

## Anja De Haen

After her studies in Tourism and in Marketing, Anja moved to Florida for a few years, where she worked for DMC's such as AmericanTours International and Travalco. She started her career as a local hostess, became a tour guide on multilingual trips through the Sunshine State and ended her American Adventure by organizing incentives in the Southern States of the US.

In 1995 she moved back to Belgium and got a job with Belgium International Travel, now BCD Travel, where she started within the DMC department and later on moved to the outbound Incentive Department. In January 2009, she became Head of MICE Benelux.

Anja lives close to Antwerp, a melting pot of different cultures... and different tastes. In her opinion, there simply is no better place than Antwerp when it comes to wining and dining!

## Anja De Haen's favorites:

### A real Quick Bite:

Call me a betrayer, but I simply love the fries of Bram Ladage in the Netherlands. (watch the YouTube clip, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6vNr3YRZOc&NR=1> ) Definitely when they are served as "Patatje Oorlog": a paper cone, fries, mayonnaise and... peanut sauce! Simply delicious!

### A Quick Bite:

I am a big fan of oriental food! Lucy Chang (Antwerp, Brasschaat & Knokke) - <http://www.lucychang.com/> - offers traditional and less traditional dishes from Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, Laos and China at very reasonable prices. The restaurant guarantees a professional and quick service, ideal for a quick bite! Another tasteful "quickie" is a "Spaghetti Bolognaise" at Den Trol (a nice brown café) in Schoten. <http://www.dentrol.be/>

### A Serious Tête à Tête:

An Antwerp Classic: Huis de Colvenier, - <http://www.colvenier.be/> - located in a beautiful Patrician House in the St-Antoniusstraat. Patrick, the chef, only works with fresh products and the menu changes almost daily, depending on what's on the market! An absolute must is a glass of champagne in the wine cellar to start with, while putting together your menu with the chef himself! I also like "Off Course" (on the left bank of the river Scheldt), Bitterpeeën - <http://www.bitterpeeen.be/> - at the IJzerlaan and Magma - <http://www.resto.be/ware/sendto.jsp?businessid=11642&lg=EN> - on the Vlaamse Kaai. Only to name a few, there are so many more!

### Business, Business, Business:

Since our offices are located in Mechelen, most business lunches take place in the City of the Maneblussers (moon extinguishers). Depending on the occasion, I either go to Brasserie Passade - <http://www.passade.be/> - , Brasserie Maroon or Brasserie L'Infini. Nice drinks, good quality food and not too expensive!

**When I travel abroad:**

If travels take me to the Netherlands, I always fancy a nice “Indonesian Rijsttafel” (rice table). My preferred Indonesian restaurant is Raden Mas - <http://www.amsterdam-eating.com/13753.htm> -, with locations in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Scheveningen.

When in Paris, I have to have dinner at the Grand Café Capucines - <http://www.legrandcafe.com/> . Rather touristic, I know, but to my recollection, it’s the first restaurant my parents took me to in the City of Lights, and it brings back nice memories. Furthermore, I simply adore its Art Déco interior and its fantastic seafood platters. Brasserie Bofinger - <http://www.bofingerparis.com/> - near the Place de la Bastille is another favorite. The restaurant just breathes history. If only its walls could speak... And when I am on vacation in more exotic places, I always look for small restaurants filled with locals. If they eat there, it has to be good!

**Some other favorites:****Hotel:**

In a previous life, I spent my honeymoon in French Polynesia. Le Méridien Bora Bora - <http://www.starwoodhotels.com/lemeridien/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=1905> - was truly awesome, and our over-water bungalow with its glass-bottomed floor was the absolute summit of luxury!

Since then, my job has allowed me to travel extensively and I have had the opportunity to stay in a variety of interesting hotels. As far as luxury goes, I much enjoyed staying at the Delano on Miami Beach - <http://www.delano-hotel.com/#/ho> -, the Al Bustan Palace in Oman - <http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/intercontinental/en/gb/locations/overview/muscat-albustanpalace> -, the Sossusvlei Lodge in Namibia - <http://www.sossusvlei-namibia.com/> -, the Oberoi Amar Villas in Agra - <http://www.amarvilas.com/Hotel/Hotel-Overview.aspx> -, the Alila Ubud on Bali - <http://www.alilahotels.com/Ubud/> -, the Ivory Tree Lodge in South-Africa - <http://www.ivorytreegamelodge.com/> and the W Times Square in New York - <http://w-new-york-timessquare.hotel-rv.com/index.htm?l=yl> .

However, the best sleeping experience I ever had was in an ice room at the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi (Sweden) - [http://www.scantours.com/ice\\_hotel.htm](http://www.scantours.com/ice_hotel.htm) -. Never slept better! And no, it was not the ABSOLUTE VODKA... (but probably the combination of the sound-proofing snow walls of the room and the exhaustion after a day of snow and ice activities!)

**Cities:**

New York and Paris.

**Countries:**

Spring in Namibia, summer in France, fall in India, winter in Lapland.

**Venue:**

Let's go back to Antwerp: La Riva - <http://www.lariva.be/> -, a multifunctional venue in a renovated historical building in the fashionable quarter of "Het Eilandje" (the small island).

**Best kept MICE secret:**

There are so many... Let's keep them secret!

**MICE personality:**

I am a big fan of Hilmar Tonnemacher of 'Abenteuer Afrika Safari' in Namibia - [http://www.dmc.travel/dmc\\_news.php?xdmc=69&xregion=2](http://www.dmc.travel/dmc_news.php?xdmc=69&xregion=2) -. His enthusiasm about the country, his knowledge about its possibilities, his hunger to create new adventures... To me, Hilmar is the personification of the country. Namibia could simply not wish for a better Ambassador!

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**5 likes, 5 dislikes**

**Likes:**

Motown & Disco Music from the '70 and '80  
Family & friends  
Caiperinhas & Mojitos  
Humor & Optimism  
... If you combine those, you get a hell of a party!

**And as a bonus: high heels... 😊**

**Dislikes:**

Negativism  
Hate  
Quarrels & fights  
Ironing – Thank you for those service checks!  
Red cabbage, when served warm.

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**Top 10 People I would Like to Meet or have Dinner with...**

**(and discuss their following quotes):**

1. Grace Kelly: *"As an unmarried woman, I was thought to be a danger."*
2. Jimmy Choo; *"It doesn't matter what you are wearing – if you have good shoes and a good bag, you'll look right."*
3. Cleopatra; *"I will not be triumphed over!"*
4. Walt Disney; *"If you can dream it, you can do it!"*
5. Donna Summer; *"God had to create disco music so I could be born and be successful."*
6. Catharina Zeta Jones; *"I like women who look like women. I hated grunge. No one's more feminist than me, but you don't have to look as if you don't give a - you know. You can be smart, bright, and attractive aesthetically to others - and to yourself."*

7. Walter Cronkite; *“And that's the way it is.”*
  8. Coco Chanel: *“The most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud.”*
  9. Barack Obama, *“You can put lipstick on a pig. It's still a pig.”*
  10. And... Dominic Purcell, ***just because he's a nice bit of stuff !***
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BCD Travel - <http://www.bcdtravel.be/>