A Tourism Strategy for Greater Manchester 2008 - 2013

We are each of us tourists in the original modern city.
1. It’s all about us

Our tourism challenge is to create a City that delivers a better quality of life for the three million people who live or work here. It’s as simple as that.

If we build a destination that is fit for us, the people of Greater Manchester*, then we will create a future City that will attract people from all over the world, particularly those with a thirst for discovery.

A City to be proud of
If our quality of life is improved, if our physical environment is transformed and if we are inspired by all that surrounds us in the form of culture, entertainment, food and services, then we will have a City Region to be proud of and one that attracts great minds and great businesses as well as a new, global tourism market.

Building the Original Modern brand**
More than that, a better tourism product and a more outward-facing industry is pivotal to Manchester’s national and international brand. Here the tourism strategy for Greater Manchester is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Original Modern vision for Manchester.

We must ensure that our visitor destinations, our hotels, our galleries and theatres and bars and restaurants are all striving to be original, and modern, in everything they do and seek to do.

We must build a better Manchester ‘product’ to increase business-related tourism in particular and to secure the continued flow of investment that our City Region needs, and deserves, to stay ahead.

A partnership for Tourism
This strategy has been drafted by Visit Manchester in collaboration with its partners across the City Region and wider Northwest. It will be delivered by an associated action plan.

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*This strategy refers regularly to Greater Manchester and to the ‘Manchester City Region’ which is a wider definition taking in additional ‘drive to work’ areas such as Macclesfield or Glossop. When reading this strategy, the terms should to a large degree be considered interchangeable.

**Original Modern is the brand vision for the Manchester City Region. This vision calls on the first industrial City to once again be original and modern in all that it does and seeks to do; it calls to mind the fact that we shaped the world once and will do so again.
2. A revolution in basic standards

So how do we embark on this journey? The current strategies for tourism in the United Kingdom and in particular in England’s Northwest (see below), reveal the baseline for our sector’s improved performance.

They are an ideal ‘tick list’ for improvement that we should keep at hand if we are to reach a minimum standard expected by visitors, be they local or global. They are the ‘basic standards’ package that you should expect of any decent visitor destination.

Northwest Tourism Strategy:
Strategic Aims

Enhanced communication with the region’s visitors;
2 Higher levels of productivity and performance from the businesses operating in the visitor economy;
3 Improved products and higher quality experiences for all of the visitors to the region;
4 For the people who work in the visitor economy to have, and to be using, improved levels of skill;
5 An improved infrastructure for the visitor economy;
6 For all activity related to tourism and the visitor economy to be based on the principles of sustainable development.

Delivering against existing regional strategies.

In practical terms this means that the City Region’s first strategic step in tourism development should be the sound delivery of the aims set out in the wider region’s recently revised Tourism Strategy.

These aims include: providing high quality service; having prize winning hotels and accommodation; good food and drink, sourced locally where possible; a transformed public realm that shows high levels of design quality; events and festivals that celebrate our historical, cultural and environmental diversity; a sustainable tourism sector that cares for the environment; civic pride; and genuine local and economic benefits for all our communities.

Across the key areas of our future market, our business and our product we should operationalise and deliver on the region’s tourism strategy quickly and efficiently, but we can and must go beyond the basic delivery of the above standards.

We should ‘enhance’ the region’s wider strategy for tourism by including our own package of strategic measures that are true to Manchester’s Original Modern vision.
3. Beyond basics: an Original Modern visitor destination

This strategy is not, then, about incremental improvements in performance and the delivery of a package of basic improvements in standards: it is about drive and differentiation.

We need to aim for something more if we’re going to move beyond domestic and regional markets in a serious way. In order to unlock a bigger global audience for our Original Modern City we need more iconic developments and a new level of “buzz” around our City Region as well as an across-the-board revolution in standards and quality.

An Original Modern tourism strategy will build on the solid delivery of the region’s tourism strategy to drive and differentiate Greater Manchester’s tourism offer in order to:

1. Create globally recognised and iconic events, developments, initiatives and opportunities;
2. Ensure a better quality of life for the communities of Greater Manchester and the wider City Region;
3. Make the practices of the City Region’s tourism sector a key plank of delivering against the Original Modern brand vision;
4. Tackle the tough issues like wider community benefits through tourism; accessibility and diversity; a more inclusive nighttime economy;
5. Embark on a “blue-skies” strand of long range thinking that explores issues such as technological change, demographic shifts and environmental sustainability.

