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ON OUR RADAR



KATHERINE LAWREY

THIS WEEK I've been hearing about a hotel in Morocco, which opens at the end of this month. The Fellah Hotel is the result of owner

Redha Moali's vision to create a sustainable hotel, giving guests authentic Moroccan experiences, without sacrificing five-star comforts.

Within the boundaries of the hotel there's a Unesco-Aschberg-recognised arts and cultural centre. Dar al-Ma'mun provides support to emerging artists, who also receive free food and lodging for a year in the Fellah. The centre incorporates artists' studios, a research centre in literary translation and a library. Guests contribute to the existence of Dar al-Ma'mun just by being there, and they can meet the artists.

Jonathan White, director of Workham Hotels, the UK sales representative for the Fellah, described the ethos to me: "Moroccans believe if you're born poor, you die poor, but Redha Moali believes that anyone can make a go of it, given the right opportunities."

One of the hotel's restaurants extends the benefits to the local community. Housewives take it in turns to prepare lunches, and profits are returned to the workers. The other restaurant serves contemporary Moroccan cuisine.

The Fellah is also home to Morocco's only Wat Po Massage Centre, with therapists trained at Bangkok's Wat Po temple. White explained: "Moali wanted to introduce something unique. The Thais lead the way when it comes to spas and traditional medicine."

The hotel has 69 rooms and suites,



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across 10 villas. They are furnished with antiques from flea markets and more modern pieces commissioned from local craftsmen. Four of the villas can be hired exclusively, giving residents their own kitchen, pool, hammam and garden.

Another selling point is the children's programme, available in school holidays, which White says is ahead of the curve for Morocco: "More families are travelling to Morocco, but not many hotels are set up for them. The Fellah has lots of children's activities, like an on-site

small animal farm and DJ courses."

White is still working on deals with several tour operators, with The Azure Collection confirmed. He concluded: "If you've been to Morocco before, and want to see a different side to it, this is the hotel for you."