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### New culinary destinations

- 1 ZAGREB**  
**Skola An**  
international menu and a colourful, funky interior (00 385 1 482 8197; www.skolaloungebar.com).
- 2 COPENHAGEN**  
**Søren K**  
A bright, white setting for a sophisticated menu (00 45 33 47 49 49; www.soerenk.dk).

- 3 BERLIN**  
**Susuru**  
Contemporary Japanese noodle kitchen (00 49 30 2 11 11 82; www.susuru.de).
- 4 BUDAPEST**  
**Baraka**  
Fine dining in hip, modern surroundings (00 36 1 483 1355; www.baraka-restaurant.hu).

## Hot courses

Restaurant tours give foodies a taste of Europe's up-and-coming gastro-hotspots

Eat chic

It was pity that drove Henrik Tidefjard to start Berlinagenten (www.berlinagenten.com), his quirky travel company that offers tours of Berlin. 'I'd see all these poor tourists hanging out on Unter den Linden and swarming the Reichstag,' he says. He felt he had to rescue them and show them the real side of the city. One of his most popular tours is the restaurant-hopping **Gastro-Rallye**, with each course at a different trendy location. Now Tidefjard has launched the concept in three other major cities with up-and-coming culinary scenes: Copenhagen, Zagreb and Budapest – cities that, as Tidefjard puts it, 'haven't been Botoxed yet'. GISELA WILLIAMS  
*Tours from €148 per person. Contact www.gastro-rallye.com*

**ANIMAL BRIGHTS**  
Bring a safari-inspired gleam to spring with a piece from Laura Tabor's new collection of silver and gold jewellery, which features elephants on cuffs (left), big cats on earrings and zebras dangling from necklaces. From £160; www.lauratabor.co.uk



## SHELF IMPROVEMENT

### Books

● Horatio Clare has already made his name as an author with two previous books, but *A Single Swallow* (Chatto, £17.99) will, I think, catapult him into the super-league of travel-writers. Clare (who has written for *Condé Nast Traveller*) follows the swallow migration from South Africa to Wales. Starting in Cape Town, we join a rollercoaster ride – mainly by car but also by boat, bus, train and motorbike – up the west coast of Africa. His trip takes him through Namibia, Zambia, Congo, Niger,

African landscapes, packed with colourful characters and incident, continue to appeal to adventurous spirits. His latest, *Assegai* (Macmillan, £18.99), does not disappoint. It picks up the story of the Courtney family, a dynasty which has seen more than its fair share of action and romance over the centuries, with Leon Courtney serving his apprenticeship as a white hunter in Kenya on the eve of World War I. Smith has taken a little-known true story of the war – that the Germans sent a Zeppelin to East



Nigeria and then across into Europe. The nature of his journey means that he goes to some pretty out-of-the-way spots, and he doesn't neglect to tell you about the girls and parties as well as the wildlife and landscape. Behind the energetic prose and the appetite for life is a weight of learning and, above all, a connoisseur's sense of language. It is as if you had those old favourites Redmond O'Hanlon, Paul Theroux and Jonathan Raban all rolled into one.

● At the age of 76, Wilbur Smith remains a master storyteller, whose epic tales of

Africa (they did, but it crashed) – and whipped it into a heady brew of passion and intrigue.

● Of other novels out this month, DJ Taylor's *Ask Alice* (Chatto, £16.99) is also worth noting. Taking us from the plains of Dakota to rural Norfolk and the drawing rooms of Mayfair, it tells the spectacular story of the rise and fall of Alice Keach, an actress-turned-society hostess who has a mysterious past. Like Taylor's previous *Kept: A Victorian Mystery*, it is a stirring tale.

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