Iconic developments, events and people.

The iconic developments we need are not necessarily just buildings or places. They could be events, or people, or collectives. We have to build a global image of Manchester that unlocks desire and interest, built around themes that we know are true to our city: industry, innovation, pop culture, sport, radicalism and independence.

And we already have good examples of these icons. The Manchester International Festival is one such icon that has broken away from our existing visitor patterns. We also have niche offerings such as Manchester Pride and In The City. There is the Imperial War Museum North and of course the enduring allure of our global sporting brands.

Some developments in the pipeline are already set to deliver against this call for icons of the future. Mediacity:uk and the move of the BBC to the North is of pivotal importance in terms of domestic market growth, business tourism and Manchester’s brand; the investment plans for a host of venues, from the bold ideas set out for the Museum of Science and Industry or Oxford Road to the equally important enhancements of places like Chetham’s School of Music or Whitworth Art Gallery. There are also plans - linked to Greater Manchester’s bid into the Transport Innovation Fund - for a revolution in public transport and, potentially, cycling across the City.

Fostering the iconic, the independent and the unexpected will require a campaign around “hearts and minds” that shows the sector what it really means to be an original modern hotel, restaurant, venue or transport company. It will mean taking the sector on a journey.
Meeting expectations.
Once desire has been triggered, Manchester has to make good on the expectations it has built and here again come in those basic standards: customer service, information, facilities, public realm, food, ease of getting around, atmosphere and buzz. If we fail to meet the expectations we have raised we will do more harm than good, as there is no more powerful force in modern day communications than word of mouth and personal endorsements. We also need to meet expectations from the earliest possible moments. If we are building a tourism opportunity around a business traveller or conference delegate for example, the experience from arriving at the airport and throughout the stay has to be of a much higher quality; visitor services have to outperform completely; the information needs to be strong and compelling.

Empowering the sector to fully engage.
Building global icons on top of an improvement in our basic standards will mean empowering tourism departments and associations across the City Region to tell the industry and their colleagues where there are radical levels of improvements needed. The tourism teams across the City Region know the scale of the task and they know what needs to be done to turn things around. They need to be given a voice.

There is a genuine trick to be played here. If our tourism vision for the future - which is all about our own quality of life as well as new visitors - is to succeed then we need the cultural, tourism and arts sectors working hand-in-hand with planners, developers and major institutions in a genuine spirit of partnership.

A competitive game.
Why should we do this, particularly when all of the trends show Manchester to already be benefiting from increased visitor numbers? Because doing nothing is not an option and because the competition is set to get tighter in the years ahead, as a renaissance sweeps through the UK’s other core cities and as urban markets across Europe raise their game and begin to attract high levels of visitor numbers.

This is an important and fundamental principle. "Renaissance Manchester" can only be a relevant story for so long and only appeals to a limited market and audience. Other cities can and will compete with us. We need to consistently innovate and improve to stay ahead.

That drive to stay ahead will require investment. There will need to be investment in infrastructure and in particular transport, but we also need to help some of our major venues and attractions to reinvent themselves for a new and more competitive 21st Century.

And don’t forget, this investment will benefit everyone in the City Region. This revolution is for us, as well as for our visitors.
4. A better quality of life, for all of Greater Manchester

So is this a strategy for the City Centre only? Absolutely not.

Marketing and developing the visitor economy is not just a major opportunity for City Centre attractions and businesses. Across the wider City Region there are a number of strategic opportunities to be seized.

Fundamentally, there is a significant domestic market to be grasped. Here the development of a local, high quality day visit and overnight stay market could be unlocked that offers a real alternative to short breaks overseas. This opportunity applies equally to all ten Local Authority areas across Greater Manchester.

Economic growth, wellbeing and a better environment.

