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Goodwill hunting

As he embarks on the ride of his life, Wissam Al Jayoussi will be driven by a great cause. His Goodwill Journey, on the back of his Harley, from Dubai to London will raise funds to build a school in Gaza. PAGES 2-3



SPACE CAR

We test drive the new 4x4 Sequoia

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GOOD BITES

Where to eat out this week

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SWISS HAVEN

Take a trip to Vevey for a picture postcard holiday

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Pandora on Earth

City Times finds out what the Swiss lakeside town of Vevey and its surrounding areas can offer prospective visitors

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SURELY FEW PLACES on earth whisper tranquility like the picture postcard towns peppered around Lake Geneva, itself nestled under the majestic Alps mountain range.

Roughly an hour's drive from Geneva, Vevey sits sandwiched between academic haven Lausanne and the musically progressive Montreux (the town inspired Deep Purple's *Smoke on the Water* and hosts an

internationally renowned jazz festival each summer).

Vevey, situated in the French-speaking 'canton' (district) of Vaud, is perhaps best known as the home of milk chocolate. Daniel Peter perfected the process in 1857, and eventually entered into a business partnership with Henri Nestlé, a shrewd businessman whose infant formula became a worldwide phenomenon. Together, the duo founded the Nestlé Company a stone's throw from Lake Geneva, where the company's global headquarters remain to this day.

Unsurprisingly, chocolate making is held in the highest regard in the region. If you wish to chance your arm at the process, Poyet's Confiserie in Vevey town

centre offers a 90-minute masterclass – in which visitors can learn why Indonesian chocolate tastes so bitter, make their very own bar and unmask the shameless fraudulence of white 'chocolate'. As for regular cuisine, regional delicacies tend towards the rustic Continental – with cheese, cold cut meats and bread all forming part of the staple diet.

Switzerland is renowned as one of Europe's foremost economic powerhouses – with a high GDP, low unemployment rates and one of the world's strongest currencies in the Swiss franc. As such, the country has managed to remain financially stout and cheery in recent times, as the rest of the world has floundered under the credit crunch.

The average house price in Switzerland increased by four per cent last year, compared to a drop of 20 per cent in prime London real estate, while Zurich and Geneva have been ranked as having the second and third best quality of life in the world respectively.



For a hearty piece of fondu-based fun, visit the Museum restaurant in Montreux, which serves up traditional Swiss fare in a cosy underground setting. Or, if you're seeking a slightly more refined meal, try Le Montagne in Chardonne, which opts for a sleek but straightforward European menu.

But enough with the gut-busters. For those looking to indulge in

less calorific enjoyment, one can enjoy a blissful boat trip along the lake, pop over to the Alps for some of the world's best skiing or simply wander through Vevey's picturesque streets.

If you're looking to scale the steep Mont-Pèlerin in Chardonne, the funicular offers a speedy alternative to driving. Similar to a cable car, the transport system can bring passengers up and down the mountain from Vevey in less time than it takes by car.

At the top, enjoy the fresh Alpine air, a perfectly unspoiled view facing the lake and mountains – a vista which, given the season, can change daily – and natural beauty akin to *Avatar's* lush planet

Pandora (the only difference is you won't be feeling any blues while you're there).

And, if you're still not feeling pampered enough, pop along to the multi-award-winning Clinique La Prairie in Montreux. Founded in 1931, it is one of the world's most prestigious health spas and caters for almost any health, dietary or beauty need.

As well as standard treatments such as facials, massages, anti-wrinkle, personal training, indoor pool sessions, manicures and pedicures, the 59-bedroom spa boasts a unique specialty in the form of 'CLP Cell Extract'.

Originally pioneered at the clinic's inception almost 80 years ago, the

Switzerland is linguistically unusual in that it has four national tongues: French, German, Italian (each a bordering country) and a regional dialect called Romansh. It is common for Swiss people from different regions to speak English to one another.





therapy sees cells from a sheep foetus inserted into the human body to aid regeneration. The treatment, which was successfully used on Pope Pius XII in 1953 when he fell ill, is renowned for its incredible ability to

revitalise, stimulate the immune system and slow the ageing process. If you wish to visit Vevey in style, stay at the Hôtel les Trois Couronnes in the town centre. Look online for the best deals on flights to Geneva.

Famous names who have lived in Vevey include silent film star Charlie Chaplin, *War and Peace* novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky, poet Victor Hugo and *Brighton Rock* writer Graham Greene.

Montreux, meanwhile, has housed the likes of Microsoft founder Bill Gates, singer Shania Twain and Queen frontman Freddie Mercury, a statue of whom can be found in the town centre.

This year's Montreux Jazz Festival will take place from July 2 to 17. Acts appearing include Missy Elliott, Phil Collins, AIR, Vampire Weekend, Massive Attack, Herbie Hancock, Simply Red, Elvis Costello and Mark Knopfler.

Parc life

Old-school opulence meets modern chic at the Du Parc Kempinski Private Residences, along with some of the finest views the eye could wish for. Welcome to Switzerland's most breathtaking new luxury experience



A SHORT TRIP from Vevey, one can find the ultra-exclusive Du Parc Kempinski Private Residences – currently being redeveloped into three penthouses and 21 apartments.

The Belle Epoque-style structure sits on top of Mont-Pèlerin, within the UNESCO-protected vineyards of the Lavaux region and overlooking both the Alps and Lake Geneva.

The newly-titled project, which will reinvigorate the historic Hôtel du Parc building, is intended to offer the epitome of luxury living – with developer Swiss Development Group already scooping up awards for its most ambitious project to date. *City Times* took a snoop around...

Living it up

Measuring roughly 6,500 square feet and with ceilings reaching 14 metres, each penthouse will be situated in one of the three towers of the Du Parc building. As well as offering the best views of the Swiss landscape, given



their lofty position, the penthouses will also boast stunning interiors thanks to luxury design firms Fendi Casa and Mariani.

Ranging between approximately 1,050 and 2,600 square feet, the 21 apartments will be designed by interior design firms BBG-BBGM, with buyers able to pick either a classic or modern style.

All residences will feature state-of-the-art technology for audio, video, lighting, temperature and drapes – in addition to 24-hour security and CCTV.

Relax and enjoy

Among the facilities on offer to all residents will be an international concierge service by Quintessentially, a local concierge service by Le Mirador Kempinski, a

Davidoff cigar lounge and a Givenchy private spa.

Other amenities will include an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, Turkish bath, fitness room, putting



green, dance studio and private cinema. Residents will also receive a lifelong membership to the Lavaux 18-hole golf course, situated just 20 minutes away.

Brand new classic

Built in 1906, the Hôtel du Parc building (formerly the Pèlerin Palace Hotel) was a haven for all manner of high society visitors such as New York socialite Gertrude Normand Smith and the Consuls of Persia and Portugal.

The restoration plans for the Du Parc will see its 140 rooms whittled down to just 24 properties, priced between 4.7 million and 23 million Swiss francs (5.25 million to 75.25 million dirhams).



Residences will be ready for occupancy in early 2012, with the surrounding four-hectare park also being revitalised to past splendour.

Visit www.du-parc.ch for more information on the Du Parc Kempinski Private Residences.