

Bedrooms in the former post office have a modern-rustic aesthetic; and (below right) the hotel's characterful exterior



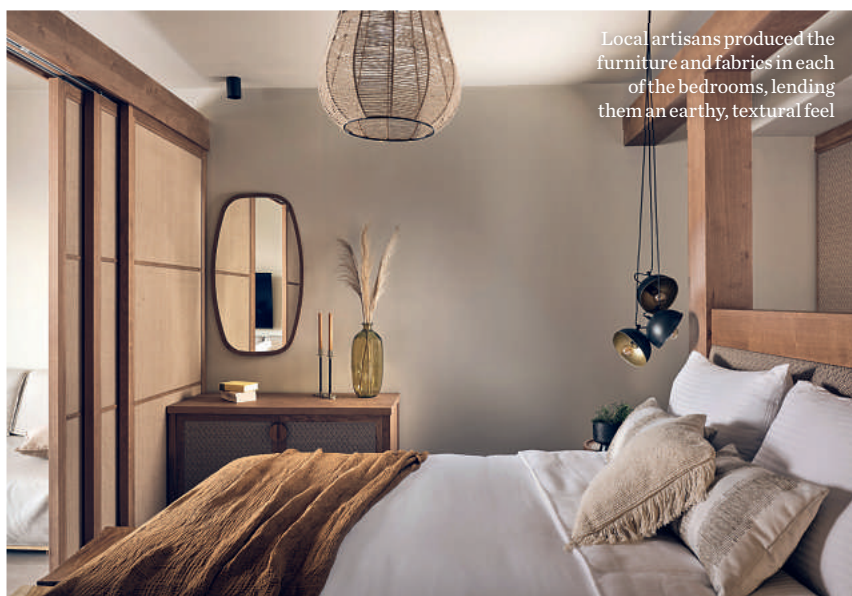
Hospedaria, *Portugal*

It takes a certain kind of creative mind to spot a dilapidated former post office and roadside store, left to decay for some 30 years, and see a guesthouse. Hospedaria owners Rui Liberato de Sousa and Nuno Ramos, who run the nearby and now-cult hotel Pensão Agrícola, seized on its potential as a sister property, reenlisting Portuguese practice Atelier RUA to coax the crumbling building into a boutique hotel. Interiors suggest the same surefooted simplicity as the name – Hospedaria means ‘guesthouse’ in Portuguese – with whitewashed walls, natural materials and a smattering of eclectic art. Each of the five bedrooms has its own private patio, and there’s a bijou plunge pool for respite from the heat. Unusually for the Algarve, it’s open year-round. From approx £155 per night (hospedaria.com.pt).



The Royal Senses, *Crete*

As arguably the best-loved Greek island, new ventures on Crete have something of a captive audience – though plenty of competition, too. The Royal Senses has made a strong start with 74 private infinity pools, but it’s an earnest desire to draw on Cretian resources that really separates the hotel from similar resorts. ‘I found a wealth of excellent craftsmanship and local techniques that informed the design as we went along,’ says creative director Constantina Tsoutsikou, who launched London-based practice Studio Lost last year. Rooms feature furniture handcrafted by makers more familiar with building traditional fishing boats, and an on-site ‘marketplace’ will proffer products from regional farmers and artisans. Opens April, from £189 per night (theroyalsenses.troulisroyalcollection.com).



Local artisans produced the furniture and fabrics in each of the bedrooms, lending them an earthy, textural feel