Developing and delivering this alternative would have economic benefits for the City Region but would also have benefits in terms of environmental sustainability. There are other benefits too, such as unlocking our citizens from the stultifying grip of the sofa and boosting physical activity, health and mental wellbeing. The quality of urban space, street trees, public art, an enthralling public realm: all of these should be improved as part of our battle to unlock the closest and most readily available market: ourselves.

Again this is an area where tourism can be a powerful player in terms of delivering a greater good. Manchester and the wider Northwest has genuinely challenging levels of obesity, heart disease and ill-health; a better visitor and leisure product is needed here too, a product that is so compulsive that you simply have to switch off the TV, put down the fried drumstick and get out and enjoy it.

So the message outlined earlier in this paper, that our quality of life across the City Region must come first if we are to attract a renewed global market, is also of pivotal importance across the districts of Greater Manchester. We must do it better for ourselves and only then will we know we have a product to be proud of.

Major challenges for local tourism businesses.

The pivotal challenge for local visitor destinations across the wider City Region? To accept that with a few exceptions theirs is not an international or business tourism market but a domestic leisure offer. Most understand their audiences well enough but there is still a tendency to forget that there are only a handful of internationally recognised ‘attack’ brands across the region and that the best business strategy is to produce a great local product for local and regional markets.

Extending stays and working together.

This means developing more “mini-dispersal” or themed promotions. Grouping attractions together to make a day of it. Becoming the sum of the parts. It sounds simple but it is not happening enough at the moment and will require new levels of partnership working and a much better understanding of who the visitor is.

We need to see a sustained push to increase levels of accessibility and quality across the entire City Region, using the standards set out in the Northwest’s wider tourism strategy as a starting point.
5. First challenges: better productivity, better transport and a new kind of ‘nightlife’

We need to move our destinations and businesses up the value chain and we need to do this for two simple reasons.

First of all we need to start competing more aggressively with the short breaks market overseas and this means we need to offer more at each and every location.

Secondly we need to ensure that we make more out of the visitors we have; could we extend their visit to include lunch somewhere? Could we spin out a visit to include a second local destination? Would they like to go shopping?

There needs to be more ambition in local product development, an ambition that should go beyond large-scale bids for set-piece architectural marvels and into innovative curatorial approaches; unexpected menus; new and groundbreaking events.

The business of tourism needs to improve across a range of standard areas including customer service levels, environmental sustainability, accessibility and diversity, better marketing and promotion and higher levels of profitability. This step change in business performance is part of the ‘basic standards’ package of improvements, referred to above, that we should be seeking to address.

And we need to understand that some aspects of the cultural life in our City and town centres do not currently offer the kind of experience we are trying to engender to encourage more visits from key segments such as ‘cosmopolitans’ or ‘empty-nesters’. Of particular concern must be the late-night experience of the City Centre at weekends, where there is a distinct lack of diversity in visitors and a perception that the Centre is the preserve only of 18-30 year olds who are interested in clubbing, drinking and coping off. Whether a truth or reality, this is a perception that Manchester shares with many other UK City Centres and which could stand in the way of developing a more diversified weekend audience.

Finally there is a widely-agreed need to take a fresh look at our public realm and explore how we can create a greener urban experience with greater levels of design quality and a renewed focus on art, interpretation and animation.

The big challenges on our ‘to-do list’.

A couple of significant issues remain to be resolved and are at the very top of our ‘to-do’ list. These are our first challenges and more will no doubt follow, but immediate action should include:

Connectivity, good public transport links right across the City Region and a genuine reason to leave the car at home are all pivotal in securing a high quality visitor experience both for us and for those who are new to the City. Here the tourism sector will find itself stood alongside those calling for a revolution in public transport, a £3billion investment in trams, buses and better rail, and a limited congestion charge. Of particular interest to our sector will be an easier and more integrated approach to ticketing.
6. What we’re going to do about it

The next steps for the City Region’s tourism sector?

This document sets out a strategy only and does not seek to confuse by blurring the lines between strategy and action; neither has it revisited an extensive evidence base on visitor profiles and feedback which both Visit Manchester and the Northwest Regional Development Agency have been amassing.

