

Word of mouth

What's hot in ★ Singapore ★ Mallorca ★ Durban ★ US airports ★ Greece

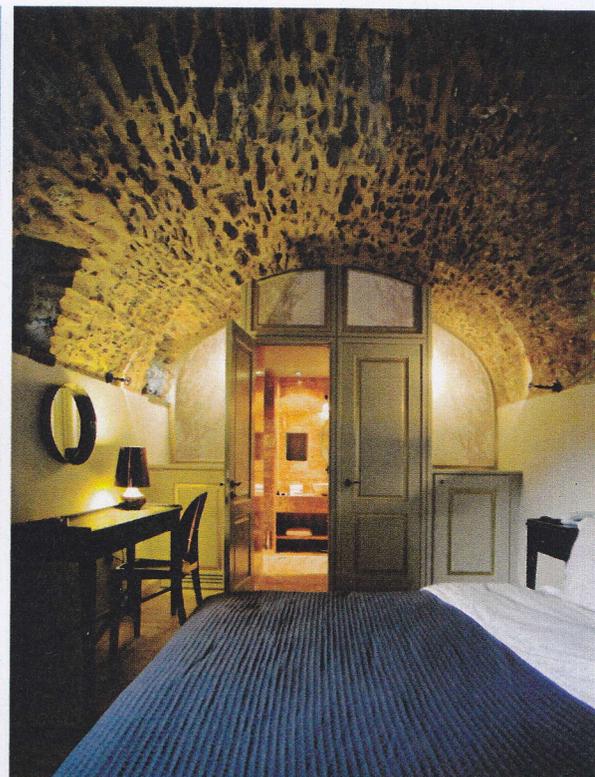
EDITED BY EMILY MATHIESON

Just opened

The medieval, fortified village of Monemvasia is where loved-up

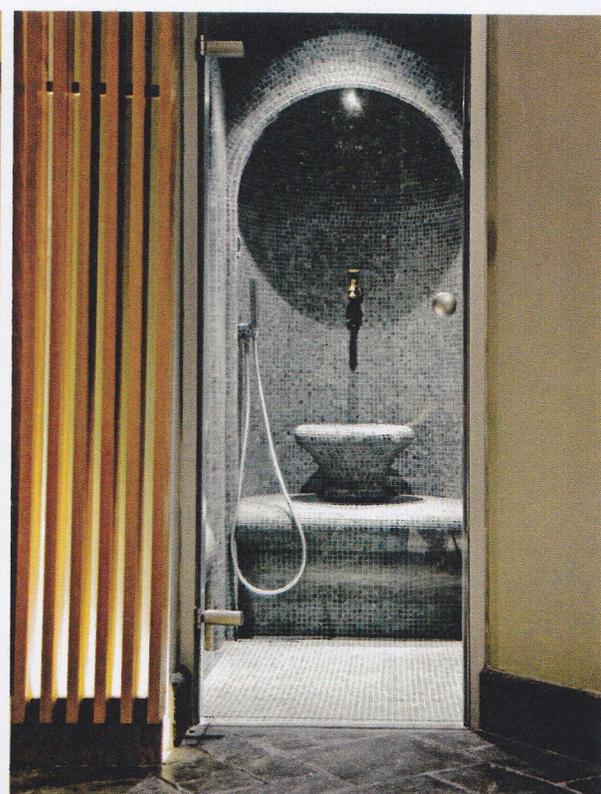
Greeks escape for the weekend. Until recently, accommodation there was limited to cloyingly quaint guesthouses within the listed walled citadel; but now you can avoid them by checking into Kinsterna, a 13th-century manor house 7km away in the nearby hills, recently converted (with associated buildings) into a hotel and spa. The sandstone complex is set among olive and orange groves irrigated from an ancient cistern (hence the hotel's name) in the central courtyard. It is fed by an underwater stream, which also enables guests to take a refreshing dip after the four-hour drive from Athens (the hotel can arrange chauffeur-driven transfers). Built on different levels, the hotel's 27 rooms feature antique rugs and chests, modern gold lamps and tin-drum tables.

The five 'Kinsterna' suites, in alcoves shaded by flowering trellises, have dreamy views to the sea a kilometre away. Ottoman-inspired lavender and rose scrubs are available in the spa, which also has a hammam. The restaurant is next to the cistern but also has tables on cantilevered platforms above the cistern, from which water flows down into a dramatic, asymmetrical swimming pool. Breakfast is a feast of local flavours – feta pie, yoghurt and honey, orange-scented rice pudding – that will keep you going until dinner, a five-course set menu with wine from the hotel's own vineyard. **RACHEL HOWARD**
00 30 27320 66300; www.kinsternahotel.gr. Doubles from €250



ALL CISTERNS GO

GREECE For a refreshing change, head to a new hotel built around an ancient water source



Kinsterna, clockwise from top left: the rooftop Belvedere Bar; a Byzantine suite; spa treatment cabin; the restaurant