

THE HOT LIST ISSUE 2017

OUR EDIT OF THE MOST EXCITING PEOPLE AND PLACES, FLAVOURS AND FASHIONS, INNOVATIONS AND IDEAS, SOUNDS AND SCENES AROUND THE WORLD RIGHT NOW

THE ISLAND SANTORINI

GREECE'S CROWD-PLEASER IS SHOWING ITS REFINED SIDE

Slow-living collective Local Milk, known for its hipster retreats in Byron Bay, Formentera and Sweden, has surprisingly chosen Santorini as the base for its first Greek odyssey. Its photography and abstract-painting workshop, held in mid-September, is based at Villa Fabrica, a converted winery in the mellow village of Pyrgos. Aaron Teece, who's cooked for Kate Moss and Keira Knightley, will prepare simple, seasonal meals to go with the intense local wines. 'Santorini is everything we look for in a retreat location: excellent food culture, eminently photogenic, with homes as beautiful as the island itself,' says Beth Kirby, one half of the husband-and-wife team who run the show. So what does this tell us about Santorini? Is the island famed for its postcards of sunsets becoming more discerning? Entrepreneur Pavlos Kontomichalos thinks so. He has just snapped up the last empty plot on the cliff-side caldera to create Erosantorini, a villa estate opening this summer with its own wine cellar, spa and outdoor cinema, tricked out by designer Paola Navone (see Point Yamu in Phuket and COMO Metropolitan Miami Beach). And in the meantime, in the village of Oia, Sunday Suites – the latest project by the Chaidemenos brothers – is even more of a hideaway than their nearby flagship Canaves (which has those amazing indoor/outdoor pools that kick-started the area's hotel aesthetic). While everyone else is squeezed into the restaurants at Ammoudi harbour, guests can hop on a speedboat to their hidden taverna on Armeni Bay for cod tempura and cherry tomato fritters. And the capital, Fira, where the streets are paved with gold shops and day-trippers, is also getting in on the act. A former chef for the Moroccan royal family, Jérôme Coustillas, has decamped to his own French restaurant at Villa Bordeaux, a 19th-century mansion with four minimalist suites that seem to float above the sea. Despite plenty of competition in the Cyclades, Santorini is now back in the game. RACHEL HOWARD

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANTI