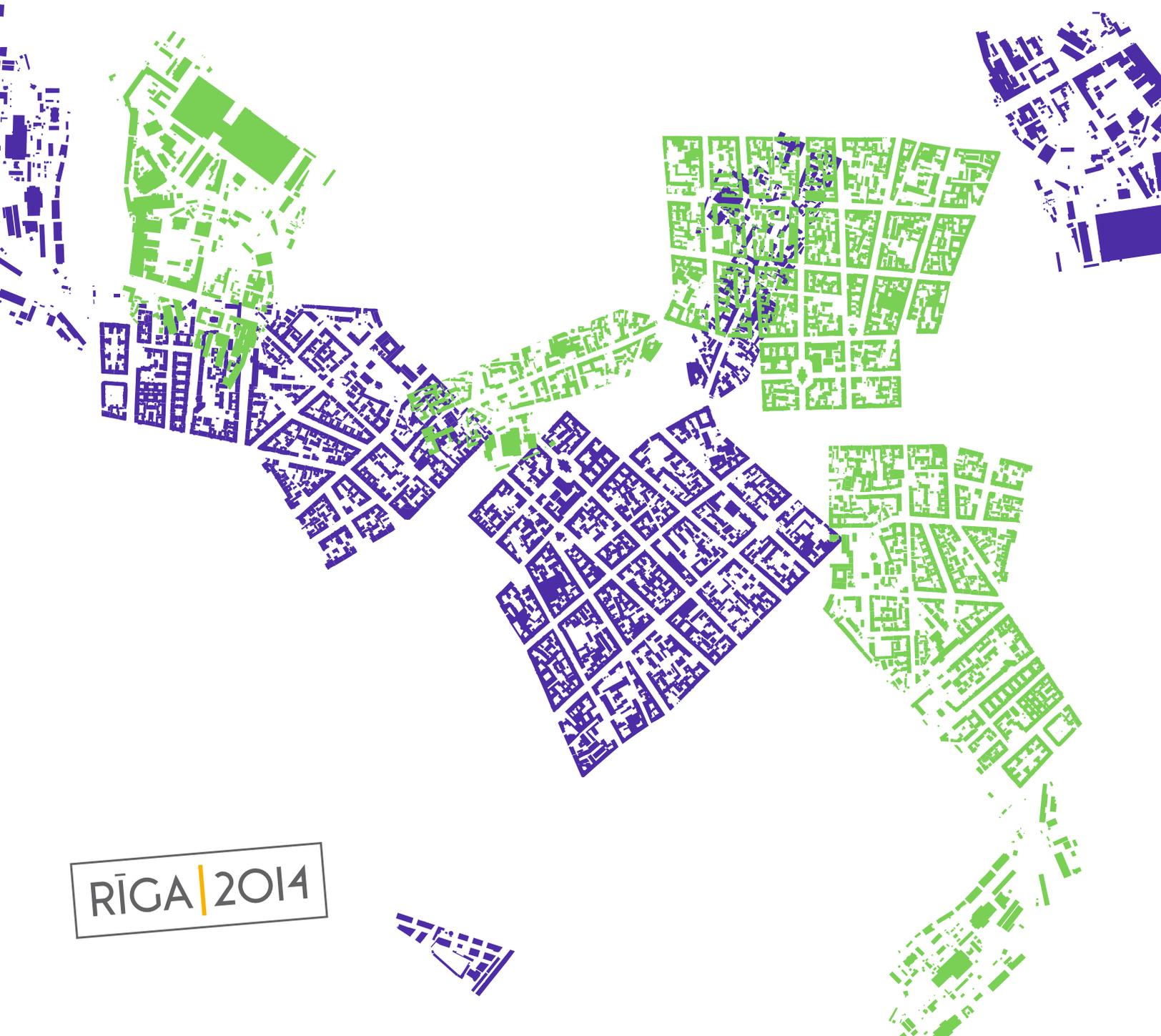


RIGA'S CREATIVE QUARTERS



RĪGA | 2014

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Qualified as Architect at Riga Technical University and received a Master's degree in Urbanism from Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands. Has worked at *MADE arhitekti*, as well as publishing articles on the *A4D* interactive platform and magazines *Latvijas Arhitektūra* and *Ir* on current issues in Latvian architecture. Carried out the *Riga's Creative Quarters* (2009) study, published in the *Process2* contemporary architecture book. Leads groups every year at the Riga Technical University International Summer School. Currently resides in Rotterdam, where she participates in projects by the *SVESMI* architecture firm and writes a blog at *fineyoungurbanists.tumblr.com*

— *Matīss Groskaufmanis,*
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Alongside studies at the Riga Construction College (specializing as architectural technician), worked at a number of architecture offices in Riga, including *NRJA*. After completing his studies in 2008, was admitted to the Mackintosh School of Architecture in Glasgow and in summer 2011, received a Bachelor of Architecture accredited by the Royal Institute of British Architecture. In 2009, before a one-year exchange programme at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, he worked at the *Leo Burnett Riga* advertising agency. In the evenings, after his professional and academic activities, he takes part in maintaining the *Cita Mūzika* hand-picked music blog.

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Metropolises: Policies and

Instruments for the Support
of Creative Industries



CREATIVE
METROPOLES



EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE



INTERREG IVC
INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENT
REGIONS OF EUROPE SHARING SOLUTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The burgeoning of creative initiatives in Riga can be traced to the deterioration of the economic situation in 2008 and 2009, which left display windows on the first storeys of the city's buildings empty. Many people who had become unemployed decided to apply themselves to pursuits close to their hearts, turning their avocations into gainful employment. It was not long before support programmes like *Atspēriens* and *Brigāde* sprang up, offering a helping hand to promising new entrepreneurs.

In 2011, Riga's creative quarters became strong *sub-centres*, each with its own unique theme. Original sites and experiences draw people's interest, have the potential to become economically meaningful, and can have a positive impact on the overall urban environment. By contrast to large-scale planning that takes place from the top down, small-scale, private initiatives reorder the city step by step, at a street level – outdoor cafe tables, well-lit windows and open doors make Riga more enticing, usable and safe.

The concept of a “quarter” in this study is a loose one, applied to various structural elements in the urban environment – the stretch of a street, a courtyard between freestanding buildings, rehabilitated industrial premises, or a pedestrian arcade. Each of the nine locations in Riga described here is known for its architectural features and a distinct lifestyle. The study also looks at cultural shifts in urban life – the revival of bicycling and the advent of virtual networking.

Creativity in contemporary cities is fundamental to the education of the populace, a necessary aspect of cultural diversity and economic growth. Richard Florida, an American philosopher focused on city planning, has theorized that creativity is the driving force behind the development of modern urban areas, regions and nations. He has gathered data indicating that diverse opportunities for recreation are essential in making cities competitive; a self-organizing process creating venues for cultural activities and entertainment is vital in attracting younger residents. If the young find a city desirable, that city has a future.

Riga's Creative Quarters is the continuation of a study first undertaken in 2009 and published in the second volume of *Process*, a publication devoted to contemporary architecture. The study reflected a growing interest in creative industries at that time. Despite the economic crisis, the development of creative quarters began with glowing optimism and offered a counter-current to the tendency of people from Latvia, especially younger people, to emigrate in search of a better life.

In 2011, the subsequent development of the quarters was evaluated, trends analyzed, and conclusions drawn about successes and failures. In June and July 2011, Riga's creative quarters were surveyed; interviews were conducted with more than 40 new entrepreneurs, the curators of cultural processes, artists, architects and building owners. Everyday life in these urban environments, those who create the environments, and public events held in the quarters were documented in photographs. All of the sites included in the study were visited in person. Their media presence was also evaluated. The criteria for the selection of the sites were primarily their accessibility to the public and the events held there, as well as the impact the sites have on their neighbourhoods and on the city as a whole.

In 2014, Riga will be the European Capital of Culture. In order to create positive long-term cultural *traces* in the city, Foundation RIGA 2014 will invite creative neighbourhoods to create a common platform for their initiatives within a programme.

Your Rīga 2014

riga2014.org

A CELEBRATION EVERY DAY

— *The blocks between Tērbatas iela and Barona iela*

One could live on a street between Tērbatas and Barona without budging from the neighbourhood at all, year after year, and experience no lack of culture, diverse cuisine, fashion or socializing. The area has long been saturated with bookshops, libraries, theatres and cinemas.

Points of interest here are not evenly spread; the streets in the neighbourhood have certain distinct epicentres. The corner of Lāčplēša and Barona is a crossroads of culture; the restaurant Osiris has long been renowned as a haunt of creative people, prominent businesspeople and politicians. The gallery and restaurant Istaba opened nearby not so long ago. *The New Riga Theatre* is visible from the intersection, and the *Teātra bāra reģlorāns* with its summer terrace can be found in its courtyard.

The quarter bears witness to Riga's coffee craze, too – there's the fine vintage clothing store and cafeteria *Bonēra*, the trendy coffee bar *Innocent Café*, and the family-oriented bakery *Kūkotava*; all three brew a superb cup that makes one want to return again and again.

Culture and design form another layer of this quarter's offerings – its essence can be discovered at *RIIJA*, a Latvian lifestyle concept shop, which shares an address with *Lukabuka*, a design shop and bookstore. There's also the *Splendid Palace*, Riga's oldest cinema.

If the alternative scene is more to one's liking, then Tērbatas iela between Stabu and Matisa is the place to be – *Gauja* provides counter service steeped in nostalgia for the Soviet era, its diverse customers mixing with crowds of revellers who keep up a lively atmosphere on both sides of Tērbatas iela in the evenings. One can find an antidote to retro Soviet chic by imbibing pop culture in a casual ambience at *Pērle*, which features live music among mannequins and other decor.

The blocks between Tērbatas and Barona do not possess a distinctive identity. The keyword here is diversity, also reflected by the variety of its visitors. ✕





CHANGING THE CITY

— *Edijs Vucēns and Žanete Skarule, owners of the unspecialized Pērle shop*

Made a conscious choice to avoid the tourist hotspots and create an alternative Riga. Two years later, kindred cafes and stores have popped up all around the area.

Are not claiming pioneer status, but have provided an impulse for young people with the desire to create and change the city to be able to try.

Pērle is not just a space, but an idea that can spread further into the city.

Communication on Twitter and via email is the only method of advertising. Pērle is not following anyone on Twitter, but has around 3500 followers.

Enjoy cooperating with others: MAMMU, Moment, Adwards, The Latvian Academy of Art.

Over time, the layout and rhythm of events has been adapted to avoid disturbing the neighbours.

@VeikalsPerle



WILL TAKE PART EVEN IF THEY'RE NOT ON THE PROGRAMME

— *Ksenija Kamikaza, DJ, landlady of the Fiesta vinotheque*

The aim was to find a central spot – a historical house to suit wine.

Invested savings meant for children and new windows, as well as their own fridges and those of their grandmothers.

The building owner was supportive.

Would really like a bicycle parking space nearby, since these days everyone rides a bike and wants a place to leave their 'horse'. Uses Facebook the most, since everyone moved to Facebook at one point – Latvians, Russians, friends living abroad. Everyone is very active on there.

Fiesta is more popular among Russians, since its owners are Russian, but Latvians come too. There are no conflicts, and no problems speaking either Latvian or Russian.

Cooperation could be going better, but there is a lack of time. Everyone works hard to survive. Have established a model of cooperation with the Ludo gaming club.

» vinoteka.lv



IN CONTACT WITH THE PLAYERS

— *Egīls Grasmanis, co-owner of the Ludo board game stores*

Ludo is a chain of board game stores – there is currently one in Riga, one in Tallinn and one in Tartu.

Started business as a publisher and wholesaler of board games, and the key reason why he and his friends opened a shop was the wish to be in direct contact with other players.

Ludo's current location at the corner of Bruņinieku and Kr.Barona has turned out to be more successful than earlier sites in

the Mols and Galerija Centrs shopping centres, as niche stores find it harder to get a good spot there.

Board game players in Lithuania and Estonia are more active and gather in clubs and groups. Latvians have to be encouraged to get together and play.

Has noticed that the popularity of board games has grown significantly over the past few years; the idea that games are just meant for children has disappeared.

» ludo.lv



FEELING LIGHT

— *Marika Viktorova un Ingrīda Reigo, owners of La Kanna restaurant*

With no prior experience in the hospitality industry, they have created a place in which to feel light, enjoy a light meal and build relationships lightly.

The La Kanna concept is an open kitchen – the chef and food preparation process are visible; guests can feel at home by having a chat with the chef. The food is fresh and homemade, including bread and pastries.

Tērbatas iela was chosen for its flow of people. Businesspeople also appreciate the location.

A La Kanna client is a successful, mature, highly-developed personality with strong self-esteem.

They would like the state and local government to offer more bureaucratic flexibility, as getting ideas approved takes a lot of time and work, making it an expensive process.

» lakanna.lv



EDUCATION, CULTURE, SUPPORT

1. The New Riga Theatre

Phenomenal direction and acting
in two auditoriums
Lāčplēša iela 25, jrt.lv, @jrt_lv

2. Splendid Palace (Riga) Cinema

The oldest cinema in Riga, showing select films –
also a venue for festivals and lectures
Elizabetes iela 61, kinoriga.lv

3. Artelis

An eclectic stage featuring theatre, cabaret and jazz
Blaumaņa iela 32, artelis.lv

4. The British Council

The base for British culture and education,
also offering support for creative activities
Blaumaņa 5a-2, britishcouncil.org/latvia,
@BCLatvia

5. French Institute

French language courses, media library,
culture and education projects
Elizabetes iela 59, ccf.lv

FASHION, ART, DESIGN

6. Lukabuka

Select books and design –
architecture, food, fashion
Tērbatas iela 6/8, lukabuka.lv, @lukabukariga

7. RIJA

A Latvian lifestyle concept store – linen,
ceramics, and a harmonious aesthetic
Tērbatas iela 6/8, rijja.lv

8. Neputna galerija

The showroom of the art book and
magazine publisher Neputns
Tērbatas iela 49/51, neputns.lv

9. QooQoo

Moved to Andrejsala.
qooqoo.lv

10. OT

Ogre Textile company outlet with
collections by Latvian designers
Tērbatas iela 45a, ogre-textile.lv

LOOKING BETTER TOGETHER

— *Alona Bauska, designer QooQoo*

Opened a QooQoo shop since the brand is growing in popularity in Latvia, and a direct relationship with the client is necessary in order to understand what products and campaigns they are interested in.

The QooQoo office is located in the Creative Andrejsala business incubator.

Wants QooQoo to be a Baltic brand, and is planning to start exporting her products.

Actively uses social networks, spreading information on brand activities and talking about the daily routine, thus drawing in more and more people.

Twitter was the inspiration for an interactive design – followers sent in images of their dogs, and 50 photographs were used for clothing prints.

Note: since Riga's Creative Quarters was originally published, QooQoo has moved to Andrejsala

» qooqoo.lv

EXERCISE FOR MIND AND BODY

11. Ludo

A board game shop and club, gaming evenings and rentals
Krišjāņa Barona iela 55, ludo.lv, @LudoRiga

12. Boards.lv

The oldest skate shop in Latvia, extreme sports schools, camps and creative workshops
Bruņinieku iela 29/31, boards.lv, @boards_lv

13. Baltijas papīrs

A fantastic paper shop with an attitude
Tērbatas iela 53-1

14. Anahata

A yoga school for all, organizing camps and seminars
Tērbatas iela 49/51, anahata.lv

COFFEE CULTURE

15. Bonēra

Cafeteria fine vintage, clothing and concerts
Blaumaņa iela 12, @Bonera

16. Cadets de Gascogne

Croissants, baguettes, freshly squeezed juices and the international press
Ģertrūdes iela 30, Krišjāņa Barona iela 52, cadets.lv

17. Innocent Cafē

A coffee bar, *illy* concept store, breakfast, brunch, lunch and bicycling
Blaumaņa iela 34-1a, innocent.lv, @innocentcafe

18. Coffee Inn

A personalized chain location with a coffee of the day and snacks
Tērbatas iela 7, coffee-inn.lv, @coffee_inn_lv

19. Kūkotava

A bakery serving wine; open kitchen that's like a stage of dough art
Tērbatas iela 10-12, kukotava.lv

FOOD AND DRINK

20. Ištaba

Artworks and handicrafts for sale, exhibitions and a restaurant
Krišjāņa Barona iela 31a

21. The Hare Krishna Centre

A restaurant, shop and yoga centre offering cooking lessons, and food for the homeless
Krišjāņa Barona iela 56, krishna.lv

22. Osiris

A cult restaurant with breakfast omelettes, steaks, and a loyal clientele
Krišjāņa Barona iela 31, @cafeOsiriss

23. Teātra bārs un Teātra bāra reštorāns

A bar and restaurant on opposite sides of the street, summer terraces, a stage
Lāčplēša iela 25 un 26, teatrabars.lv, @TeatraBars

24. L'Aperitivo

Italian wine and cuisine, evening aperitifs and themed weeks
Stabu iela 30, @AperitivoRiga

25. Vīna Studija

An impressive interior and the right wine in the right glasses
Stabu iela 32, vinaštudija.lv, @vinaštudija

26. Gauja

Counter service and a bar with microbrews, cultivating a Soviet aesthetic
Tērbatas iela 56, bufetegauja.lv, @bufetegauja

27. Uzbekištāna

Uzbek cuisine, with juicy *chebureki*, *shurpa*, and *pilaf*
Bruņinieku iela 33, uzbekištana.lv, @uzbekištana

28. Take it easy Tarte Cafe

Sweet and savoury tarts and musical offerings
Ģertrūdes iela 39

29. La Kanna

A cafe with an open kitchen serving fresh, light foods
Tērbatas iela 5, lakanna.lv, @LaKannaCafe

30. Čaibana Sato

Uzbek and Uighur cuisine, with *pilaf*, stuffed cabbage and lamb *pelmenyi*
Blaumaņa iela 5a-1b, sato.lv

ENTERTAINMENT

31. Pērle

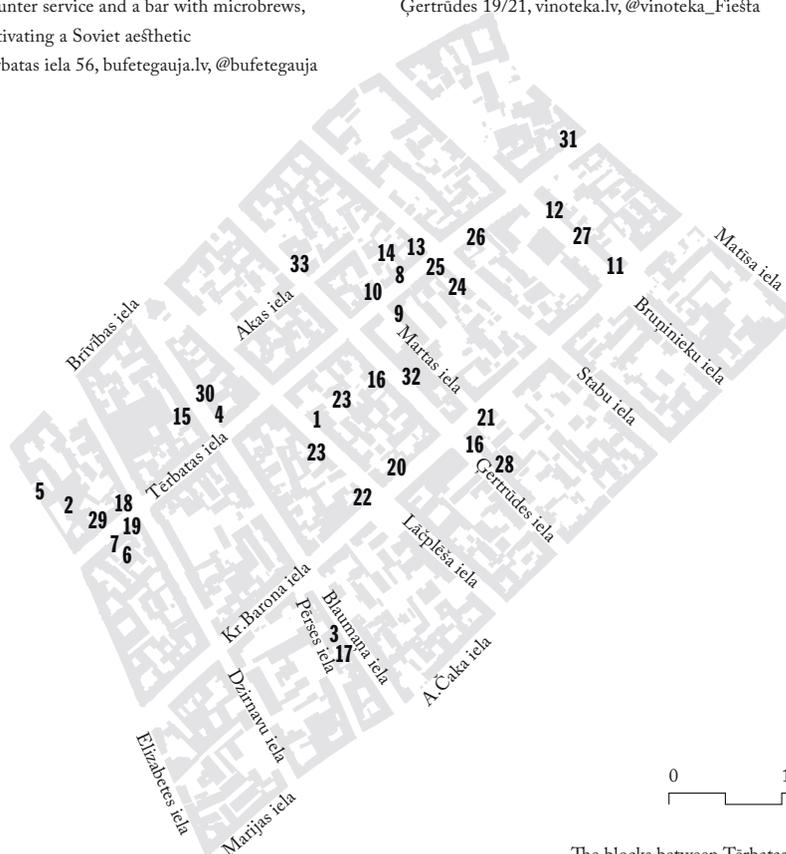
Bar, unspecialized shop, concerts, lectures
Tērbatas iela 65, @VeikalsPerle

32. Golden

An open-minded club, intelligence and sexuality
Ģertrūdes iela 33/35, mygoldenclub.com, @sekonoslepumiem

33. Fiešta

Every evening here is a festival - wine, fine food, and a dance floor
Ģertrūdes 19/21, vinoteka.lv, @vinoteka_Fiešta



A BOUQUET OF COLOURS AND TASTES

— *Baznīcas iela*



Finding oneself in the quarter along Baznīcas iela – Church Street – may actually be easier than missing it, since the concentration of cafes, boutiques, bars and handicrafts shops here is not only a destination in its own right, but also happens to be on the way to many other places people go. Whether you're headed for the Miera iela “republic”, the *Quiet Centre*, or the Esplanade, you're likely to cross Baznīcas, Lāčplēša or Ģertrūdes streets, and perhaps you will surrender to the temptations of dining, snacking or sipping coffee in this quarter.

The offerings in this quarter were once oriented toward the office workers rushing by, housewives and a more mature crowd, but the area got a second wind with the advent of Riga's bicycling centre, *MiiT*, in Lāčplēša iela. *MiiT* immediately drew flocks of bicycles and younger people. The energetic parties in the courtyard contrast with the more sober atmosphere at the nearby vegetarian restaurant *Kamadena*, and at *Fazenda*, a restaurant exhibiting a kind of countryside nostalgia.

One can find fresh ideas materializing around Old St. Gertrude's, too – *Muffins and More* is the first cafe in Latvia devoted to muffins at a New York level of taste. *Pīrāgi* and other local specialties can't be found there, so those interested in personal service and an array of Latvian and exotic foods might try *Muklājs*, where the menu with its many permutations can only be uncovered through conversation with the waiter.

There are also stores featuring Latvian design in this quarter. Anna Ledskalniņa's fashion showroom *Anna Led* and the gift shop *Muhamors* attract both a local clientele and visitors to the city. The most ‘democratic’ part of the Quiet Centre, Baznīcas iela differs from other streets because the urban space is dominated by Old St. Gertrude's, in the centre of an atypical circle, the heavy traffic along Brīvības iela flowing at one edge of the otherwise rather secluded quarter, allowing visitors to dive into the rich range of gastronomy and design on offer. ✕



A PRODUCT NO ONE IN LATVIA KNEW

— *Jack Hansen, co-owner of the Muffins and More bakery*

Has sold over 35 thousand American muffins.

In order to survive, he tries to listen and fulfil new ideas – both his own and clients’.

Highlights the importance of the small space – people like it; there is no distance. Such premises are hard to find in Riga, however, as they are usually in uninviting cellars or half-cellars.

Communicates with clients via social media – everything is on the internet, including discount offers.

By selling muffins only, they have created a product no one in Latvia knew.

» muffinsandmore.lv



OPEN TO ALL

— *Raivis Vaitekūns, co-owner of the MiiT bicycle cafe*

Open to everyone, not just cyclists— at no point have they tried to screen clients. Lunch is available; coffee takes priority as a focus product.

Have no intention of bowing to the winter demand for skiing products in the name of financial stability. This has worked so far — activity in the bicycle workshop has not ceased even during the winter season.

Received support from the Altum programme to launch the business, in the form of a grant and a loan on favourable terms.

Have been called a Twitter bar since they've grown by using social networks. They see them as having great potential.

Try to avoid stagnation and keep up with trends — unlike vintage clothing, fashionable for a specific period, they see the bicycle as having a classic and solid value.

» miit.lv

FASHION, ART, DESIGN

1. Anna Led

Annas Ledskalniņa's showroom, comfortable sizes, natural materials
Baznīcas iela 13, annaled.com

2. Muhamors

Tagine pots, teapots, lamps and other gifts
Baznīcas iela 14, muhamors.lv, @muhamors

3. Gints Bude

A fashion house and studio
Baznīcas iela 31, gintsbude.com

4. Baba

A fashion and design store, creative workshop
Baznīcas iela 37, @veikals_BABA

5. Cherry Picking

Strings of light for one's own and others' pleasure
Baznīcas iela 37, chepi.lv, @CherryPickingLV

SECOND HAND

6. Lira

Vintage vinyl, books, films and wine for sale or trade
Baznīcas iela 8, lira.lv

BICYCLE CULTURE

7. Miit

Cafe, bicycle shop and workshop, dances and contests
Lāčplēša iela 10, miit.lv, @miit_tiiim

FOOD AND DRINKS

8. Fazenda

Meals made with local ingredients in a romantic atmosphere, a bakery and market
Baznīcas iela 14, fazenda.lv, @fazendabazar

9. Kamadena

A vegetarian restaurant with good vibes, a shop, concerts, and seminars on tantra
Lāčplēša iela 12, kamadena.lv, @kamadena

10. Muffins and More

Real American muffins, delicious every day
Ģertrūdes iela 9, muffinsandmore.lv, @muffinsandmore

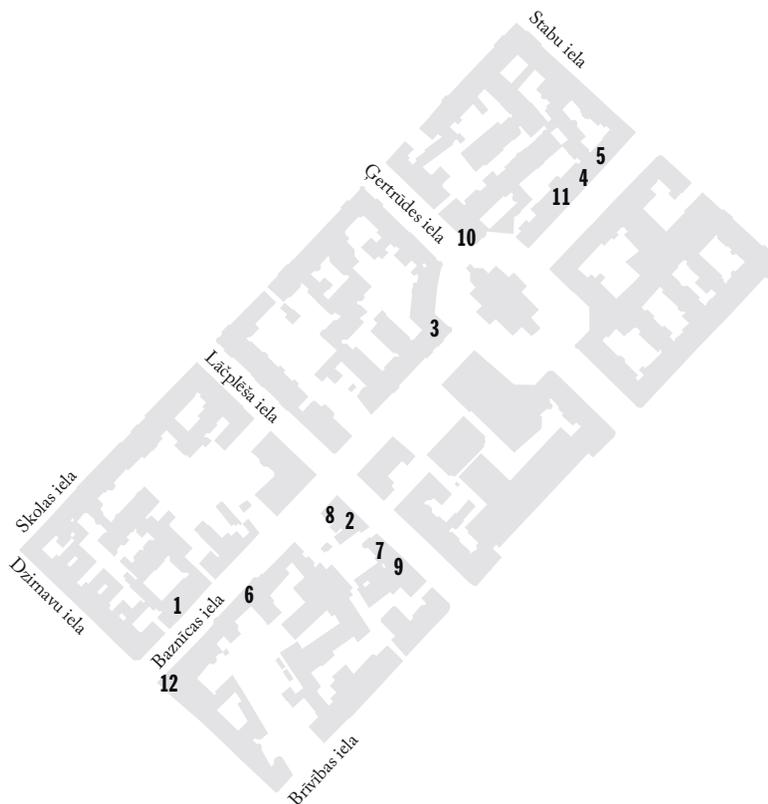
11. Muklājs

A restaurant with a unique attitude, Calvados, jazz, conversation
Baznīcas iela 37, @muklajs

BOOKS

12. Robert's Books

Used English-language books
Dzirnavu iela 51ah, robertsbooksriga.com, @robertsbooks



A REPUBLIC OF OUR OWN

— *Miera iela*



The image of Miera iela – Peace Street – was long moulded by the famous *Laima* chocolate factory, the hulking red brick building housing the Riga Maternity Hospital, and by the trams passing incessantly along the street. In recent years, however, creative businesses have begun to recompose this collage, gathering informally along certain stretches of the street. Walking about in this area, there's an atmosphere of freedom, the newcomers getting on well with the denizens of this peaceful quarter.

