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Escapes

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Sarah Tomczak



Fading

SUN

BEFORE THE SUMMER EBBS AWAY,
SEIZE THE DAY WITH A FINAL FLING AT ONE
OF THESE EUROPEAN HOT SPOTS





Right: Anassa boasts a beautiful hilltop location. Left: the 'Village Square'



Left: enjoy the hotel's landscaped gardens and sea views. Below: interiors are light, bright and airy

ANASSA HOTEL, PAPHOS

Dreaming of an endless summer, I plan a last-minute trip to Anassa Hotel, the hideaway retreat in the Paphos hillside, searching for balmy climes and a rejuvenating stay that will sustain me (and my tan) for a little longer. It seems like the spot for those seeking luxury without the fuss: from the model-esque mum with her two Breton-clad children, to a perfectly coiffed French woman ordering a black coffee and croque-monsieur (no, it's not on the menu), breakfast feels like a fashion front-row seat.

Despite the grandiose white building and vast accompanying grounds (166 rooms, suites and residences), the place never feels busy, even during high season. My suite is away from the main building, down the winding stone pathways that also lead to the pool and onwards to the secluded beachfront, all enveloped in the vibrant flowers and herbs used in the hotel's four restaurants.

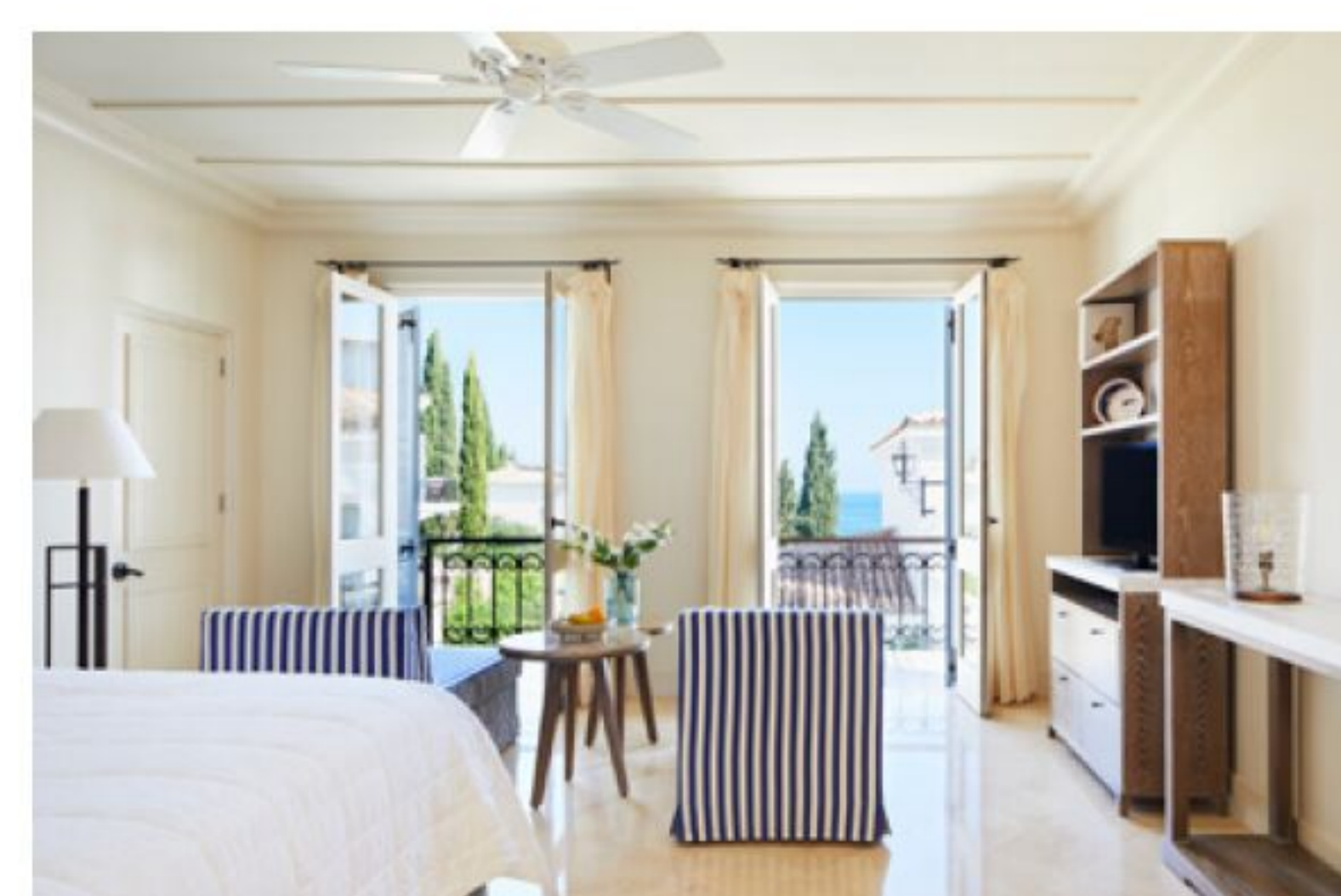
The minimalist rooms, intended to showcase beauty outside, have smooth marble floors, flowing linen curtains and whitewashed walls, only accented by deckchair-striped chaise longues that aptly match the Acqua di Parma 'Blu Mediterraneo' bathroom products, and the glimmering Mediterranean that lies beyond my balcony.

My stay is book-ended by two amazing dining experiences unique to this Cypriot family-owned hotel. The 'Village Square' takes place in front of the on-site chapel for a weekly traditional buffet of stuffed vine leaves, spit-roasted pig and more cheese than even I can manage. The evening is made complete with live musicians and traditional dancers. The final torchlit dinner 'Under the Stars' overlooks the beach and serves a taster menu as we stargaze.

While activities from pottery classes to scuba diving lessons are available, my over-ambitious hike in Akamas National Park confirms that an uncomplicated routine of sun lounging, interspersed with a visit to the world-class Thalassa spa for an Osea Organic Ocean treatment, is fulfilling enough.

JODIE DUNWORTH

ROOMS FROM £326, ANASSA.COM



Above: sunbathe by day and stargaze (while feasting) by night. Left: the suites are full of Mediterranean flair