



**Astir Palace.** The Four Seasons Astir Palace Hotel Athens announced yesterday it will open for guests from June 12, having incorporated all the provisions of the global program of the Four Seasons chain, 'Lead With Care,' in cooperation with Johns Hopkins Medicine International. It is offering an Athens Riviera Escape package with a 20% discount.

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## IN BRIEF

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### Eight countries say gas deserves EU help

**BRUSSELS** (Reuters) - Greece and seven other European countries have urged the European Union to include natural gas in future funding, as the bloc's executive prepares to unveil its plan for a green economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. The European Commission will tomorrow present its trillion-euro proposal for the bloc's next budget, alongside a coronavirus Recovery Fund to mobilize investments in line with its climate goals. Greece, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia have asked Brussels not to exclude natural gas projects from future funding. "It is of crucial importance to maintain EU support and financial assistance for the development of gas infrastructure," they said in a discussion paper seen by Reuters.

### Japan Tobacco enters 3-year alliance with InvestGR Forum

**The InvestGR Forum** yesterday announced the start of its three-year strategic partnership with Japan Tobacco International (JTI) with this year's event, titled "Greece in the Pole Position," which due to the coronavirus pandemic will be online. Victor Crespo, managing director of JTI in Greece, stated: "It is with great pleasure that we begin our collaboration with this important institution, InvestGR Forum. Our presence at this Forum confirms our company's strategic decision to have production activity in Greece, a country we consider an attractive investment market, especially after the recent successful health crisis management. We believe that international investment is key for the recovery of the local economy while strengthening the county's positive image and we seek active participation in the public dialogue towards this direction." Andreas Yannopoulos, founder of InvestGR Forum, stated, "We welcome Japan Tobacco International as Strategic Partner of the InvestGR Forum for the next three years. JTI is a company with a leading presence in its sector worldwide, as well as in Greece, where it has been operating successfully for many years." The 3rd InvestGR Forum 2020: Greece in the Pole Position will be held in two installments, on July 15-16 and on October 8-9. The conference is being organized by Public Affairs & Networks for the third consecutive year and is taking place with the support and under the auspices of the Representation of the European Commission in Greece, the Ministry of Development and Investment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (SEV).

**IKEA-Piraeus.** Popular Swedish furniture and homeware retailer IKEA is set to open an "urban concept store" in downtown Piraeus, following the success two years ago of a pop-up store that was opened in the Greek port city. IKEA, which is represented in Greece by Furlis, said on Monday that the 2,000-square meter store will be located on central Gounari Street and is set to open in October. Spread out over three floors, it will carry some of the top-selling items from its bigger outlets and provide help with ideas and practical tips for redesigning or refurbishing kitchens and other parts of the home. The outlet will also have a restaurant and a Swedish food store, as well as a takeaway cafe on the ground floor.

**Turkish FX tax.** Turkey has hiked a tax on the buying of foreign currency to 1% from 0.2% in a move meant to curb fallout for the lira from the coronavirus pandemic, the country's Official Gazette said. (Reuters)