To deliver this strategy there is an action plan, the Destination Management Plan which clearly sets out a role for the key players in a transformed visitor experience: local authorities, businesses and employees, residents, transport providers, other agencies. There will also be a distinct role for the City Centre’s management company, Cityco, and the Marketing Co-ordination Unit at Marketing Manchester.

A series of SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) will be set as part of our Destination Management Plan, based around an evidence base that reflects the strategy outlined above and that touches on more than just visitor numbers but that includes brand profile, perceptions, sustainability, quality of life and profitability.

A split-level action plan.

There are two distinct tiers to our action plan which sit within our key priorities.

The first will show how we plan to deliver our ‘basic standards’ revolution following closely the aims of our regional and national tourism strategies. This revolution will include a measurable shift in performance for businesses within the sector.

The second - and probably the more important - will embrace the iconic and globally-relevant developments that we wish to see to ensure that Manchester is a place worth visiting, wherever in the world you come from. We will keep a keen eye on whether our challenge is to shift outdated perceptions, or improve part of our product.

This second tier of actions is tourism’s response to the Original Modern vision and it is entirely intertwined with other important strategies from the Community strategy, to Local Area Agreements, Multi Area Agreements to key masterplans and development projects.

Working in partnership.

An honest and robust dialogue needs to be established and continued between those who understand our visitor economy and the businesses, agencies and organisations who have a central role to play in improving key aspects of that experience from cleanliness to transport to urban design: specific groups and organisations to be involved including planners, the transport sector, local authorities and our city centre management organisations.

Blue skies thinking.

And finally there needs to be some space for dreaming. There should be a series of visitor futures explored, perhaps through some blue-skies think tank sessions, that helps the sector and its representatives to get a more substantial grip on the tourism market of the future and what kind of a City Region we should be creating as the 21st Century gets into its stride.

Some big ideas that arose during the strategy’s creation can be found in Appendix 2, and Appendix 3 lists Monocle’s Recipe for Cities.
Selected glossary

Attack Brands: A terminology used in the Northwest Tourism Strategy, the phrase refers to those destinations or tourism assets - that have significant international appeal - Manchester, Liverpool, the Lake District and Chester.

City Region: Manchester, Greater Manchester and the ‘Manchester City Region’ are all often used interchangeably in key strategies pertaining to the 10 local authority areas of Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan. Greater Manchester is the administrative area covered by the 10 local authorities; the City Region is an economic development term used to widen this area to include additional ‘drive to work’ areas such as Macclesfield or Glossop. Manchester is both the local authority area covered by Manchester City Council and the key branded term used when marketing the City Region both nationally and internationally.

Community Strategy: The Manchester Community Strategy 2002-2012 is the guiding strategy for the city. It sets out the long-term vision for Manchester and states the high level priorities that need to be addressed. The current Community Strategy is under review. The updated document will include a refocused ‘vision’ and a three year action plan (Local Area Agreement). The Community Strategy’s aim is to improve the quality of life of Manchester’s residents and create neighbourhoods where people choose to live.

Core cities: The English Core Cities Group is an association of eight large regional cities in England: Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne and Nottingham. The group was established in 1996 as a partnership of seven cities and was joined by Nottingham in 2001. The cities have come together to promote their common interests as the major cities in the English regions outside London.

Cosmopolitans: A term used in the ArkLeisure market segmentation model for tourism. These people are independent, active risk-takers who seek both intellectual and physical challenges. They enjoy trying new things and experiences, especially with regards to technology, and have an appreciation of art and culture. Cosmopolitans make up 15.2% of the population and they have the highest ethnic representation of all segments (18%). They are relatively young (over 40% are under 35), however the mean age is 42 and there is good representation across most age bands.

Dispersal: This is a piece of tourism terminology that describes a strategy to target tourists visiting popular ‘honeypot’ sites with marketing that could disperse them to a wider range of destinations in a given area, potentially extending their stay and enhancing their economic impact.

Empty-nesters: This is another market segmentation term that refers to families where the children have left home and where family income is at a peak resulting in an increased interest in travel, cruises, vacation. This market segment may also have an increased level of time available if the head of household has retired.

Visit Manchester: The tourist board for Greater Manchester, a subsidiary of Marketing Manchester.