The clusters of shops, cafes and salons along Miera iela began with the early birds, creative entrepreneurs who later attracted kindred neighbours. *Taša*, Anita Maskaļška's handicrafts salon, for instance, arrived on Miera iela by intuition. Soon the tea salon *Illuseum* found a home next door, and after a while other shops and cafes sprouted in the vicinity. At the furthest end of the street, ideas found fertile ground in a similar fashion – next to the design boutique *XX gadsimts*, the houseplant exchange *Mājas svētība* found its premises on the recommendation of the owners of the nearby ceramics gallery, *Mubamors*.

Side-streets hide establishments and institutions that are also part of this quarter – the identity of Annas iela, for instance, is bound to the *Technical Innovation House Annas 2*, which organizes street festivals as well as *2ANNAS*, an annual festival of short films. Aristīda Briāna iela, meanwhile, is notable for the club *Piens* – Milk – and the delicatessens and eateries that have sprouted up around it. Once a year the usually packed club empties out – when the Piens Festival turns the block's courtyard space into an open-air living room with a market and a musical programme.

Informal cooperation among the creative residents is evident not only in virtual gatherings but also in a unified vision for the future and in Thursdays' Miera iela happy hour, when there are special offers throughout the quarter. Plans by the Ministry of Culture to transform the former tobacco factory nearby into a multifunctional innovative space could attract more adventurous entrepreneurs and artists. In the meantime, the Miera iela family lives on in harmony, drawing both visitors and new neighbours. ✕



RING THE DOORBELL

— *Laura Ziemele un Renāte Pablaka,*
owners of the houseplant exchange point Mājas svētība
(Aspidištŗa)

Architect Renāte thought up Mājas svētība while sitting at her computer and seeing how people were exchanging plants over the internet. It seemed that a physical location for the exchange would be a good idea.

To get into Mājas svētība, you have to ring the doorbell.

The most useful support for new entrepreneurs would be the opportunity not to spend money – special conditions for landlords and simplified tax payment.

Both they themselves and their visitors have had to understand that the cash register is not here by accident.

Besides the plant exchange, Mājas svētība has a cafe, sells flowerpots, t-shirts and bags, as well as offering replanting services.

Neither Laura nor Renāte are gardeners, but they believe that anything can be learnt from a Youtube video.

» majassvetiba.lv



WEIRDOES IN THE BEST SENSE OF THE WORD

— *Anita Masaļska, owner of the Taša crafts salon*

Before arriving in Miera iela, the salon was located in a narrow space in Brīvības iela, which had exhausted its potential over 7 years. Came to Miera iela by chance and started gathering others around themselves.

Rent is high, and events and activities are paid for from their own pocket. Taša is an expensive hobby rather than a business.

The salon's client base consists of eccentrics – weirdoes in the best sense of the word.

Greeting a passerby from time to time through the salon's open doors, she admits to a strong cooperation with their Miera iela neighbours – they often visit one other, advertise each other and make joint arrangements.

@bodeTASHA

EDUCATION, CULTURE, SUPPORT

1. Annas 2 Technical Innovation House

Workshops with a technical and technological bent for those aged 6-25
Annas iela 2, [tjn.lv](#)

2. Melnais Knābis – The Black Beak

Hair salon, library, gallery and performance space
Miera iela 39

VINTAGE

3. XX gadsimts – The 20th Century

A careful selection of furniture, lamps and dishes; clothing rental
Miera iela 39, [20gadsimts.lv](#)

4. Ze Store

Old chairs, gadgets and records, restored sofas, skis
Miera iela 17, [zeStore.blogspot.com](#), [@ze_store](#)

HANDICRAFTS AND GREEN THUMBS

5. Buteljons

Glass recycling point; clothing exchange
Miera iela 10

6. Taša

Jackets, pullovers, wool, workshops and esoterica
Miera iela 19, [@bodeTASHA](#)

7. Mājas svētība

Houseplant exchange, natural fertilizers, tea
Miera iela 39, [majassvetiba.lv](#), [@majassvetiba](#)

8. Puka dizains

Upcycling – turning the old into the new; furniture restoration
Miera iela 50, [puka.lv](#)

FOOD AND DRINK

9. Taka

Meals made with love, exhibitions, concerts
Miera iela 10, [pataku.wordpress.com](#), [@BarsTaka](#)

10. DAD cafe

Youth with the Dalai Lama's smile, food, live music, exhibitions
Miera iela 17, [dadcafe.lv](#), [@DADcafe](#)

11. Illuseum

A reincarnation of the teashop [Goija](#); cult drinks and books
Miera iela 19, [illuseum.blogspot.com](#)

12. Fontaine Deli Snack Riga

A branch of the legendary Liepaja deli, international fast food
Briāna iela 9a, [@FontaineRiga](#)

CLUBS

13. Piens

Concerts, hipsters, French pastries, bicycle workshop
A. Briāna iela 9, [piens.nu](#), [@klubspiens](#)

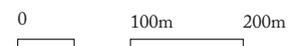
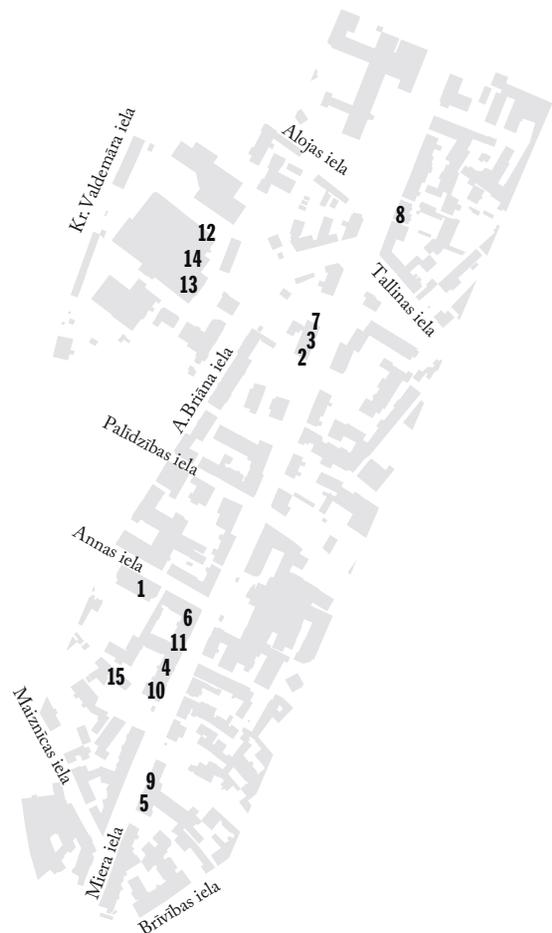
14. Kefīrs

If you're not milk, you're kefir – for those who don't get through the face control next door
A. Briāna iela 9a, [klubskefirs.lv](#), [@KlubsKefirs](#)

GREEN LIFESTYLE

15. Dabas dobe

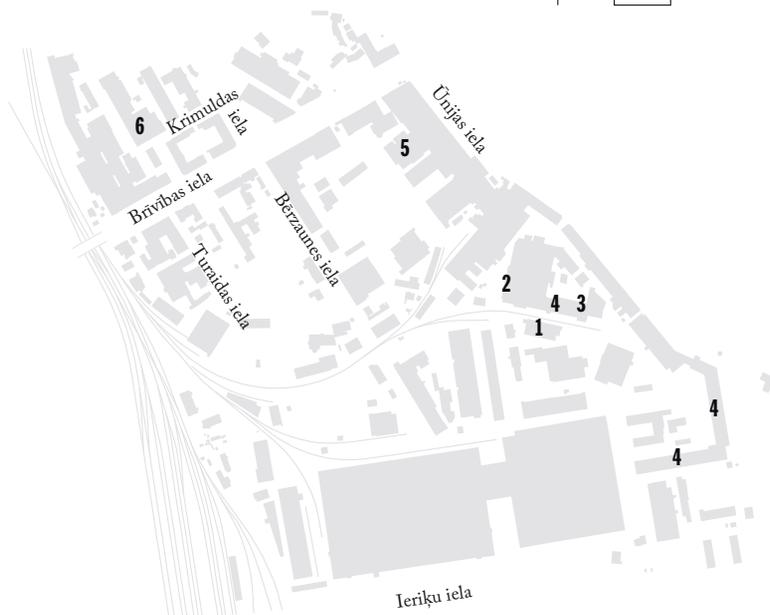
Fairtrade eco-products, seasonal produce
Miera iela 15, [dabasdobe.lv](#), [@DabasDobe](#)



A PLACE TO EXPAND

— VEF

0 150m 300m



Former factory spaces with very high ceilings and low rents have been adapted for creative work in many a city. Riga residents first learned of the presence of artists at VEF in 2008, when Kaspars Lielgalvis and Dāvis Līcītis initiated a concert and exhibit programme called *Art Days in Little New York*. Though the first event drew only perhaps two hundred people, it threw open the gates of what had until then been something of a self-contained artists' commune.

Though the structures at VEF have barely changed since the factory closed its doors, the events held here bear witness to how exceedingly lively this quarter can be. One of the epicentres is the 7th building, where the *Totaldobže Art Centre* makes its home. Instead of concentrating on entertainment, as in past years, centre director Kaspars Lielgalvis has now shifted the focus to education – discussions and exhibits involving artists, critics, curators and other creative professionals. Along with the culture on offer, the bar *Ziema* has survived its first season, recently taking on the status of an art gallery. The initiator of the project, Edgars Ābele, applied the formula “how to create a space without spending money or taking out a loan”; as a result, the authenticity of the space was preserved but made homey. As a pleasant contrast to the quarter's art and culture scene,

the other side of Brīvības iela was home to *Dutchbike.lv*, a used bicycle workshop. *Black Friday*, a venue for dark music, is located next door. Taken together, they add an alternative face to a post-industrial area that has thus far been touched only in a small degree.

The VEF quarter is more closed off than the creative quarters in central Riga – it isn't as easily grasped. The artists are therefore forced to find fresh ways of attracting an audience and helping those who visit find the right doors of perception. One potential direction became clear on *White Night 2010*, when various parts of the VEF complex that were hitherto unexplored by most became unique sites for artistic events. This is a place with room for expansion. ✕

EDUCATION, CULTURE, SUPPORT

1. Totaldobže Art Centre
Exhibits, lectures, concerts, poetry, dance, artists' residences
Īnijas iela 8, 7. korpus, totaldobze.com

FASHION, ART, DESIGN

2. Galerija Ziema
An art gallery and bar; Sunday brunch and social evenings
Īnijas iela 8, 2. korpus, @GalerijaZIEMA

3. Open Silkscreen Studio Lušte
Do-it-yourself concept, T-shirts, etc.
Īnijas iela 8, 6. korpus

4. Studios: Blankblank, Ilze Vanaga, Nils Vilnis, Sabīne Vekmane, Anda Lāce, Daiga Krūze, Kristaps Zariņš and others
Īnijas iela 8, 1., 2., 6. korpus

CYCLING AND EXTREME SPORTS

5. Volcomparks (VEF superpark)
An indoor skate park; youth activities
Brīvības gatve 214b, VEF 5. korpus, volcomparks.lv, @volcomparks

6. Dutchbike.lv
Used bicycles
Brīvības iela 193d, dutchbike.lv, @dutchbikelv



FROM ENTERTAINMENT TO EDUCATION

— *Kaspars Lielgalvis, artist,
head of the VEF Totaldobže art centre*

Came to VEF when looking for a place for his studio.

Over time, has become aware that events can't be held for free, since this will lead to the eventual extinction of the alternative culture sector. Concedes that it may be possible to make money

with a bar, but this creates the absurd situation of selling alcohol to cover cultural expenses.

Is attempting to shift the art centre's programme from a focus on entertainment events to cultural and educational activities.

Receives substantial support from the owners of the premises – both in the form of low rents and other means.

Is looking for people interested in the idea of the art centre who would like to work there.

» totaldobze.com



VIRTUALLY NOTHING IS BOUGHT

— *Edgars Ābele un Sabīne Vekmane, landlords of the Ziema gallery and bar*

Ziema was initially opened as a bar, later becoming a gallery and spot for Sunday brunch, frequently accompanied by musical performances.

When setting up *Ziema*, Edgars tried out an approach of “how to create a space without taking out a loan or spending any money”. Virtually nothing is bought; all the materials and other things have come from swapping or just taking them over from other people, who have proved to be very cooperative.

The no-money approach is also reflected in price policy – they are as low as the owners can afford.

VEF is located sufficiently close to the centre, but is a very peaceful environment at the same time – there are almost no cars, and on evenings and weekends it feels like being at the countryside.

@GalerijaZIEMA





DO IT YOURSELF – PAY LESS!

— *Katrīna Sauškina, artist, co-owner of the Luste silkscreen studio*

Luste operates by a do-it-yourself principle, since the silk-screening technique is simple enough for anyone to master. The rates for printing also act as an incentive. Do it yourself - pay less.

The studio is open to offsite activities for students in Riga's mainstream and art schools.

The distance from the centre of town is not a problem – the Gaisa Bridge is more of a psychological barrier. The tram from Barona centrs reaches VEF just as quickly as the Central Market in the opposite direction.

The main thing is having a surface to work on; the rest is inconsequential.

Luste has received support from the Atspēriens grant programme. The funds were channelled into the purchase of a professional printing table and exposure unit.

Believes bicycle paths would help the city come alive.

EYES WIDE OPEN

— *The Quiet Centre*



A preconception about the atmosphere of Riga's Quiet Centre being composed of beives of tourists losing themselves in Art Nouveau quarters, embassies and apartment buildings full of diplomats, would be behind the times. These days, what first comes to mind about this neighbourhood is its array of trend-setting restaurants, shops and cafes. In a short space of time, promising architectural and design firms have begun to cluster in the luxurious apartments of the area. Some are located on upper floors, but among those at street level that passersby might peek into are the *OPENAD* design studio and the architectural firm *MARK*.

The most dynamic point in this neighbourhood is where Antonijas iela and Elizabetes iela intersect. Despite the somewhat melancholy atmosphere in this block, people regularly gather here, many headed for *Botanica Cafe*, which serves fresh, locally grown food of known origin, or *Vina Studija* if they are wine lovers. On the corner, you have to keep your eyes open not only for the endless stream of cars, but also the streams of creative people hurrying past in every direction.

