



## GLOBAL GALA

*Lord Stanley Fink on staging the world's biggest party*

Financial whiz, Tory party treasurer, globetrotter, philanthropist and British Lord – Stanley Fink has dominated London's social scene for decades. In his latest high-profile move, the 54-year-old tycoon has joined forces with entrepreneur David Johnstone in an ambitious effort to stage the biggest party the world has ever seen. Inspired by Phileas Fogg – the protagonist of Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days* – The Global Party will be held at 80 venues in 80 destinations across the globe, including Dubai and Bangkok, on 15 and 16 September, all in aid of charity. We caught up with Fink to quiz him about the project.

“The idea is certainly ambitious,” says Fink. “To hold 80 parties in 80 destinations at the same time, each with 1,000 guests. The style of party is different in each country. Bed Supper Club, Bangkok, is fun and vibrant. The Orient Express train in London exudes sophistication. Dior's new dress will be launched there. Venues are already trying to outdo each other. One has even organised an airplane flyover. All profits will go to charity. It'll make the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the biggest invite-only party of all time if all goes to plan.

“The big aim is to work towards the greater good. We've donated tickets to approved charities for auction. The venues are all five star and we're looking to make US\$20 million to US\$25 million for these causes. To generate that kind of money, tickets will sell for US\$3,000. That allows entry to any event you wish. One charity has already auctioned a ticket for US\$30,000. The ticket comes in a 3kg gift box, with an invite on a metal plate. The address of your chosen party is engraved as a souvenir.

“It's important to give back as much as you receive. Both me and my business partner love children's charities. Money will go there, as well as to eco and humanitarian charities such as Virgin Unite or the Scholar Rescue Fund – a grand total of 15 charities. We're looking to hold the event every two years and growing.

“One passion of mine is travelling. My wife and I didn't have money for a proper honeymoon after we'd married. Years later, my employer gave me three weeks off work to travel South-East Asia. When I returned I was free to take on a new project. It was that project that led to a change in fortune. I'd argue my whole recent career came from the call to travel and the lessons I learned. I'd encourage anyone to go if they have a chance, and I urge my children to do just that.

“Travel is full of different ideas, different people and being open to them. I remember Hong Kong and the raw creative tension, new skyscrapers, the buzz. Singapore was calm and anaesthetic in comparison, but with an energy all its own. We loved Thailand, too, which was a less commercial place than it is today. When you get past the traffic, Bangkok is amazing, with floating markets, superb hotels and the friendliest of people. I remember going to the palace and encountering students who offered to show us around for free, just to practice their English. People had such a liberating and fatalistic view of life. There's no envy of people with money, just acceptance and a determination to be happy with what you can achieve in your time on Earth. Money does not make you a better person. I still have a Buddha statuette in my office to remind me of it.

“Some people might see it as wrong to spend money to party like this in the current economic climate. The truth is, if the rich don't spend some of the money they've saved, the economy isn't going to get out of recession. Now is not the time for people with money to stop spending it.” **eight by Dusit**

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