Original Modern: Original Modern is the brand vision for the Manchester City Region. This vision calls on the first industrial City to once again be original and modern in all that it does and seeks to do; it calls to mind the fact that we shaped the world once and will do so again.

Public Realm: All areas to which the public has open access. Often used in reference to urban design and the built environment.

Sustainable tourism: Sustainable tourism attempts to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems. It is responsible tourism that is both ecologically and culturally sensitive.

Visitor Economy: The term Visitor Economy is increasingly being used in the marketing of tourism destinations. The word ‘visitor’ is a simpler and more inclusive one than either tourism or tourist, while the reference to economy focuses attention on the importance and perhaps seriousness of what is referred to.

Appendix 1
Regional priorities and an Original Modern destination.

An Original Modern tourism strategy will build on the solid delivery of the region’s tourism strategy to drive and differentiate Greater Manchester’s tourism offer to:

1. Create globally recognised and iconic events, developments, initiatives and opportunities;
2. Ensure a better quality of life for the communities of Greater Manchester;
3. Make the practices of the City Region’s tourism sector a key plank of delivering against the Original Modern brand vision;
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Northwest Tourism Strategy:

Visitor Experience Objectives

1. Productivity, Performance & Quality - Help businesses improve their performance and the quality of the products and services that they provide; Stimulate competition, and; Overcome barriers to higher productivity, performance and quality.
2. Superior Skills - Improve the skills of our workforce and the attractiveness of our sector as an employer.
3. Sense of Place - Improve our public realm, and the built and natural environment.
4. Signature Projects - Support and encourage projects that will transform the region’s appeal to visitors.
5. Signature Events - Support and encourage a programme of sustainable events of national and international significance.
6. Easy Access - Make it easier for visitors to get to, and travel around, the region.

Attracting visitor objectives

1. The Attack Brand Approach
2. The Power of Information
Appendix 2
Key points to consider.

In five years time we will be... building a new city park... celebrating the Manchester school of urbanism... making Oxford Road a key part of our offer... transforming our public transport system...

Our visitors... what kind of a shift do we want to make? If our current visitor has muso ears, a bellyfull of beer and some feet that itch for football, what does our future mutant visitor look like? Are they spending enough and could they spend more? Are they happy?

In our nature... we shouldn’t be afraid of an urban offer but we must recognise that countryside and three National Parks are a core part of the brand that is Manchester... we’re a gateway to England’s finest landscapes... you can see hills from every side... this is part of our quality of life... it is what could turn a business visitor into a tourist.

A visitor is... staying with friends or relatives... attending a conference... a football fan... coming to an art festival... shopping... you and I.

The bigger picture is... our own quality of life... our city brand... engaging the rest of the City... building productivity... an ‘Events in Manchester’ Facebook group

We need a cultural concierge - an automated way for every audience to say ‘yes’

There are gaps to be bridged between communities: the visitor economy should include the many and not the few, it should increase 'cultural entitlement' and community cohesion.

Appendix 3
Monocle’s recipe for cities

Monocle
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City slickers - Top 25 urban design

Preface
It’s not necessarily the billion-euro development, star-architect-designed gallery or shiny new ferris wheel that makes locals feel good about their town. Monocle believes that the measure of a city is more about everyday wonders - pavements, well-designed schools, punctual transport - rather than one-off, grand projects. Here’s our list of the top 25 urban elements that make the city.

01 Airport road
Singapore
It’s remarkable how many cities pay so little attention to the key arteries leading to and from their major transport hubs. As first impressions count for everything, getting this right goes a long way towards making residents feel happy they’re home and potential investors pull out their chequebooks. Singapore understands the business of first impressions better than any other city. Its ultra-lush landscaping from Changi is testimony to this.

02 Street clocks
Prague, Czech Republic

03 Bike lockers
Chicago, USA
For many Chicago commuters the landmark of the $500m (€371m) Millennium Park is the bicycle station quietly tucked away in a corner. The two-level McDonald’s Cycle Center provides indoor storage for 300 bicycles, lockers and private showers with towel service. Built with federal funds, the park sold the naming rights to McDonald’s last year, which will cover the station’s operating costs for the next 50 years.