If you've gotten an overdose of crowds and noise, you can seek shelter in the quiet side-streets – perfect places to savour those tourist staples, Art Nouveau buildings. In one such building you'll find the *Centre for Contemporary Art*, offering an art library, exhibits, lectures and information for all.

The Quiet Centre is characterized not only by expensive real estate, but also by quality in everything from the food and drinks available in this quarter to the urban environment itself. According to the architect Austris Mailitis, a resident of this quarter, the reason Riga is sometimes called “the Little Paris” can be found in the Quiet Centre – there are many trees, and small gardens often separate the buildings from the sidewalks. Taken together, the streets draw you in with their variety and you can wander aimlessly, if only to gaze at the facades, sometimes renovated, sometimes abandoned to a thick patina of age and neglect. ✕



THE MORE PEOPLE TALK, THE MORE THINGS HAPPEN

— *Elīna Dobele, architect, creator of the footwear design label ZoFA*

During the very depths of the architecture and construction crisis, created her first footwear collection and the ZoFa brand in late 2008.

Opened the ZoFa atelier in the Quiet Centre in 2011. While searching for a place, she thought of her customers – where it would be convenient and interesting for them to visit. Artists, wealthy people and tourists are all to be found in the Quiet Centre.

Agreed on a rent rebate for the first year with the landlord, received LVL 6000 for the purchase of equipment from the Atspēriens programme and LVL 5000 for the creation of the atelier from the Brigāde programme.

Is used to believing in herself, but is aware of her lack of management experience.

Lacks time and energy for many things due to all the red tape.

Uses Facebook and Twitter – the more people talk, the more things happen.

Is friends with the neighbouring Open AD architecture office and Ars Tela linen studio.

Wants to conquer the international market and create a conceptual footwear collection.

» zofa.lv

LIVE MORE

— *Austris Mailītis, architect at Mailītis A.I.I.M.*

Has set up an office and flat in a building on the corner of Elizabetes and Ausekļa with an impressive tower-like staircase.

In winter, when the trees have no leaves, the view from the office window stretches to Ķīpsala.

Likes the Quiet Centre due to its tree-lined streets and beautiful buildings with front gardens.

The Quiet Centre has a centre of its own at the crossing of Elizabetes and Antonijas, where people meet in coffee shops and there is more traffic. Ahead, the buildings merge smoothly with the rest of the city.

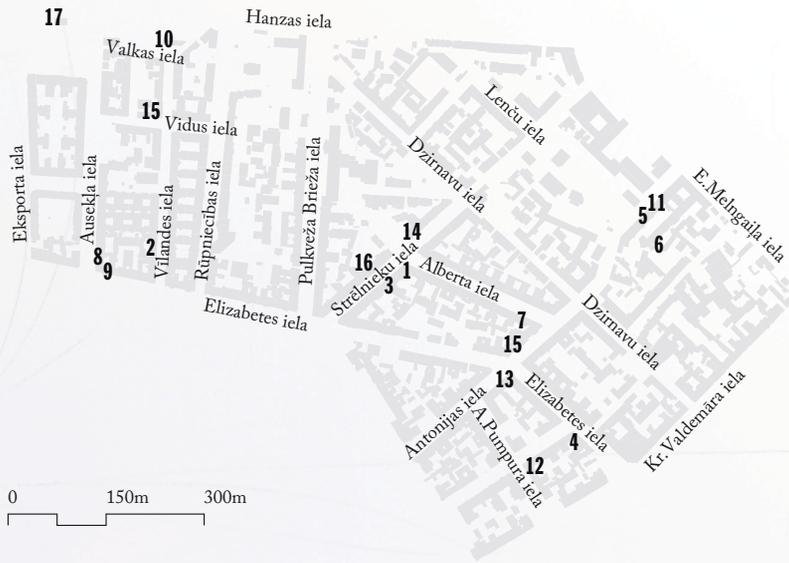
Feels that one can live more in post-economic crisis Riga – there is more time, more nice cafes, more bicycles on the streets.

Takes a positive view of architects and other offices moving to the ground floors of buildings as this opens up the street level.

» mailitis.lv



ARCHITECT STUDIOS



8. 1plus1

The office of Mārtiņš Pilēns, winner of the Latvian Architects' Association's *Grand Prix 2010*
Elizabetes iela 7-3, 1plus1.lv

9. Mailitis A.I.I.M

The Mailitis family office – designers of the Latvian pavilion at Shanghai's *EXPO 2010*
Elizabetes iela 7, mailitis.lv

10. MARK

Award-winning architects, models in the windows
Valkas iela 3/5, mark.lv

11. OPENAD

The office of Zane Tetera, designer of Riga's most exceptional interiors
Antonijas iela 24, openad.lv

EDUCATION, CULTURE, SUPPORT

1. The Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art

Library, *Ofisa galerija*, the *Survival Kit* festival, lectures
Alberta iela 13, lcca.lv, @LCCA_lv

2. The State Culture Capital Foundation

Funding for cultural projects
Vilandes iela 3, kkf.lv

3. The Stockholm School of Economics Riga

Education in economics and business, and a library
Strēlnieku iela 4a, sseriga.edu.lv, @SSE_Riga

FASHION, ART, DESIGN

4. Māksla XO galerija

Contemporary Latvian art
Elizabetes iela 14, makslaxogalerija.lv

5. ZoFA ateljē

The architect Elina Dobeļe's shoe shop and workshop
Antonijas iela 22, zofa.lv, @Zo_FA

6. Ars Tela

Alvida Kauliņa's linen studio – works from fine linen fabrics
Antonijas iela 20b, arstela.lv

7. Madam Bonbon

A shoe store located in a unique apartment; Latvian fashion
Alberta iela 1-7a, madambonbon.lv, @Madam_Bonbon

FOOD AND DRINK

12. Rossini

The Riga address of the lovely Valmiera restaurant and pizzeria
A. Pumpura iela 6, rossini.lv

13. Vīna študija

An unhurried place to get into wine culture
Elizabetes iela 10, vinastudija.lv, @vinastudija

14. Winiveria Vinoteca

A Georgian wine bar with character and good taste
Strēlnieku iela 9, gruzijasvini.lv, @Winiveria

15. A.L.L. Cappuccino

An urbane, inviting place at the foot of a quiet residential building
Vilandes iela 13, Antonijas iela 11

16. Art café Sienna

Exhibitions, artistic souvenirs, coffee and cakes
Strēlnieku iela 3, sienna.lv

17. Hanzas 28

A tea salon with an Eastern interior
Hanzas iela 28, @Hanzas28



INDUSTRIAL AMBIENCE

— *Andrejsala*

Andrejsala was the original epicentre of alternative sites for culture in Riga. Led by an initiative for the development of a new Riga, it became the first de-industrialized area to be settled by artists and other creative people trying to fill an empty niche in the city's cultural scene. Near the River Daugava and not far from the yacht club and the port's passenger terminal, this quarter quite rapidly became a destination for a diverse crowd. Swiftly springing up and soon suffering an overdose of competing visions for future development, Andrejsala has now fallen rather quiet, the silence mostly broken by Scandinavian tourists bussed in to obtain cheap alcohol, and the activities of the *First Dacha* club.

This apparent semi-extinction is illusory, however. From what was a sort of theme park for those seeking alternative culture, Andrejsala has been transformed into a home for creative industries. Though some of the residents spend time together, the direction they have taken is work, not entertainment. The presence of *Creative Andrejsala* is proof of that; a business incubator, its principal function is to support creative entrepreneurs. Despite stereotypes about partying in open offices designed in the style of playgrounds, LIAA project manager Liene Kuplā emphasizes the fact that there is no pressure to socialize – the businesspeople who've found a base here being determined to carve out their individual empires. There are also innovative residents outside the incubator – the design studio *RIJADA*, known for the creation of various icons of Latvian design, relocated from VEF to Andrejsala, where it augmented its reputation by bringing new life to the streets – badminton and basketball have come to the island.

Whilst Andrejsala awaits major developments centred around the planned Contemporary Art Museum coming into being, freakbikers continue welding rides in their familiar garage and the doors of the Latvian Museum of Naïve Art remain open. Though the period of intense partying here has passed, both the open space at the southern end of the island as well as the jetty at the north end, with its ambient sounds of cargo being loaded and unloaded in the harbour, offer public space of a type that is rarely found in a modern metropolis.

» andrejsala.lv





COMES WITH INITIATIVE

— *Ribards Funts, RIJADA designer*

The space in Andrejsala makes it possible to develop and transform – it can be both a closed workshop and a publicly accessible showroom.

The windows of the studio are like a TV – watch ships during the day, and at night, dressed-up people walking from their cars to the *Firšl Dacha* club.

Doesn't like the municipal police driving people away from Andrejsala – even the old man sitting on the riverfront quietly with his bottle of beer.

Has put up a net and drawn a court for badminton at Andrejsala; often plays basketball with the salespeople from the alcohol wholesale store.

Andrejsala has space enough – if you come with your own initiative, no one will stand in your way. Representatives of diverse fields have currently made their homes here, each one working determinedly in their own direction.

» rijada.lv



WITHOUT SPENDING MONEY

— *Evelīna Deičmane, sound installation artist*

Chose a studio in Andrejsala instead of the VEF area in order to invest less money in fixing up the space.

The early goodwill of the Andrejsala building owners towards artists has diminished over time.

Convinced that people who work alongside each other quickly develop a sense of solidarity, helping each other out. Sometimes they just play badminton and sit on the roof together.

To create larger works, she uses artist residencies in Berlin.

In Riga, an artist learns how to work with a minimum of resources, and it is much easier to get noticed here.

EDUCATION, CULTURE, SUPPORT

1. The Latvian Museum of Naïve Art

Naïve art from the 18th century to today
Andrejoštas iela 4, noass.lv, @Noass_LV

2. Театр сна. Снов театрис.

The Dream Theatre

A Russian youth theatre
Andrejoštas iela 4, Elektrocehs,
teatrsna.edicypages.com

3. Komutators

Metal art centre, exhibits, performances, concerts
Andrejoštas iela 4, web.me.com/komutators

4. Creative Andrejsala

Business incubation services, premises, consulting
Andrejoštas iela 4a, creativeandrejsala.lv, @c_sala

FASHION, ART, DESIGN

5. RIJADA

Product design studio and showroom
Andrejoštas iela 4, rijada.lv

6. Angel Glass Design

Glass design studio and showroom
Andrejoštas iela 4a, angel.lv

7. ArtBag

Bag design studio, internet workshop, shop
Andrejoštas iela 4a, artbag.lv, @ArtBag_LV

8. Keitas kiosks

Fashion design studio and shop
Andrejoštas iela 4, 030470.com

9. Patricija Brekte's studio Peaben

Drawing lessons for adults and children
Andrejoštas iela 4, korpusu cehs, peahen.eu

10. Artists' studios

Evelina Deičmane, Uģis Bērziņš, Ritums Ivanovs

BICYCLE CULTURE

11. Club Velozaurs

The place for freakbikes and freakbike lovers,
workshop, exhibits, films, and a bar
Andrejoštas iela 4, Galdnieciba, freakbike.lv,
@Yaatnieki

12. Karters

A trial-biking school
Andrejoštas iela 4, karters.lv

ENTERTAINMENT

13. Lūzumpunkts

Adventure organization
Andrejoštas iela 4, luzumpunkts.lv

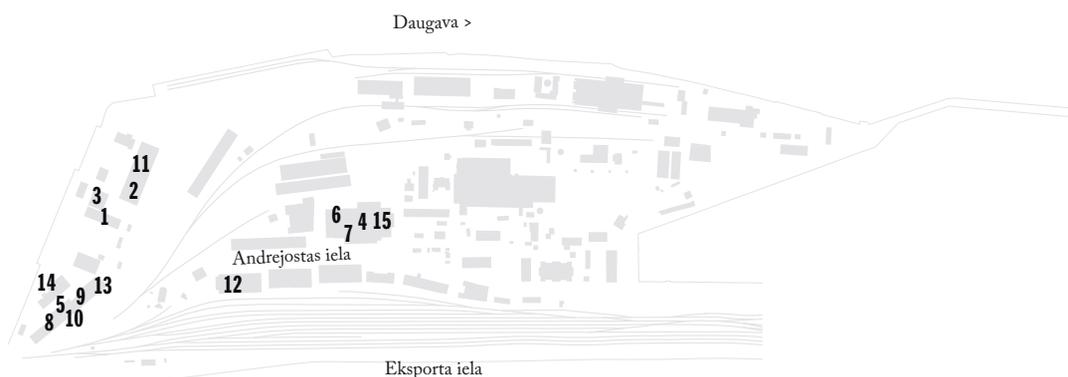
14. Firšt Dača

House music club, lounge bar
Andrejoštas iela 4, @FirštDacha

FOOD AND DRINK

15. Bufete

dienas ēstuve ar jumta terasi
Andrejoštas iela 4, Enkura nams



A SYNERGY OF SERVICES

— *Bergs Bazaar*



While it is a common presumption that *Bergs Bazaar* is orientated towards a more affluent public, a recent diversification in tenants has also caused a shift in its target audience – new creative enterprises have sprung up alongside established residents, bringing a bustle of activity to the pedantically maintained labyrinth of courtyards. Unlike the majority of the creative quarters, Bergs Bazaar is a purposefully cultivated business structure and not a spontaneous concentration of enterprises. Aleksis Karlsons, representative of the quarter's owners, reveals that a careful selection process for tenants most consistent with the concept of the Bazaar is in place, with preference being given to interesting candidates with sustainable strategies of existence, who have the potential to participate in the development of a stable synergy of services along with the other tenants.

The top storeys of the quarter have become home to residents, city guests, and offices. Particular note should be made of the *Nordic Council of Ministers' Office* – besides providing support for artistic and cultural initiatives, Norden also has an open access media library devoted to the exploration of all things



Nordic. The presence of creativity-stimulating tenants is also in evidence on the street level. The *¼ Satori Birojnica* coworking space is an innovative arrival to the scene. Rolands Puhovs, one of its founders, explains that Birojnica's objective is to create a high-quality co-working infrastructure for as low a price as possible. With this aim in mind, the working places for rent have been combined with a bookstore, which further transforms into a lecture space on weekday evenings. At the other end of the courtyard labyrinth, a window display of futuristic locally-designed bicycles draws the attention of passersby, and lets them take a peek at the goings-on of the *Arhiidea* architecture office within.

Although visually closed off from adjacent streets, the quarter is open and accommodating, as evidenced by its human-scale buildings, well-developed facilities and greenery, and overall accessibility. To a great extent, the environment of Bergs Bazaar is dictated by the demands of its heart, *Hotel Bergs*, but tourism has not harmed the substance and spatial qualities of the quarter. Interestingly, it was right here that the green and independent farmers' market movement found its feet, making Bergs Bazaar a pioneer in the development of a humane urban environment.

» bergabazars.lv, [@bazars](https://www.instagram.com/bazars)



EXCEEDING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE QUARTERS

— *Imants Gross, Director of the Norden Nordic Council of Ministers' Office*

Sees Bergs Bazaar as a well-kempt and commercial area with potential. Assumes that the creative environment of the quarter could be strengthened; it has potential.

They cooperate with the neighbouring Danish Cultural Institute, but the multidisciplinary initiatives of Norden

are usually city-wide, regional or international rather than local in scale.

Considers aid and subsidies to be designed for kick-starting healthy, sustainable projects – some empty premises in Riga were distributed to a number of projects, not all of which were sustainable.

Engages in social media, but recognizes the value of TV shows too. The Norden-supported Ziemeļu Puse (Northern Style) is a success story with all 46 series now sold to Lithuanian television. This marks the first time Lithuania has bought a TV show from Latvia.

» norden.lv

SOCIALLY ACTIVE

— *Toms Kokins, arhitečts,
urbaništs, Arhiidea*

Arhiidea also designs smaller objects – from the Eslice modular homes to bicycles and furniture.

The office moved from a closed space in Alberta iela to the ground floor of a Bergs Bazaar building with a large display window.

The new premises are not made for being idle, and one must look decent, since Zaiga Gaile glances through the windows each day.

Believes that any casual passerby can become a client – many are drawn by the bicycles visible in the display window.

The changes at Arhiidea are connected to a desire to become socially active, taking part in debates and events.

» arhiidea.lv

EDUCATION CULTURE, SUPPORT

1. Norden, Nordic Council of Ministers' Office

Library, media library, grant programmes
Marijas iela 13/3, norden.lv, @norden_lv

2. Danish Cultural Institute

Cultural events, conferences, social
dialogue, experience exchange visits
Marijas iela 13/3, dki.lv, dankultur.dk

3. ¼ Satori and Birojnica

Bookstore, lecture space, co-working
space, fax, printer, internet, drinks
Dzirnavu iela 84/2 satori.lv, @SatoriLV

4. Kino Suns

Independent cinema, festival films, lecture series
Elizabetes iela 83/85, kinogalerija.lv

FASHION, ART, DESIGN

5. Klase

Shop and representatives of Latvian
fashion; clothing, footwear, accessories
Elizabetes iela 85A, modesklase.lv, @modesKLASE

6. Proud2B

Fashion store and art space, design,
photography, interior design
Dzirnavu iela 86, p2bfashion.com

7. Gallery Arte

Art and interior design objects,
exhibitions, event space
Marijas iela 13/2, galerijabb.lv

ARCHITECT STUDIOS

8. Arhiidea

Modular homes, urban design, bicycle design
Marijas iela 13/2 – 18b, arhiidea.lv

9. Zaigas Gailes birojs

Wooden, stone and Soviet heritage
building restoration
Marijas iela 12/4, zgb.lv

GREEN LIFESTYLE

10. Otrā elpa

Second hand charity shop, social projects
Marijas iela 13, otraelpa.lv, @otra_elpa

11. Farmers' and craftsmen's market

Second and fourth Saturday of every month
Berga Bazāra pagalmos, bergabazars.lv

FOOD AND DRINK

12. Kanēla konditoreja

Coffee, tea, cakes, cookies, salads
Dzirnavu iela 84, kanelakonditoreja.lv

13. Franču maiznīca Cadets de Gascogne

Croissants, baguettes, freshly squeezed
juice, international press
Marijas iela 13/4, cadets.lv

14. Andalūzijas Suns pub

Classic international cuisine, lunch,
happy hour, dinner, exhibitions
Elizabetes iela 83/85, andaluzijassuns.lv,
@AndaluzijasSuns

15. Garage wine bar

Wines, open kitchen, design concept store
Elizabetes iela 83/85, vinabars.lv

16. Gourmet Studio

Armagnac and chocolate bar, spices,
delicatessen, seminars
Marijas iela 13/4, gourmet-studio.lv

17. S. Brevinga alus salons

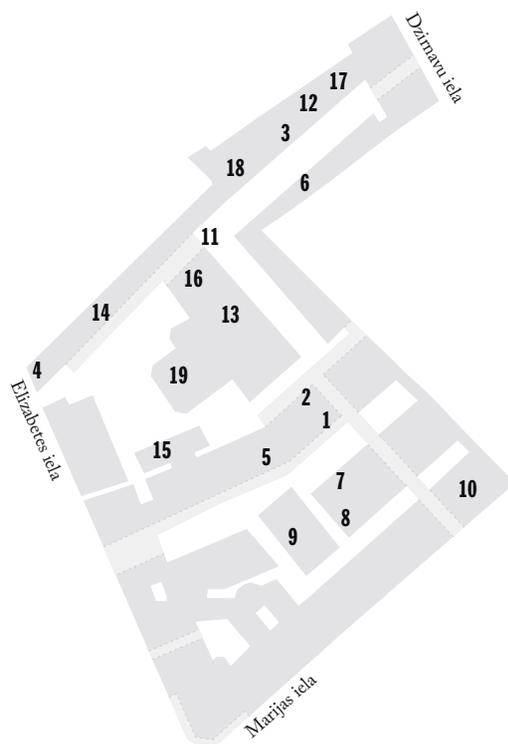
Draught and bottled beers from around the world
Dzirnavu iela 84, @AlusSalons

18. Gaštopub Cydonia

Organic cuisine, Latvian farmers' produce,
children's playroom
Dzirnavu iela 84, cydonia.lv

19. Reštorāns Bergs

Boutique hotel restaurant, sophisticated
international cuisine, gourmet dinners
Elizabetes iela 83/85, hotelbergs.lv



Bergs Bazaar

A DESIRE FOR STABILITY

— *Spīķeri*



Cultural events and gastronomic inclinations are the key reasons for a visit to *Spīķeri*, a yet untamed section of Riga lying behind the railway embankment. Here, the proximity of the *Central Market* begets a healthy and contrasting mix of people and services, adding to the social diversity of the city. As a purposefully cultivated quarter, *Spīķeri* has a positive brand image and an intelligent saturation of functions. The public-private partnership approach is being tested within the quarter's development, envisaging cooperation between the quarter's owners and the municipality, as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations. There is also a diversity to be observed among the *Spīķeri* inhabitants – no more than a third of the area has been allocated to representatives of the creative industries, thus achieving

integration with the other tenants. Uldis Dinne, owner of *Spīķeri*, considers that in order for a quarter to be alive, its venues must complement one another.

Spending time in *Spīķeri*, it seems that its main niche is a kind of select culture. This is demonstrated by the coexistence of diverse institutions – the *kim?* Contemporary Art Centre, pioneer of alternative culture *Dirty Deal*, the State Chamber Orchestra *Sinfonietta Rīga*, the Latvian Music Information Centre, and the Latvian Radio Choir have all found homes here. In the *Spīķeri* quarter, high-quality food is also considered part of culture – both a number of shops selling the produce of Latvian farmers and several different concept restaurants can be found here. The heart of the quarter is the night market, and its significance is brought up by Jānis Jenzis,

owner of the *Kitchen* restaurant, whose clients tend to shop there after a meal.

Spīķeri residents also have a tendency to rotate, but among the larger tenants a desire for stability can be felt. Despite its lively everyday life, the quarter currently functions as an isolated and not yet fully discovered island in the colourful sea of the surrounding urban environment. Hopefully, the planned neighbourhood clean-up and bike path connection with the city centre will improve communication, while retaining the unique microclimate of *Maskavas iela*. ✕

» spikeri.lv, [@spikeri](https://www.instagram.com/spikeri)



TO MEET PEOPLE AND HAVE A CHAT

— *Māris Prombergs, organizer of the Dirty Deal Cinema Club*

Organizes the cinema club in cooperation with foreign embassies and cultural centres.

With the addition of lectures on diverse cultures and social environments, the films become a tool encouraging the exchange of experiences and ideas.

Launched the cinema club thinking it would attract young artists and film industry people: “Nothing of the kind! They sit at home watching *Youtube* and downloading films from the internet.” The majority of visitors are in their thirties and older, coming to the cinema club as a social event – to meet people and have a chat.

People who come to the cinema club notice there is a theatre next door, and start visiting that as well – at moments like these *Dirty Deal* really feels like a house of culture.

Has understood that informing people about neighbouring events draws a larger audience to his own evenings – if they’re interested in one thing, they might try something new along the way.

» dirtydeal.lv



FROM THE FIRST PLASTIC TABLE

— *Jānis Jenzis, restaurant owner*

Has been working in the hospitality industry from the very first plastic table that appeared after Latvian independence.

In 2009, with a “great depression” ruling all around, he and his partners opened the *Oštas skati* restaurant in Ķīpsala. This was followed by other popular spots – the *Garāža* wine bar in Bergs Bazaar, the *Kitchen restaurant* in Spīķeri and the cafe in the new Riga Bourse museum.

A different concept and environment have been developed for each restaurant, but they share prices, quality and good service.

At the launch of his business, he received support from building proprietors in the form of rent rebates. The municipality fixed the holes in the road at Ķīpsala and clear snow away, while employees have been trained with the support of EU funds.

He would like the business world and controlling institutions (the police, Food and Veterinary Service, etc.) to understand that everyone has a common aim – bringing order to our environment and society.

» restaurantkitchen.lv

EDUCATION, CULTURE, SUPPORT

1. Spīķeri Concert Hall

Home of the Chamber Orchestra *Sinfonietta Rīga*, the Latvian Radio Choir, the Latvian Music Information Centre, and the *Framest Studio* recording studio
Maskavas iela 4/1, spikerukonzertzale.lv,
[@spikerukonzertz](https://www.instagram.com/spikerukonzertz)

2. kim? Contemporary Art Centre

Three exhibition halls, lectures, reading room
Maskavas iela 12/1, kim.lv, [@kim_riga](https://www.instagram.com/kim_riga)

3. Rīga Ghetto and Latvian Holocaust Museum

The former ghetto territory, unscathed by the ravages of time, heading towards reconstruction
Maskavas iela 14a, rgm.lv

4. Dirty Deal

Independent cultural centre; theatre and other festival venue
Maskavas iela 12/2, dirtydeal.lv, [@dirtydeal](https://www.instagram.com/dirtydeal)

GREEN LIFESTYLE

5. Foldlife

Corrugated cardboard furniture for all occasions
Maskavas iela 12/2, foldlife.lv, [@foldlife.lv](https://www.instagram.com/foldlife.lv)

FOOD AND DRINK

6. Desa & Co

Venison and wild boar meat; gourmet bištro
Maskavas iela 4, zemitani.lv

7. Merlin

Beer restaurant and chill over three storeys; international cuisine
Maskavas iela 4, merlin.lv, [@MerlinSpikeri](https://www.instagram.com/MerlinSpikeri)

8. Pirosmani

Georgian restaurant and shrine to the art of famous primitivist painter Niko Pirosmani
Maskavas iela 6, restaurant-pirosmani.lv

9. Restaurant Kitchen

Cheeseburgers; dessert according to the chef's fancy; Latvian art
Maskavas iela 12/1, restaurantkitchen.lv,
[@restanturankchn](https://www.instagram.com/restanturankchn)

10. Nakts tirgus

Vegetables, berries and fruit; open-air canteen; officially from 10pm, in reality – from the afternoonofficiali no 22.00, reali – jau pēcpusdienā
Nēģu iela 7

The coexistence of *kim?*, the *Dirty Deal* cultural hub and *Restaurant Kitchen* is enjoyable and mutually beneficial.

Patronage and philanthropy are relatively undeveloped in Latvia. The basis of *kim?*'s existence is support from the state and municipality.

Has observed that everyone looks out for themselves at Spīķeri, coming together at certain moments.

The initial concept of *kim?* has changed – publishing activities and international cooperation have gained priority.

The number of visitors is not the only criteria for success, as *kim?*'s events draw a variety of audiences.

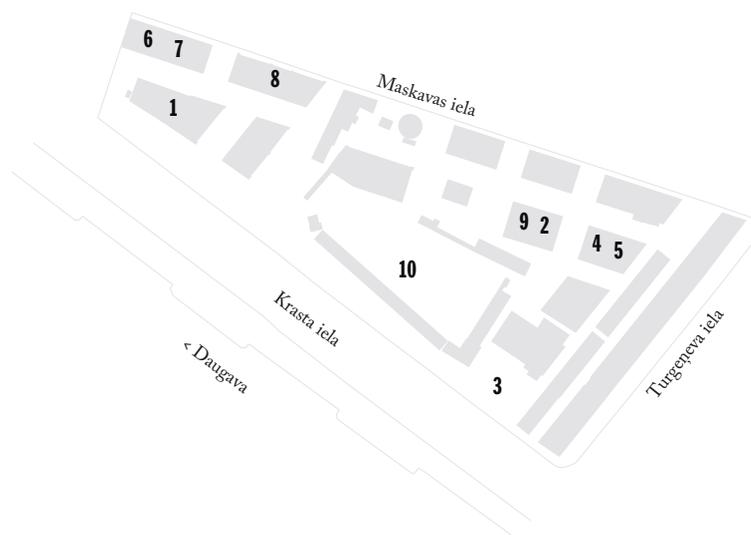
Initially, the focus was more on young people, while *kim?*'s current priority is gaining the attention of professionals in the field.

» kim.lv



COMING TOGETHER AT CERTAIN MOMENTS

— *Zane Onckule, Director of kim? Contemporary Art Centre*



A CAROUSEL OF EVENTS

— *Kalnciema Quarter*



Although Riga has more wooden architecture than any other European city, the town currently holds no rival to the *Kalnciema Quarter* – at least until the planned *Koka Rīga* (Wooden Riga) centre is unveiled in Grīziņkalns. The contrast between shop windows filled with contemporary design salon wares and the cluster of restored wooden buildings in their historical environment forms a one-of-a-kind composition at the corner of Kalnciema and Melsnīla. During events, the bustle of buyers and sellers draws attention to the quarter. The neighbourhood is also enlivened by evening concerts

and film nights in the garden and its improvised open-air cinema.

The Kalnciema Quarter courtyard is open to all, but market days, usually coinciding with other events – films, musical performances, and the carousel – bring an influx of visitors and cultural vitality. Some of the quarter's tenants lead an independent existence, others adapting to the saturated schedule – it's no wonder that the first floor wine shop's opening hours tend to coincide with market days and other events. Liene Griezīte, an architect involved in planning the life of the quarter, explains

that although all activities stem from the initiative of the owners, they are also regularly adapted to fluctuations in visitor demands, while remaining vigilant regarding cultural diversity and the high quality of the market. Promoting an unhurried attitude towards food, culture, and other things, the atmosphere of the quarter's markets echoes the robustness of its wooden buildings. Even kebabs have found their place in the market, although it is more likely these act as a resort for visitors who can't face the long queues at the Slow Food stands. ✕



ORDER BREEDS ORDER

— *Kārlis un Mārtiņš Dambergs, Kalnciema Quarter owners*

Emphasize the principle that private owners tend to respond to tangible, positive steps by the municipality with the same – order breeds order, while in the case of being ignored everything moves in the opposite direction.

They take a positive view of the integration of Kalnciema Quarter within the neighbourhood, since locals feel a sense of belonging and pride regarding the quarter.

They feel that the heaviest burden is the disproportionately high taxes imposed on cleaned-up, creative areas.

The support they are most in need of is tax relief for the quarter, with its well-kempt territory and creative activities open to all.

» kalnciema.lv
» [@kalnciemiela](https://www.instagram.com/kalnciemiela)



COLLECTIVE QUALITY

— *Liene Griezīte, architect, Director of Arhitektes Lienas Griezītes studija*

Collective qualities have now taken priority over the aesthetics focused on originally.

Openness in everyday life and during events strengthens local residents' feeling of belonging; there is a mutual tolerance.

Considers it impossible to work for long without profit, but at the same time, a sense of accessibility should be retained.

To avoid becoming a victim of their own events, the members of the association add to the quarter's programme cautiously – evaluating visitor responsiveness, the quality of the market content, and exercising vigilance against an oversaturation of events and musical homogeneity.

Despite a collaborative effort with *Live Riga*, few tourists visit.

ARCHITECTURE, CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

1. Xcelsior

Architecture office, furniture and design classics
Kalnciema iela 37, xcelsior.lv

2. Arhitektes Lienes Griezātes studija

Architecture firm specializing in the
restoration of wooden buildings
Kalnciema iela 35

3. Krauklis Grende

Architecture firm specializing in
eco-friendly construction
Kalnciema iela 33, passiv.lv

4. BC Grupa

Real estate, restoration, wooden flooring, *Zhiguli's*
Kalnciema iela 35, kalnciemaia.lv

BICYCLE CULTURE

5. Run Rabbit Bicycle

Selling used and restored bicycles
Melnsila iela 13, rrbicycle.lv, @RRBicycle

FOOD AND DRINK

6. Da Vinchi wine shop

Wine from small Italian wineries
Kalnciema iela 35, kalnciemaia.lv/da_vinchi

7. Reštaurants Māja

Fine cuisine with detailed
information on product origin
Kalnciema iela 37, restoransmaja.lv,
@Restorans_Maja

MARKET

8. Farmers' and craftsmen's products; concerts; cinema; workshops

Dates to be announced, kalnciemaia.lv,
@Kalnciemaia



Kalnciema Quarter

CONSTANTLY PULSATING

The majority of creative enterprises and initiatives seek to unite within quarters, but some choose to go their own way and attract attention with a unique environment or activities. The pulsation of these independent sites is strong enough to envisage other creative initiatives flocking around them in the future. ✕

EDUCATION, CULTURE, SUPPORT

EU House

Answers to questions regarding the EU can be found at the EU House - a single building combining the European Parliament Information Office, the European Commission Representation in Latvia and the European Union Information Library. Take part in discussions on EU issues important to Latvia, attend art and design exhibitions, and exchange thoughts on the EU and its future.
Aspazijas bulvāris 28, esmaja.lv, @esmaja

Kinoskola – Film School

Kinoskola offers series of lectures, creative workshops and film analysis under the guidance of experienced film and acting professionals for school and university students with their sights set on a future career in the fields of audiovisual culture and film.
13. janvāra iela 33, kinoskola.lv, @kinoskola

Ģertrūdes ielas teātris

The open stage at the end of Ģertrūdes iela hosts contemporary dance and theatre performances, concerts, lectures and film nights. Performances developed by independent creative organizations from Latvia and abroad provoke viewers' perceptions and expand the boundaries of the performing arts.
Ģertrūdes iela 101a, git.lv, @geatris

Dizaina Fabrika – Design Factory

Dizaina Fabrikā or D.FAB boasts the most expansive exhibition space in Pārdaugava, easily found by keeping an eye out for the brick chimney decorated with a sculptural object on Slokas iela. D.FAB gathers visitors for its exhibitions, events, and dance and theatre performances. Art is given a life outside the walls of the exhibition space through the Art Take Away project – clothing pieces with prints by Latvian artists.
Slokas iela 52d, dfab.lv, artakeaway.lv, @Dfabarts



LIKE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, OVERLOOKING THE LAKE

— *Pauls Kišuro, chef at Cabo Cafe*

Cabo Cafe on Ķīšezers Lake was created in an uncultivated spot, overgrown with bushes. Many had wanted to build houses in the area, but a part of the shore was left to the people after all.

They tried to retain the quality of the site, leaving the landscape unchanged.

An important part of the cafe's concept is good food. The menu has a low mark-up, making the high-quality dishes affordable.

People find *Cabo Cafe* by word of mouth; the bar staff are active Twitter users.

They would like the municipality to carry out improvements to infrastructure; for example, cleaning the road in winter, which would let the cafe give up its seasonal existence. The public swimming area is also in need of improved facilities.

Intend to expand in future. The construction of the cafe will be improved and a roof terrace built, offering better views of the lake.

» cabo.lv



Riga Art Space

Riga Art Space, a contemporary exhibition hall under the Rātslaukums, does without a permanent exhibition or its own collection. It has room for both large-scale art shows and events, as well as smaller exhibitions in which young artists and curators make their debut.
Kungu iela 3, artspace.riga.lv, @Makslasfelpa

Art Museum Riga Bourse

Along with its move to the restored neo-Renaissance style Riga Bourse building, the Foreign Art Museum has entered a new phase of activity. The museum has the richest store of foreign art in Latvia, and its exhibitions offer a chance to become familiar with the history of art in other countries, as well as current trends.
Doma laukums 6, inmm.lv, @MuzejsRigaBirza

BEACHES AND WATERFRONTS

Vecāķi beach

Vecāķi is known for its fresh pine forest air, wooden architecture and white sandy beach. A bicycle path runs from Riga to Vecāķi, and it can also be reached by train or car. A small stretch further up from the Vecāķi beach has long been a favourite spot for nudists.

Vakarbulī beach

On hot summer days, residents of the left bank of the Daugava revive themselves at the Vakarbulī swimming area (with Blue Flag certification). Cafes, water cycles and various other activities are also on offer here. Vakarbulī beach can be reached by car or bus.

AB dam

The floating arts centre on the Noass and Betanovuss pontoons has proved the potential of the AB dam as a venue for culture, regularly drawing crowds for the contemporary art forum White Night, Riga City Festival and Museum Night events. The annual video and contemporary art festival Waterpieces is also held here..
noass.lv, doriangray.lv

Oštas skati

The Oštas Skati office building at the very end of Ķīpsala is also home to a restaurant of the same name, boasting 'democratic' prices and prime views of the River Daugava. Here, suited-up business people sit next to young artists, and expensive cars are parked next to used bicycles. The small promenade and pier are an excellent example of the development potential of Riga's waterfront.
Matrožu iela 15, restoransostasskati.lv

Cabo Cafe

A surfers' favourite, this summer cafe on the shore of Ķīšezers Lake also welcomes those with no enthusiasm for water sports, who come simply to enjoy its food and drinks or a warm summer evening dance on the terrace. After two years of a seasonal existence, Cabo Cafe is planning to extend its operations to the colder months.
Roberta Feldmaņa iela 8, cabo.lv, @cabocafe

MADE IN LATVIA

Pienene - Dandelion

The green studio Pienene is a cosy cafe and souvenir shop. It specializes in the fruits of Latvian nature – eco-friendly toys, natural cosmetics, linen textiles, and dark pottery are available here, and visitors can try local sweets, chicory coffee and herbal teas.
Kungu iela 7/9, @studija_pienene

Tašte Latvia

The best range of Latvian fashion brands can be found at the Tašte Latvia concept store: women's, men's and children's clothing, accessories and home design items. The rational beauty of the shop's interior, designed by architect Brigita Bula, also merits a look.
Galerija Centrs 4th floor, Audēju iela 16,
Sky & More 2nd floor, Dunties iela 19a,
tastelatvia.lv, @tastelatvia

Paviljons

Starting out as a fashion show in the Vidzeme Market meat pavilion, Paviljons subsequently found a place in the Domina shopping centre. Paviljons offers a wide range of work by Latvian fashion designers, also acting as a brand for independent fashion collections.
Domina, Ieriķu iela 3, paviljons.lv

Idille

Delicious seasonal fruit and vegetables can be found at the Idille garden produce shop in Mildas tirdziņš (Milda's market). Chefs at Riga's most popular restaurants appreciate the store's wide range and high quality. Idille stands also appear at Latvian Doctor's Association and Kalnciema Quarter markets, etc.
Mildas tirdziņš, E. Birznieka-Upiņa iela 2,
idille.lv, @iDillec

EVENINGS

Vieta

The landlords of Vieta are the Veto magazine family – a group of people brought together by working on its content and design. During the day, spend some pleasant time buying an original fashion accessory or flipping through some classic American comic books, and return in the evening for a drink and a dance.
Kr. Valdemāra 61, vetomagazine.lv,
@tava_vieta

Nabaklab

If you enjoy listening to Radio NABA and lounging on the couches at Bufete Gauja, you'll also like the Nabaklab club. Sitting directly on the border of Old Riga and the Boulevard Circle, Nabaklab is aimed at music fans whose taste falls outside commercial genres.
Zigfrīda Annas Meierovica bulvāris 12,
nabaklab.lv, @NABAKLAB

Kama Tea Hub

Herbal aromas from local fields and the hills of far-flung lands, special tea-drinking ceremonies and vegetarian foods can be enjoyed at Kama Tea Hub. Also catch the warm and intimate atmosphere of its live music nights.
Ķekaba iela 26/28, facebook.com/KamaTeaHub

Laundrijs

This small laundry in Teika is combined with a cafe hosting parties, concerts and film discussion evenings. Laundrijs also has a play corner to occupy kids while mum is washing laundry or chatting with friends over cups of coffee.
Brīvības gatve 283, laundrijs.lv, @laundrijs



A FAMILY PLACE

— Jānis un Jūlija Volkinšteins, owners of the *Veto* magazine and *Vieta* bar

Created the *Vieta* bar as a forerunner to the next *Veto* magazine project.

Valdemāra iela is a good place to meet people, with its many offices and large flow of pedestrians. During the day school kids eat grilled sandwiches here, while people living and working locally arrive in the evenings.

They don't want *Vieta* to be a place for drinking only, so visitors are offered a bookshelf of classic comics to read – its readership is small, but steady. A corner has also been devoted to Jūlija's *wowowo* clothing and headpiece brand.

On one of the occasions that *Veto* was refused funding by the State Culture Capital Foundation, they decided not to let the magazine die, but to finance it from other sources instead. A successful minibus rental service has been developed for this purpose, and they also manage the building housing the *Veto* office.

Use *Facebook* for hosting photos, while *Twitter* is used to share daily information. They consider this to be sufficient – websites are only necessary for those with extensive menus and catalogues.

» vetomagazine.lv
» julwowowo.blogspot.com

ALL BICYCLES ARE NOT THE SAME

— *The Bicycle Quarter*

Riga has a rapidly growing number of cyclists, but the city has been slow to adapt. There are still few real cycle paths, and a lot of inconvenient curbs to navigate. People more often leave their bicycles in stairwells several floors above the ground instead of on the streets. Bicycle culture enthusiasts, however, are tireless in the creation of new meeting spots and events promoting bike-riding. All bicycles are far from being the same, and so several strong cycling subcultures have developed in Riga.

The mountain bikes popular in the past have been replaced by simple, inexpensive city bicycles, easy to manoeuvre and less effort to pedal. New shops selling second-hand bicycles imported from the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark are sprouting up in Riga, and there is no shortage of buyers. Since the majority of active cyclists are representatives of the creative professions, these retail and maintenance spaces are usually located in Riga's creative quarters or nearby. For example, *Run Rabbit Bicycle* has set up house at *VEF* with a smaller branch at Kalnciema Quarter, while *Dutch Bike* can be found in the Quiet Centre and next to the VEF territory, as well near the *D-Fab* exhibition space.

