@birmingham live SATURDAY, MAY 26, 2018 BIRMINGHAM MAIL 13 **12 BIRMINGHAM MAIL** SATURDAY, MAY 26, 2018 www.birminghamlive.co.uk

The Palm Jumeirah seen from Seawings tour, below, and

one of the company's planes by Dubai Creek Golf Club, right

The Jumierah Zabeel Saray hotel and, right, its spa

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AFRICAN ADVENTURES AWAIT

DREAMLINER flights from Manchester to Ethionia's capital Addis Ababa will start on December 1.

The four-times-a-week service with award-winning Ethiopian Airlines will unlock connections to more than 58 countries across the African continent, and complements the Heathrow route which started in 1973.

Initially the new flights will go via Brussels, and the state-of-theart Boeing 787 will offer business and economy cabins, with return fares starting at £499.

See ethiopianairlines.com and manchesterairport.co.uk for more

LODGES ARE CENTER OF ATTENTION NEW two-storey timber and stone

lakeside Waterside Lodges are now open at Center Parcs' Elveden Forest site in Suffolk. Ideal for wildlife spotting, the

accommodation features openplan living areas, three bedrooms and decking for dining, relaxing and stargazing. Family breaks in the lodges

start from £1.999. Visit centerparcs.co.uk



A BLOOMING BRILLIANT TRIP

WITH the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) flower shows in full swing, RHS Chatsworth is just around the corner (June 6-10).

HF Holidays has a trip which includes a day at the RHS Chatsworth Flower Show, set in the stunning grounds of Chatsworth House.

There is also a visit to two of Derbyshire's renowned gardens.

First up is Renishaw, home of the Sitwell family, with classical Italianate gardens, woodlands and park. In the afternoon it's off to Hardwick Hall to discover the links to Chatsworth House.

A three-night stay (June 8-11) costs from £399 per person. It includes full-board, en-suite accommodation at Peveril of the Peak, the services of an HF Holidays' leader, transport to and from gardens and all garden admissions costs. There is a separate admission fee for stately homes/houses.

To book visit hfholidays.co.uk or call 0345 470 8558

Keep PALM and carry on

ADRIAN CAFFERY enjoys a bird's-eye view of a destination where records are made to be broken

HE soundtrack to my whistle-stop trip to Ďubai was the annoyingly catchy Everything Is Awesome from The Lego Movie. I couldn't get the tune out of my head because from the moment I boarded the plane to when I returned to Blighty everything was, well, you know, AWESOME! Here are some of the reasons why:

- We flew on the world's biggest passenger plane with the "world's best economy class";
- We stayed on the world's biggest man-made island, shaped like a palm tree:
- Our opulent hotel featured the Middle East's biggest spa, plus views to the world's biggest ferris wheel;
- Our seaplane flight gave us views of the world's tallest building and world's largest 'picture frame', and
- We admired the world's heaviest gold ring in the markets.

We stayed for two nights at lumeirah Zabeel Saray, a hotel on The Palm Jumeirah, a true wonder of modern engineering.

Opened in 2006, at a cost of £12bn, and stretching three miles into the Arabian Gulf, it doubled the length of Dubai's coastline at a

The road from the mainland is the 'trunk', eight 'fronds' either side are home to luxury villas, and the outer crescents are filled with five-star hotels.

The only place to appreciate the size of The Palm Jumeirah is from the air and we were lucky enough to buckle up for a 20-minute seaplane flight over the city.

Taking off from Dubai Creek, the lifeblood of old Dubai, we also got a bird's-eye view of The World, a project even more fanciful than The

It's a vast collection of artificial islands in the approximate shape of a map of the world, although so far only a few have been developed.

Then we flew over the iconic Burj Al Arab, a 'seven-star' hotel on its own man-made island that's shaped like a billowing sail, with curves in all the right places.

At 321m, it is higher than the Eiffel ower and until 2007 it was the tallest hotel in the world. Its helipad and restaurant seem suspended in

Flying at an altitude of around





450m, we were still nearly 400m below the tip of the Burj Khalifa, easily the world's tallest building with 160 floors.

Its needle-like outline soars high above the many other skyscrapers in Downtown Dubai, acting as a symbol of the city's towering

We also flew over the world renowned OE2 cruise ship which will soon re-open its doors as a ment and hotel floating enter

Finally, we swooped around the golden Dubai Frame, the city's newest attraction, which is 150m high and 93m wide, with a glass walkway on top.

The plane landed parallel to the

beautifully manicured Dubai Creek

■ ADRIAN CAFFERY flew with

Emirates to Dubai on board a

double-decker Airbus A380-

800, which seats up to 644

passengers. Emirates has its

International, exclusively for its

Manchester, Newcastle, London

and Dublin. It was voted "Best

TripAdvisor Travellers' Awards

Airline in the World" in the

passengers. You can fly there

own terminal in Dubai

direct from Birmingham.