04 Outdoor cinemas
Athens, Greece
The Athenians know how to do cinema, but eschew velvet seats, popcorn and surround sound for the simple sophistication of gravel under foot, the scent of honeysuckle and jasmine, cold Mythos, sunflower seeds and moonlight. On sweltering summer nights, book your canvas director’s chairs in one of Athens’s 60 or so Therini Kinematografi and join the cicadas experiencing the stars beneath the stars.

05 Trams
Various cities, Europe
There’s something quite magical about watching trams in Barcelona, Strasbourg or Frankfurt glide silently along beds of grass as they do their city circuit. Where possible, this attractive combination of efficient public transport and inspired landscaping should be standard as part of the urban fabric.

06 Well-designed apartments
Steinhausen, Switzerland
The high-rise gets the Swiss treatment. In Steinhausen, Switzerland, architectural firm Schellin-Syfrig + Partner has designed minimalist apartment blocks constructed from red cedar wood. While other cities continue to build Identikit 1970s-inspired blocks, these point to an alternative and more satisfying direction for apartment living.
Appendix 3
Monocle’s recipe for cities (cont)

07 Urban landscaping
Melbourne, Australia
Whether it’s for skating, cycling, jogging or simply taking a stroll at dusk we always hunt out a bustling riverfront. Melbourne brings the focus back towards its waters with the new Birrarung Marr park located on the north bank of the Yarra river, adjacent to Federation Square. With landscaping by Taylor Cullity Lethlean and Paul Thompson, heritage-listed elms and native flora are brought right back into the city - something Monocle thinks can only be a good thing.

08 Child’s play
Tokyo, Japan
Japanese convenience- store Lawson is diversifying with new brands Natural Lawson, Lawson 100 and Lawson Plus. The latest is Happy Lawson in Tokyo’s Nihonbashi district, which is aimed at parents of small children. This child-friendly convenience store sells food, toys and books and offers up to two hours of childcare.

09 Summer houses
Copenhagen, Denmark
The rise of all-inclusive package tours in the 1970s almost killed off the garden allotments that are a fixture in cities across Europe. With three weeks in the Canaries affordable to the masses, a patch of vegetables surrounded by a few apple trees and a tiny house no longer looked so attractive. Today, the vegetables surrounded by a few apple trees and a tiny house no longer looked so attractive. Today, the concept of grow-your-own and holidaying closer to home has made garden allotments the height of modernity and Copenhagen’s sturdy little colony houses a benchmark for sustainable community planning.

10 Green space projects
New York, US
Until recently, few people thought of the High Line, an abandoned subway track snaking through the West Side of Manhattan 9m above the ground, as anything other than ruins. Now the 2.4km of track is set to become an elevated park, spanning Chelsea and the Meatpacking District. Developers are already starting to move into the area - expect more apartments, restaurants and offices to appear shortly.

11 Fire station
Gelsenkirchen, Germany
Every city could use an iconic fire station - the simple things done well mark out a great urban environment. Designed by Boje Lindner Architects, this fire station can be found at Gelsenkirchen, in the north of Germany. The two-storey building features a modernist design, black concrete exterior and glass paneling. The gym, bedrooms and roof patios add a domestic touch.

12 Public loos
Tokyo, Japan
The public lavatories at Tokyo’s Omotesando Hills centre prove that even the humblest of amenities deserve attention from the world’s top architects. Designed by Tadao Ando with an opaque glass front, they glow like a lantern at night and more than hold their own in a street lined with buildings by famous architects.

13 Wi-Fi hot spots
Málaga, Spain
We’ve had enough of running around cities trying to find a Wi-Fi hotspot. Call this a business town? That’s why we salute Málaga and its ambitions to become the most Wi-Fi enabled city in the world. With the help of telecoms company FON España, it plans to have free access in over 80 per cent of the city by the end of the year.

14 Perfect park I
Stockholm, Sweden
Nestled in the heart of Stockholm but somehow slightly removed at the same time, Djurgården is a bit of country in the city with the added attraction of a zoo, restrained theme park, stately residences and cozy cottages. At once wild and perfectly manicured, it’s the best park we know for an after-work picnic, a Saturday afternoon in the long grass or an evening stroll in late September.

