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# Travel updates: Alsace and London

Tom Robbins

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## Alsace



A villa built in 1920 by the French jewellery and glass designer René Lalique has been transformed into a lavish boutique hotel. Lalique used the villa, in the village of Wingen-sur-Moder, as his home while visiting his nearby factory. The villa's exterior has been faithfully restored in traditional Alsatian style but inside it now contains six suites designed by Tina Green (wife of the British retail magnate Sir Philip Green) and Pietro Mingarelli. Beside the villa is a new building in glass and red sandstone, designed by architect Mario Botta, which houses a 20,000-bottle wine cellar and restaurant. The chef, Jean-Georges Klein, won three Michelin stars at his previous restaurant, L'Arnsbourg in Baerenthal. Lalique products are still made at the factory, on the other side of the village, and a museum opened there in 2011. Suites range from €350 to €1,300.

*villarenelalique.com*

## London

Business-class lounges and cabins have traditionally been hidden away behind frosted glass, velvet ropes and curtains, but a pioneering collaboration between British Airways and London City Airport now lets anyone explore inside using Google Street View. Armchair travellers can “walk” into the airport, go airside, then continue to gate 24, where they can enter BA’s lounge. Further mouse-clicks take them outside on to the apron and up the stairs on to BA’s 32-seat, all-business-class Airbus A318, which serves the London to JFK route.

*[londoncityairport.com](http://londoncityairport.com)*

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## MY LONDON

### King’s Cross to Dalston, by Neel Mukherjee

I’m going to write about two discrete areas of London. The first is the stretch I always used to imagine as the urban badlands of King’s Cross, eroded by poverty, underdevelopment and crime. This is, roughly speaking, the area lying between the V formed by the forking tines of York Way and Caledonian Road, bordered by the Regent’s Canal to the north. See more... [»](#)

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