ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

TRAVEL

Now Is the Time to Visit This New Hotel in Greece

A new hotel on the island of Crete is beckoning travelers from near and far

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Caramel hotel, a new property on the Greek island of Crete.

With the current economic outlook in Greece quite a bit more positive than it has been for months—but the country still much needing international travelers' business—now's the time to book a last-minute and perhaps previously postponed trip to this ancient land of myth and legend. The financial situation notwithstanding, this season has seen a healthy handful of enticing hospitality debuts. At the top of the heap is the Caramel hotel, located in Rethymno, on the northern coast of Crete, the island that arguably offers the southern Aegean's most engaging ancient ruins.

Having opened in May on Crete's longest beach, the boutique resort's villas and suites are decorated in the region's typical white-on-white palette. Accents of blue, fuchsia, and golden yellow dot the hand-painted tile floors, with further visual interest provided by the clean lines and tight tailoring of the modern-leaning furnishings, which mingle with antiques.

The hotel's architects—an in-house team from Grecotel, the company overseeing Caramel—conceived the resort as a sort of village, adapting a series of existing white-stucco, terracotta tile–roofed buildings into light-filled suites and villas. These domed and vaulted structures, all with open archways and large windows that connect indoors and out, now orient around a central space (think of it as a modern agora). At the heart of the resort is a free-form pool, whose sunken daybeds mimic the look of lily pads on the edges of a pond. From here, palm-dotted terraced gardens and lawns lead down to the beach, where bright-white cabanas, their diaphanous curtains billowing in the turquoise sea's gentle breezes, await.