The art issue

Wandering the gallery zone / Art Athina goes global
Focus on Herakleidon, Potnia Thiron and the Contemporary Art Space
Poros yachts / Portuguese Ambassador Alfredo Duarte Costa / Athina's Lofts

PLUS: ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, FOOD & WINE, NIGHTLIFE, SHOPPING, NOVELTIES, MAPS AND MORE



Globetrotter

Screenwriters' conference to premiere in Athens

Screenwriters from across the globe will gather in Athens this November for the first World Conference of Screenwriters. Invited guests include Guillermo Arriaga, writer of *Babel*, Alan Ball of *American Beauty* fame, Christopher Hampton (*Atonement*, *Dangerous Liaisons*), David Hare (*The Reader*), Shonda Rhimes, who penned TV success "Grey's Anatomy", and JJ Abrams, behind the hit series "Lost". Commenting on the upcoming conference, Patrick Verrone, president of the Writers' Guild of America West in Hollywood, California, commented: "We are very much looking forward to spending time in the home of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, those great Greeks who first brought us so many of the conventions of tragedy, comedy and of the stage that are the tools of our profession. Where else should such a meeting take place, except in Athens? See you in November." The conference is organised by the European Federation of Screenwriters, the Hellenic Audiovisual Institute, the Hellenic Film Commission-Greek Film Centre, and the Greek ministries of culture and tourism.

Fly to Heathrow from Athens from just 109 euros with British Airways. Flights from Thessaloniki to Gatwick are even more affordable, from 72 euros

Superfast invites you on a 3-day wine-tasting cruise to Italy with oenologist Dimitris Hatzinikolaou. Departing May 15, prices from 189 euros per person

Royal Caribbean International is offering a 12-night voyage to the Arctic Circle and Norwegian fjords, departing June 26 from Amsterdam. From 1,300 euros per person, including flights, transfers and a double cabin

GulfAir offers fabulous fares to Bangkok and back for as low as 270 euros

Another ideal home for Leroy Merlin

French DIY chain Leroy Merlin opened its second Athens superstore last month, a 9,000 square metre behemoth on Pireos Street. Spread across two levels, the store is dedicated to the eternal quest for home and garden improvement, with everything from fitted bathrooms, lighting and bed-sheets to lawn-mowers and deckchairs.

Although DIY in Greece doesn't have the same fervent following as in western Europe and the US, while the lack of gardens makes gardening as a hobby almost obsolete, Leroy Merlin owner Adeo and its Greek partners Fourlis express themselves content with the local uptake - notwithstanding the current financial storm.

In an April interview with *Naftemporiki*, Greece director general Jean-Marc Huppe highlighted the chain's "impressive start" in its first year of operation (2007) while, "although 2008 showed signs of slowdown, the year-end results were positive". "We are very satisfied because we have much better results than our competitors (at least on a like-for-like basis)," he continued.

The first store at Athens airport, which opened in March 2007, has been followed by a branch in Thessaloniki, while a Larissa store is next on the cards. Altogether, Adeo and Fourlis are planning 15 shops throughout Greece and Cyprus. Currently, Leroy Merlin has a global portfolio of 19 shops in nine countries.

LEROY MERLIN

ATHENS HOSTS THE FIRST EUROPEAN UNION CONFERENCE ON ANTI-DOPING BETWEEN MAY 13 AND 15 * GET READY FOR JUNE 16 IN MOSCOW * START BOOKING TICKETS NOW FOR NEXT MONTH'S MUSIC TREATS: FRANZ FERDINAND ON JUNE 3, THE VIBES, MOTLEY CRUE, AMONG OTHERS