

# editorial

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2008 is the five hundredth anniversary of the birth of the celebrated Italian architect Andrea Palladio. He is arguably the single most influential figure in the design of European cityscapes. There is a hint of Palladian style in the town square of Zamość — the picture-perfect community in eastern Poland where we brave a fearsome east wind to write this editorial. Zamość is for the future, though, as we shall feature the Polish town in our next issue. But there is the legacy of Palladio in these pages too. The architect would surely smile benignly at the nineteenth-century affection for classicist glass-topped shopping arcades. In this issue of *hidden europe* we celebrate some of the best examples of the genre: from Cardiff to Milan, from Genoa to Brussels.

But few are the readers who turn to *hidden europe* for tales from Brussels or Milan. Our forté is the rural world and remote communities — the nerve ends of Europe. And those feature aplenty in this current issue, with two Balkan essays: one on Muslim communities in central Bosnia and the other on village life in the mountains of northern Albania. Elsewhere in this issue, we stumble upon synagogues in London and the south of France. And we take time to celebrate the delights of slow trains — you know, the ones that can just fall asleep at some country railway junction and leave you to ponder for hours. We also review an extraordinary project that is breathing new life into old industrial landscapes in eastern Germany and we pause in a village in eastern Croatia, just a mile or two from the Serbian border.

We offer our special thanks to Antonia Young and Anjeza Cikopano, the joint authors of our Albanian feature. They are both first-time contributors to *hidden europe*. And we are indebted also to Peter Wortsman who, in a second essay for the magazine, writes about the threads of Jewish life in the Dauphiné and Comtat Venaissin areas of southeast France. As in previous issues of the magazine, we benefit from the goodwill of Collins Bartholomew Ltd ([www.collinsbartholomew.com](http://www.collinsbartholomew.com)), who very kindly allow us to use map extracts from their atlases to accompany some of our articles.

To all our readers we wish a very happy 2008. May our modest efforts inspire you to touch the nerve ends of Europe many times this year.

Nicky Gardner & Susanne Kries  
EDITORS

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front cover: the old city of Mostar, Herzegovina

top left: giants at Helsinki's main railway station (photo by David Harding)

middle left: Sani, an Albanian woman (photo by Antonia Young)

bottom left: entrance to the Galeries Royales St Hubert, Brussels

above right: town hall and Armenian merchants' houses in Zamość, Poland

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