Those who prefer their bike to fit like a glove choose fixed-gear bicycles. These young people in bright clothes and matching bikes find each other in specific places in Riga: *MiiT*, *Innocent Café*, the *Piens Velo*

workshop. Fixed-gear riders also have games and competitions in common – the bike polo and sprint or Ruļļu cīņas held in *MiiT* during the cold season.

Definitely different from all the rest, freakbikes have found a home in the garages at Andrejsala. Freakbike owners make their rides themselves, defying the limitations of traditional bicycle geometry. The *Apokalipses jātnieki* (Horsemen of the Apocalypse) riders' association hold occasional freakbike-making workshops, meet in the *Velozaurs* club and go on colourful parades through the streets of Riga.

Riga also has room for freestyle riders who pose a challenge to stairs and walls by monuments and shopping centres. The largest of the skateparks that have been set up are Grīziņkalns skatepark, *Monsterparks* and *Volcomparks*. Andrejsala has a trial-biking club and the *Karters* school.

The main keeper of bicycling traditions and the retro aesthetic is Toms Ērenpreiss. *The Vintage Bicycle Club of Latvia* he has set up brings riders together with bikes that are over 30 years old, and organizes the local *Tweed Run*, a parade of old-school bicycles with matching clothes and accessories. Riga gained another colourful bicycle ride in 2011 – the *Bicycle Flower Parade* organized by the *Dutch Bike* store; another chance to draw attention to bicycle culture and show some love to two-wheelers. ✕



A PEACEFUL WARRIOR

— *Toms Ērenpreiss, head of the Ērenpreiss bicycle workshop*

The Ērenpreiss bicycle workshop specializes in the restoration and servicing of bicycles. In two years, its team has grown from three to seven in number, while the workshop has taken over the entire building.

A cycling culture is developing, but this is a long evolutionary process and is still far from the level of 1920s-1930s Riga, when the bicycle was the main means of transportation, and the city had five large factories and over thirty workshops.

Believes that the work invested in a restored bicycle reflects its owner's soul, and the work must be flawless.

Has learnt that hope is not be relied on in technology.

Toms is a peaceful warrior in the bicycle revolution, taking traditions and the reputation of the Ērenpreiss name as his weapons.

» erenpreiss.lv

COULD MAKE A BIKE ON SKIS

— *Artūrs Baiža*



Began by looking for an industrial space rather than a traditional shop. Wanted to be further away from others and have no problem with holding parties.

Admits that cycling mania has intensified in Riga, so new ideas and concepts have to be born.

Currently selling used and restored bicycles, but doesn't intend to stop there - they are already working with artists and making other plans.

Won't sell skis during the winter; will work with bicycles instead. Could make a bike on skis.



CITY BICYCLE STORES

Dutch Bike

Valkas iela 7, Brīvības iela 193d, Slokas iela 52d,
dutchbike.lv, @dutchbikelv

PARKS

Volcomparks (VEF superpark)

Brīvības gatve 214, VEF 5. korpuss,
vefsuperparks.lv, @volcomparks

Grīziņkalna skeitparks

J. Asara iela 24

Monsterparks

Kroņu iela 13a, @monsterparks

WORKSHOPS, RESTORATION

Ērenpreiss velosipēdu darbnīca workshop

A. Čaka iela 90, erenpreiss.com, @darbnica

Cafē, bicycle store and workshop MiiT

Lāčplēša iela 10, miit.lv, @miit_tiiim

Piena velo darbnīca

A. Briāna iela 9, piens.nu

Pilsētas velosipēdu darbnīca

E. Smiļģa iela 11, @velodarbnica

CLUBS

Apokalipses jātnieki and Velozaurs

Andrejoštas iela 4, freakbike.lv, @Yaatnieki

Karters

Andrejoštas iela 4a, karters.lv

Latvian Vintage Bicycle Club

latveloclub.lv

EVENTS

Riga Bicycle Week

organized by Ērenpreiss velosipēdu darbnīca,
Rīga City Council, CSDD and others
velonedela.lv, @velonedela,

Critical Mass

organized by cyclists every Mayday

Freakbike parade

organized by Apokalipses jātnieki

Tweed Run

organized by Latvijas Veclaiku divriteņu klubs

Bicycle Flower Parade

organized by Dutch Bike



DILL, PEARLS, AND SALMON SANDWICHES

— *Markets*

Riga's urban environment has experienced great changes due to a return to the market tradition, which has reduced the influence of shopping centres. Alongside the large city market open daily, smaller markets and fairs are held, with the added value of carefully selected products and an entertainment programme. Some farmers' markets have even had the audacity to steal clients from right under the noses of shopping centres. Food is not the only thing being sold – markets specializing in craftsmen's wares, vintage clothing and home design items have also become extremely popular.

Kalnciema Quarter Market

Organized around themes and public holidays, and accompanied by concerts and attractions, the market is held in the Kalnciema Quarter courtyard on Thursday afternoons and holidays. On such occasions, the usually quiet Pārdaugava site comes to life, and the market stalls are engulfed by a motley crowd of local residents and Rigans travelling from distant parts of the city. Dates to be announced,
» kalnciemaiera.lv

Bergs Bazaar farmers' market

Already a Riga institution, this market fills the Bergs Bazaar passages with Slow Food quality fare, craftsmen's wares, eco-friendly children's toys and natural cosmetics. Snacks from the *Vincents* restaurant prepared on the spot make the shopping experience even more enjoyable. Second and fourth Saturday of every month 10 pm – 3 pm,
» bergabazars.lv

Night Market at Spīķeri

The lowest fruit and vegetable prices in Riga draw traders and restaurant owners, but shopping in the dark of night is an interesting experience for any Rigan. The open *kotlete* (meatball) and salmon sandwiches available in the cafe at the corner of the Night Market make an alternative midnight snack after a visit to *Dirty Deal*.
Every day after 10 pm, Nēģu iela 7

Latvian Doctors' Association Green Market

To educate city dwellers in the habits of healthy eating, the Latvian Doctors' Association has opened its courtyard to a farmers' fruit and vegetable market, accompanied by a series of related events – *Healthy Products for a Healthy Lifestyle*. Nutrition experts are available

for consultations and advice on balanced food choices every Thursday up until September. Summer Thursdays from 3 pm to 7 pm, Skolas iela 3,
» arstubiembra.lv

Countryside produce market by Spice shopping centre

The scent of the fresh cows' milk, oven-baked bread, forest blossom honey, smoked and cured meats and sausages is so tantalising that you might be forgiven for not even making it into any shops. Instead, linger outside, tasting and filling your basket with goods from Latvian farms. Fridays 4 pm–8 pm, Saturdays and Sundays 12 pm–4 pm, Lielirbes iela 29,
» spice.lv

Slow Food Organic Farmers' Market at Sky & More shopping centre

By launching its organic food market, the *Sky & More* shopping centre has joined the Slow Food movement. This means that origin of the produce available here has been tested, and it contains no harmful substances, is tasty and of a high quality. Fridays 12 pm – 9 pm, Duntes iela 19a,
» skyandmore.lv

Mildas tirdziņš – Milda's market

The market pavilions grouped around a small courtyard on the crossing of Satekles, Elizabetes and E. Birznieka-Upīša are an alternative to the supermarket – pleasanter in scale, and offering closer contact between the buyer and the seller. Over 30 Latvian food producers have found a place here. E. Birznieka-Upīša iela 2,
» mildastirdzins.lv

Open Air Vintage festivāls

Just like London, Paris and Berlin, Riga also has its occasional *vintage* market, which transforms the *Dirty Deal* space or the courtyard of the *MiiT* cycling cafe into a colourful emporium for the day. The market is organized by the *RetroSpectro* shop together with fashion journalist and blogger Agnese Kleina. Dates to be announced,
» retrospectro.wordpress.com
» whimsicalagnesiga.com

Andele Mandele pearl hunt

Andele Mandele is a market for real huntresses of fashion, who enjoy looking over each other's wardrobes while on the prowl for a pearl of their own. The unoccupied premises of shopping centres or clubs are chosen for these swapping, buying and selling events. Dates to be announced, @andelemandele

VEF flea market

Until now, Riga was missing a proper weekend flea market – a place for students to find cheap household buys and for collectors to hunt for ancient treasures. Since this summer, however, a weekly trade has started up in the VEF quarter. The range of wares on offer includes home design items and books, stamp and postcard collections, sports equipment, electronics and jewellery. Saturdays 10 am – 5 pm, by the VEF arts centre, Ūnijas iela 8,
» retrospectro.wordpress.com
» totaldobze.com

A SINGLE BRAID OF EVENTS

— *The Virtual Quarter*

As the city quarters grew, a set of popular internet sites developed over the same short period of time. The authors of these are enthusiasts working in creative fields and writing about what's fresh in Latvian design, fashion, architecture and art. New blogs and websites are proof of the evolution of Riga's cultural life – it turns out that there are many events, places and people worthy of attention and description. Alongside sites with original content, there has also been a growth in the activity of the creative industry on social networks. While in 2009 only a handful of companies had profiles on *Twitter*, *Facebook* and *Draugiem*, two years later event announcements through these media are the key source of information. They have the advantage of spreading news rapidly and offering a direct link with the audience – comments and questions can easily be added to every event, and there has been a significant decrease in the level of anonymity so characteristic of the internet. ✕





EVERY DAY AT NOON

— *Agnese Kleina, author of the
Whimsical Agnesiga blog*

Filling the blog isn't difficult, since Agnese's lifestyle includes attending many events, which fits in easily with her job as editor-in-chief of Deko magazine.

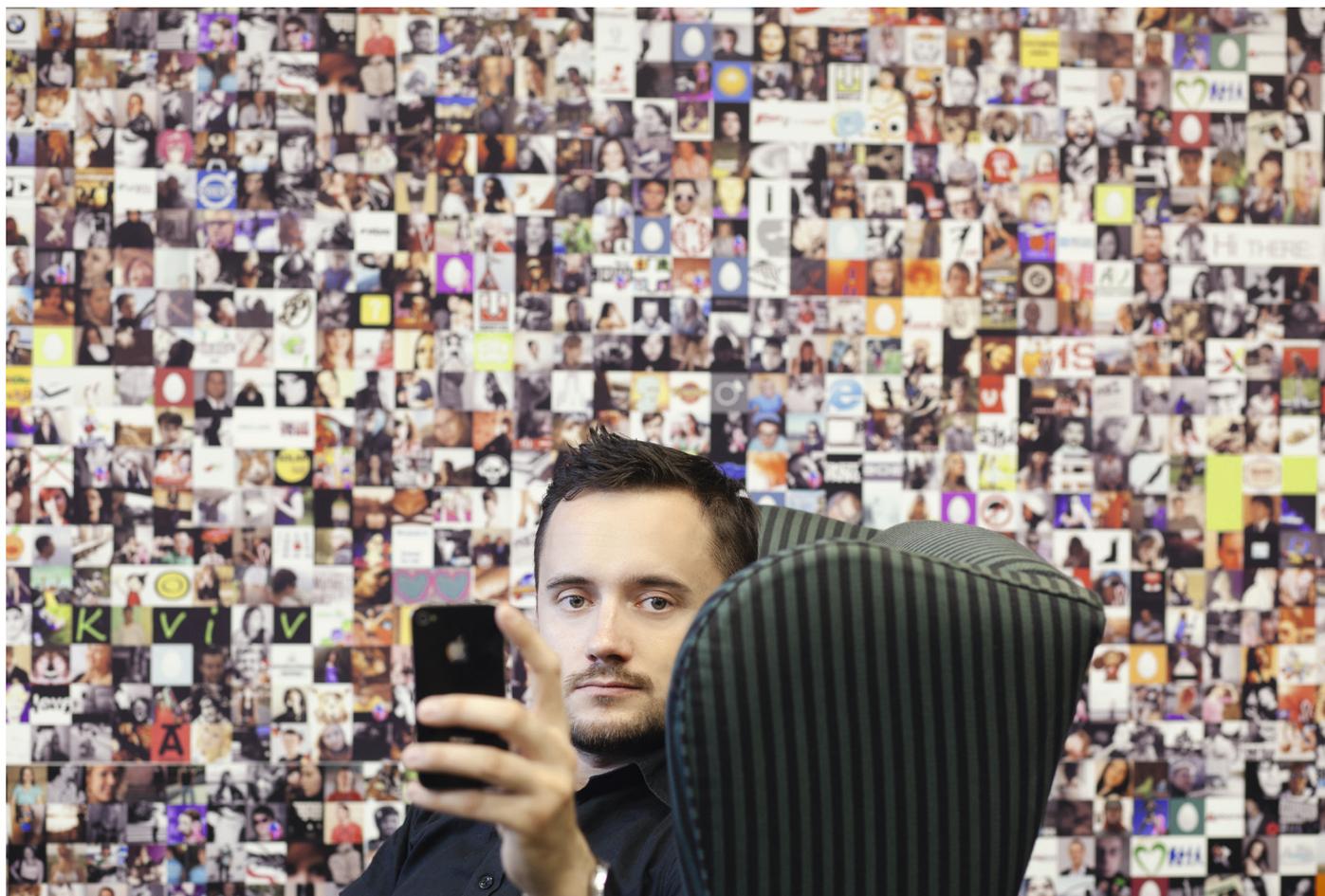
Good material is divided up – putting the "legs" in the blog and the "rump" in the magazine.

Her readers have got used to regular entries, with a new dose of information every day around noon, in a variety of sections – street fashion; her own outfits; reports from events; stories on interesting people and places.

She was quickly noticed by the local fashion community when a critical comment in the blog earned her the status of persona non grata at the Riga Fashion Week shows in autumn 2010.

The readers of her blog have written that Agnese knows how to weave many different things into one beautiful braid.

» whimsicalagnesiga.com



MAYBE ATTENDING

— *Artūrs Mednis, social media expert, Inspired Latvija*

In Riga, social media are used by a small but active group of users who want to have their voices heard. Even if they only make up a tenth of the total users, it is thanks to these people that everyone else finds out about new bars, restaurants and creative quarters.