GETTING THERE

Golf Club with its huge, modernist club house inspired by the sails of a traditional boat.

Opened in 2011, the Jumeirah Zabeel Saray hotel is designed in the style of an Arabian palace, and my After our flight we took the 'deluxe' room came with a marble short taxi ride to the gold souk in Deira which, with 100 bath so deep, long and wide that it shops, gives even took forever to fill. Looking back across the water Birmingham's Jewellery from my balcony, I could see some

Quarter a run for its money. Amid all the bling you can't miss the Najmat Taiba (Star of Taiba) ring, which weighs 63kg and is made up of 58kg of 21 carat gold and 5kg of precious

Too big for even the BFG's fingers, if Dubai ever produced a world champion heavyweight boxer, I can imagine him using the ring as his

Not far from the souk is the Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding, most useful in a place where 90% of the population are ex-pats.

We joined visitors of many different nationalities for a traditional buffet lunch while our host fielded questions about Emerati culture, customs and

At the end of a busy day it was nice to return to the luxurious Jumeirah Zabeel Sarav hotel, which

Entertainment" 13 years running

and "World's Best Inflight

at the Skytrax World Airline

Awards There's in-flight wi-fi

and passengers can take their

pick from thousands of movies

and TV shows, listen to all their

favourite music or play games.

below the plane, plus read-outs

of speed and altitude, it feels

like you're in a flight simulator

And with live feeds from

cameras placed on top and

There are no fewer than 42 treatment rooms. Treatments cost extra and the most expensive includes a facial which incorporates a 24-carat gold chain mail mask. I spent the following day on the

has the ability to make all its guests

Ât 210m high, The Dubai Eye is a

London Eye and will be able to carry

1,400 passengers at a time when it

skyscrapers of Dubai Marina (which

The hotel has eight show-stopping

restaurants offering signature dishes

cinema, a kids' club with mini water

But the jewel in its opulent crown

park, and shops in the 'avenue of

is the spectacular Talise Ottoman

Spa, where guests are free to use the

salt water pool, the Jacuzzis, saunas,

steam rooms and snow room - ves.

whopping 75m taller than The

opens at the end of the year.

I could also marvel at the

until 10 years ago was desert)

including one which twists

impossibly through 90 degrees.

from around the world, plus a

indulgence'.

there's snow in it!

feel like sheikhs.

impressive sights.

hotel's private beach and in its huge infinity pool, then walked some of the boardwalk that stretches the 11km length of The Palm's crescents.

That evening, we watched a stunning show in a purpose-built theatre called La Perle, which takes the best of traditional and modern circus and gives it a fresh twist.

Using 2.7 million litres of water, there are some jaw-dropping aerial and aquatic stunts and no fewer



■ JUMEIRAH ZABEEL **SARAY:** Rooms start at approx £240 per room on a bed and breakfast basis. Visit iumeirah. com/en/ hotels-

■ PIERCHIC: A three-course sunset dinner costs approx £80. Visit pierchic.com

■ LA PERLE: Tickets start from

£82. Visit **laperle.com** or email boxoffice@laperle.com

■ **SEAWINGS:** Flights over Dubai start at approx £225 per person. Visit seawings.ae

■ For more information on Dubai see visitdubai.com/en-uk

■ For more on the SMCCU visit cultures.ae

than five motorcycle stunt riders in **ALL ABOARD FOR EUROPE** a 'Globe of Death'.

After the show we made tracks for the coast, where the ultimate in romantic meals awaited us at Dubai's premier seafood and Mediterranean restaurant.

Pierchic is at the end of its own lengthy wooden pier and offers close up views of the Burj Al Arab hotel, which come nightfall glows every colour of the rainbow.

Perhaps it was the views (or the fancy cocktails) but it genuinely felt ike I was having the best meal of my life (apart from all those cooked by my wife, of course).

It was the perfect end to a couple of eye-popping days in Dubai, days in which we'd barely scratched the surface of what it has to offer. There is so much more to discover in the city of Guinness World Records



IGLU CRUISE (iglucruise.com; 0203 733 5557) offers a 14-night voyage onboard MSC Cruises' Magnifica from £901 per person (full board) sailing from Southampton on June 25.

The trip includes an overnight onboard in Amsterdam and stop-offs in Le Havre, Porto. Lisbon, Cadiz, Malaga, La Coruna and Hamburg.

Or head to the Mediterranean on a seven-night fly cruise onboard Marella Cruises' Thomson Dream from just £774 per person (full board) flying from Bournemouth on July 3.

The trip includes all tips and exclusive discounts and stop-offs in Palma, Trapani, Sorrento, Rome, Ajaccio and Palamos.