15 A modernist mall
Miami, USA
If malls are going to continue to be a feature of sprawling suburbs then they should take inspiration from the best. Bal Harbour Shops north of Miami continues to win awards for its great management and tenant mix - Bottega Veneta, Saks, Tod’s and Chloé. Launched in 1965, it has become a modernist masterpiece by preserving its typography, fountains and art. With its abundance of greenery and outdoor concept (no air-con in the common spaces) it was eco-chic long before the term was invented.

16 City swimming
Copenhagen, Denmark
Taking a dip in cool waters is one of the loveliest ways to shake off those frustrating, chaotic city days. The Kasrtrup Sea Bath in Copenhagen, designed by White Architects, is a soothing wooden structure featuring a long jetty that culminates in a gentle arc-shaped swimming and diving platform.

17 Perfect park II
London, UK
London has lots of parks but none is as beautiful as Regent’s Park, designed by the architect John Nash in 1811. There are over 166 hectares of boating lakes, nature reserves, rose gardens and football pitches. But we love it for an early morning jog when it can feel like you have a huge slice of London all to yourself - well, apart from the carrels, monkeys and kangaroos nodding at you from their enclosures in adjacent London Zoo.

18 Covered market
Barcelona, Spain
There is nothing quite as inspiring as doing your weekly shopping at a local, colourful and chaotic city market. Barcelona gets it right again with the Santa Caterina market, recently refurbished with a riotous design by Benedetta Tagliabue and Enric Miralles.

19 Police boxes
Tokyo, Japan
No matter where you are in central Tokyo, you’re never far from the nearest police box, or koban. Named by at least two policemen, the koban is community policing in action - the place to go in emergencies or simply for directions. Look out for the police issue Bridgestone bikes and the koban sign with kawaii (cute) mouse Pi-Po, the mascot of the Tokyo Police.

20 Cosy high street
Sydney, Australia
Sydney’s not blessed with many great shopping areas - witness what’s become of poor Double Bay. But the mini high street of Plumer Road is a beacon. The low red-brick buildings have a welcoming post-school buzz when children gather to buy sweets and mums pull up in BMW X5s to pick up roast chicken for their dinner tables in Vaucluse. At weekends locals walk down to grab coffees and papers. Plumer Road works because it’s compact and has all the shops and services you need.

21 Signage
Berlin, Germany
As we’re not getting any younger and taxi drivers tend not to be from the city they happen to be driving in, the easier it is to read the numbers on the outside of a building the better. Berlin (in fact many German cities) make illuminated numbers a standard feature on offices, apartment blocks and single family residences. In our dream city, we’d make it part of the building code and enforce it rigorously.
Appendix 3
Monocle’s recipe for cities (cont)

22
Railway station
Filisur, Switzerland
There’s no excuse for suburban platforms to be unwelcoming places to wait for a connection to the city centre. For authorities short on design inspiration, a trip on the Rhätische Bahn between Chur and St Moritz is a good place to start. The tiny station at Filisur shows what can happen when you reduce a project to the essentials - good materials, superior construction and smart design. The wood, concrete and steel structure fits perfectly with the Alpine setting but would work as well in the suburbs of Busan.

23
Street seating
Barcelona, Spain
Every city needs functional, high-quality seating from which to watch the world go by. Monocle is a fan of Barcelona’s robust and iconic benches. Find these scattered throughout the city’s streets and public squares and take time out to enjoy the view.

24
Bridge
Paris, France
With its undulating pathway and 12m-wide plaza suspended above the Seine, the Simone de Beauvoir footbridge in Paris, designed by Feichtinger Architects, joins the recently redeveloped Bercy district on the Right Bank to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France on the Left, offering a scenic and relaxing way to experience the city.

25
Seamless integration
Tokyo, Japan
Japan is leading the way in imaginative mixed-use developments. One of the latest is Tokyo Midtown, a €2.23bn retail, office and apartment complex. Along with carefully selected restaurants and fashion stores - no tacky chains here - it also offers first-rate food shopping and a 24-hour supermarket. There’s a cultural element too, in the Suntory Museum, and a design exhibition centre.