Local and regional studies indicate a gradual decline in the popularity of blogs, while the number of social media users is growing.

Event ads on *Facebook* only act as listings, since they can't be used to predict attendance. *I am attending* frequently means *Maybe attending*.

Social media are not what makes a shop, bar or quarter more popular, they can only help. In the long term, the place itself will show whether it works or not.

» inspired.lv



POSITIVE SIDE EFFECTS

— *Sandijs Ruluks, author of Designblog.lv*

Although he writes a blog on the best finds in Latvian design, he spends most of his own time in the Netherlands. His absence has pushed him to develop a compact interview format – 10 questions, most often answered in written form.

He asks interview subjects to take a picture of themselves at 17:17 – a time of the working day when people are usually immersed in the creative process.

A positive side effect of writing the blog is finding out about the creative process that takes place before a piece of design is complete.

In comparison with print media, a blog allows you to react to events more quickly, there are no limitations to volume or topics, and finding older entries in the archive is much easier.

» designblog.lv

DESIGN

Anyone interested in graphic, interactive or product design should take a look at [designblog.lv](#), dedicated to all that is good in Latvian design. The blog has a catalogue of links to Latvian designers' portfolios as well as news on competitions and events, but most of its content is in the form of questions and answers. Its [designblog.lv](#) 10+10 interviews with designers and architects, conversations with design school students and reader polls are a stirring force in the Latvian design environment, and help future designers build up a stock of useful knowledge.
» [designblog.lv](#)

The [Asketik](#) graphic design office doesn't just stand out with the freshness of its work – it is also behind the [Plikums](#) initiative, a site of their own making that features the goings-on of the creative industries in Latvia. The site doesn't have separate sections for graphic design, advertising, photography and art, making every item appear equally interesting. A special part of the blog is the [Plikums](#). Sarunas series of video interviews, in which designers and representatives of related professions talk about their work, inspirations and the creative process.
» [plikums.lv](#)

[The Design Information Centre](#) works on integrating Latvian design into local consciousness and the international market by organising the [Design. Future](#) festival and regularly publishing information on design competitions and exhibitions.
» [dic.lv](#)

FASHION

In her [Whimsical Agnesiga](#) blog, the first true home-grown fashionista Agnese Kleina talks about current trends in fashion, gives readers a peek at the best-dressed guests of various events and of course, demonstrates her own particular sense of style. Agnese is a great persuader of the diversity and quality of Latvian fashion brands' clothing, footwear and jewellery: she wears them herself and provides news of their success stories around the world. For the past two years, Agnese and the [RetroSpectro](#) shop team have been organizing the Open Air Vintage festival, choosing Riga's creative quarters as a location. Anita Sedliņa or [Anii](#) creates her own pieces of clothing and focuses on Latvian fashion, reporting from shows, presentations and trips. Agnese and Anita don't see each other as competition, posting friendly footnotes to what the other has written instead. If you open one of the blogs, it won't be long before you find yourself having passed seamlessly to the other.
» [whimsicalagnesiga.com](#),
» [retrospectro.wordpress.com](#)
» [anii.lv](#)

Trendy young things spotted and photographed on the streets of Riga can be seen on the [Ielu Mode](#) blog, while the riders of attractive bicycles are captured in the photos of [Vello Fellow](#).
» [ielumode.lv](#),
» [vellofellow.blogspot.com](#)

Santa Bindemane writes about children's fashion, interior design and entertainment on her [Kids Gazette](#) blog. Together with artist Edīte Kīrse she has also created the Bloggers t-shirt collection, featuring images of Latvian and foreign fashion bloggers. The first in the series was a t-shirt showing Agnese Kleina.
» [kids-gazette.blogspot.com](#)

ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Latvia's architects love to debate over wine, in their offices and on [A4D](#) – an interactive website for information and the exchange of opinions. A4D publishes news and analytical articles on architecture, overviews of the newest projects (including images) and annotations of books and magazines. You'll also find out what events to attend if you're interested in contemporary architecture, and what architects themselves think about new buildings in Riga.
» [a4d.lv](#)

Urban design is still a relatively unknown creative field in Latvia, but two young urbanists – Evelīna Ozola and Toms Kokins – have recently begun posting informational material, criticism and suggestions for the streets and quarters of Riga and other cities on their [Fine Young Urbanists](#) blog.
» [fineyoungurbanists.tumblr.com](#)

CULTURE, LITERATURE, ART

[Arterritory](#) writes about art and culture in Latvia and its neighbouring countries in Latvian, Russian and English. Just like design blogs, Arterritory also goes beyond the territory of art by looking at news in fashion, photography, architecture and film. An experienced group of authors under the leadership of Anna Iltnere is behind Arterritory, meaning there is a wealth of artist interviews and articles on art processes, as well as a large catalogue of artists, galleries and museums. Also including art centres in other European, Russian and U.S. cities alongside Riga, the calendar of exhibitions and events is especially useful.
» [arterritory.com](#)

A classic in the field of the intellectual exchange of ideas is *¼ Satori*, also present in Riga as a bookstore, cafe and coworking space in Bergs Bazaar. *¼ Satori* specializes in book reviews, a virtual library of literature fragments, blogs by cultural figures and an environment of intense debate.

» satori.lv

An alternative selection of exhibitions, concerts and theatre performances is found on the *Veto* blog that complements the printed magazine and reflects the interests of its creators and audience. Every Friday, the *Kuštība pilsētā* (Movement in the City) section lists the coming weekend's events.

» vetomagazine.wordpress.com

Ziemeļu stāsti (Northern Tales), the internet magazine by the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office, acts as a guide to Scandinavian culture, providing an introduction to the worldview and lifestyle of our nearby neighbours. Another resource for this is the Latvian-created *Ziemeļu puse* (Nordic Style) TV show, now available to both Latvian and Lithuanian audiences.

» ziemelustasti.lv

PHOTOGRAPHY

The former *Foto Kvartāls* magazine moved onto a digital version in early 2011, now focusing on the diversity of photography as an art medium. Almost all of Latvia's active photographers and photography critics are involved in shaping the website; adding images, exhibition reviews, technical advice and stories on key figures and events in photography.

» fotokvartals.lv

Find the portfolios of many Latvian photographers alongside the work of designers and artists on the *Filtered* project website, with a format conducive to wandering freely between photography, graffiti, video and painting.

» filtered.lv

COMICS

(ku)š!, Latvia's only magazine devoted to comics culture is small but powerful, and regular. It publishes the freshest and brightest drawings by local and foreign artists, and each issue is devoted to a specific theme.

(ku)š! is for sale in numerous stores within Riga's creative quarters and can also be found on the internet.

» komikss.lv

MUSIC

What is Riga listening to? Whatever the authors of *Cita Mūzika* (Another Music) have recommended.

They claim that the border between regular music and exceptional music is not easy to draw, and share their findings by writing on the blog and DJing at events and locations in Riga.

» citamuzika.lv

Radio 101 has injected the urban environment with music by choosing a site for its live studio in the centre of Riga, on the ground floor at the corner of Brīvības and Elizabetes. Its large windows offer a chance to see the radio personalities at work, while they react on air to events going on outside. *Radio 101* frequently relays information on events in the creative quarters.

» radio101.lv

If you're interested in new indie and electronic genre musicians from the Baltic States, *The Baltic Scene* blog also has a lot to offer.

» thebalticscene.tumblr.com

URBAN CUISINE

Anyone who seeks something more than well-trodden tourist trails on their travels is aware of *Another Travel Guide*, which has not forgotten Riga and it treasures among more exotic destinations.

Easy to understand categories like Where to drink coffee, Trendy, and Best cakes help you quickly choose a spot perfect for your mood.

» anothertravelguide.lv

Advice by a local often seems more trustworthy than information aimed at tourists. Find it on Zane Bojāre's *Subjektīvs* (Subjective) blog – written in Latvian and English on her experiences in Riga's cafes and restaurants, small shops and art spaces.

» subjektivs.lv

What is the best place to dine in Riga? Where can you buy food from local producers and how can you prepare a delicious meal yourself? Recipes, shop and restaurant reviews including an insight into menus and prices can be found on the *Četras sezonas* (Four seasons) website.

» cetrassezonas.lv

EDUCATED, HAS AN ALLOTMENT GARDEN

— *Quarters of the future*

RISEBA + RTU

The development plans of the two universities sitting on opposite banks of the Zunda canal are a mark of the potential of a quarter fitting the campus or university town model. The former industrial complex between Daugavgrīvas iela and the Zunda canal now houses the Architecture and Media Centre of the Riga International School of Economics and Business Administration (RISEBA); an indication of the institution's expansion. On the other side of the canal, work is already underway on the Riga Technical University (RTU) RTU – *A City within the City* project, envisaging the creation of an engineering studies centre on a Baltic scale. Although these are two independent visions developing side by side, the materialisation of both could create a new hotspot of education, culture and innovation – and a new pedestrian bridge crossing the canal is also said to be in the works.

RISEBA Creative Quarter,
Ūdens iela 6, riseba.lv

RTU A City within the City,
Āzenes iela 18, pilseta.rtu.lv

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LATVIA

When the construction of the National Library of Latvia reaches its conclusion, the creative quarters won't be the only places to find the combined functions of culture, reference and art. Alongside reading rooms and book collections, the plan of the *Castle of Light* also includes exhibition, seminar, conference and activity spaces. Together with the planned University of Latvia student town in Torņakalns and the expansive ambitions of RTU and RISEBA, there are clear indications that the left bank of the Daugava is facing an explosion of educational and scientific activity in its future.

The National Library of Latvia,
Mūkusalas iela 3, lnb.lv

UPIŠA ARCADE

Like Bergs Bazaar's untapped appendix and spatial opposite, the other side of Marijas iela hides another system of connected courtyards – Upiša Arcade. Here, the buildings surrounding the block are higher and the topology of the open spaces more uniform than in the quarter across the street. Upiša Arcade has experienced the presence of artists every so often during the Survival Kit contemporary art festival, but its everyday content is symbolized by a cluster of musical instrument shops and a cosy café. As in the Bergs Bazaar, the top storeys of the buildings contain flats, so the future development potential of the quarter veers towards the cultural rather than entertainment. The new *Palladium* concert hall (housed in an ex-cinema) is also scheduled to be opened in close proximity to Upiša Arcade and Bergs Bazaar.

Upiša Arcade, Marijas iela 16

Palladium Rīga, Marijas iela 21,
palladium.lv

KANEPE CULTURE CENTRE

Opened as the centre of the 2011 *Homo Novus* festival, this poetic property with a garden in the historical centre of Riga puts a new point of creativity on the map and strengthens links between the Quiet Centre and Baznīcas iela. The intention is to respectfully restore the former residential and music school building, transforming it into a concert hall, restaurant and meeting place.

Kanēpe Culture Centre, Skolas iela 15,
@KanepesKC

TABAKAS FABRIKA – TOBACCO FACTORY

Miera iela has long been known as a success story of bottom-up development, but now another point of synergy between the creative industries is planned for its more undeveloped end. If the vision of the Ministry of Culture transpires into reality, the next few years should see the industrial premises of *Tabakas fabrika* transform into an epicentre of diverse cultural, creative and entrepreneurship processes on a city-wide and even regional scale. Meanwhile, the vast premises of the former tobacco factory are not standing completely empty, being taken over now and then for series of events – the Skaņi Mežs experimental music festival or the International Festival of Contemporary Theatre Homo Novus.

Tabakas fabrika, Miera iela 58, km.gov.lv

GRĪZIŅKALNS

You don't yet need a time machine to travel to a Riga untouched by development plans – the untamed urban environment of the Grīziņkalns neighbourhood holds the remains of industrial buildings of the last century standing alongside examples of historical wooden architecture. Liberated from the private property craze of the central quarters, courtyards here are usually open and can be walked through – often connecting parallel streets. An openness and freedom can also be felt amongst local residents – just like contemporary architecture, restrictions in drinking in public places have not yet reached the blocks of Grīziņkalns.

Mūrnieka iela, tidied up several years ago, is not the only evidence of the quarter's potential; the *Koka Rīga* (Wooden Riga) wooden architecture centre on the corner of Lienes and Krāsotāja is to form the new core of the social life and regeneration of Grīziņkalns. The project

includes plans for a neighbourhood information centre, wooden architecture preservation activities, as well as a repository of restoration reference material, and an exhibition space. If the *Koka Rīga* centre manages to draw similar neighbours to the area, Grīziņkalns has the chance to become a quarter filled with new social currents within the next few years. Large-scale improvements are also planned for the neighbourhood's streets and parks. .
Mūrnieku iela, rigasaustrumi.lv
Koka Rīga, Krāsotāju iela 12, kokariga.lv

ALLOTMENT GARDENS

The local product and urban farming trends running wild in the large cities of the world have yet to penetrate Riga's most absorbent minds, so we can only speculate on a growing use of allotments. However, challenging the stereotype of senior citizens as the only target audience, a new interest in gardening and a desire to rent a vacant vegetable garden from the city can be observed among the young middle-class generation. A critical mass that would mark a real allotment cultivation craze has not yet been reached, but the development of the bicycle path network and search for alternative lifestyles may lead to the appearance of a new typology of quarter in Riga's most interesting neighbourhoods.

Allotment rent office,
 Daugavpils iela 31, 418. kab., rigasaustrumi.lv



THE ABILITY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

— *Oskars Redbergs, Director of the RISEBA Architecture Programme*

The Riga International School of Economics and Business Administration (RISEBA) is running a new undergraduate programme in architecture that has already enrolled 36 students from various countries in its first year.

The faculty plans to hold public lectures at least once a month.

Considers the creation of new study programmes to be inevitable, since young people are increasingly choosing the creative industries.

The aim of RISEBA is not to outdo Riga Technical University, but rather the normalization of the study programmes currently on offer.

Is convinced that architects have the advantage of being able to solve problems in a studio format – in a group of very diverse people.

The building is jointly used by students of audiovisual media art and architecture. This is expected to encourage a creative synergy; using each other's talents and skills.

» riseba.lv

