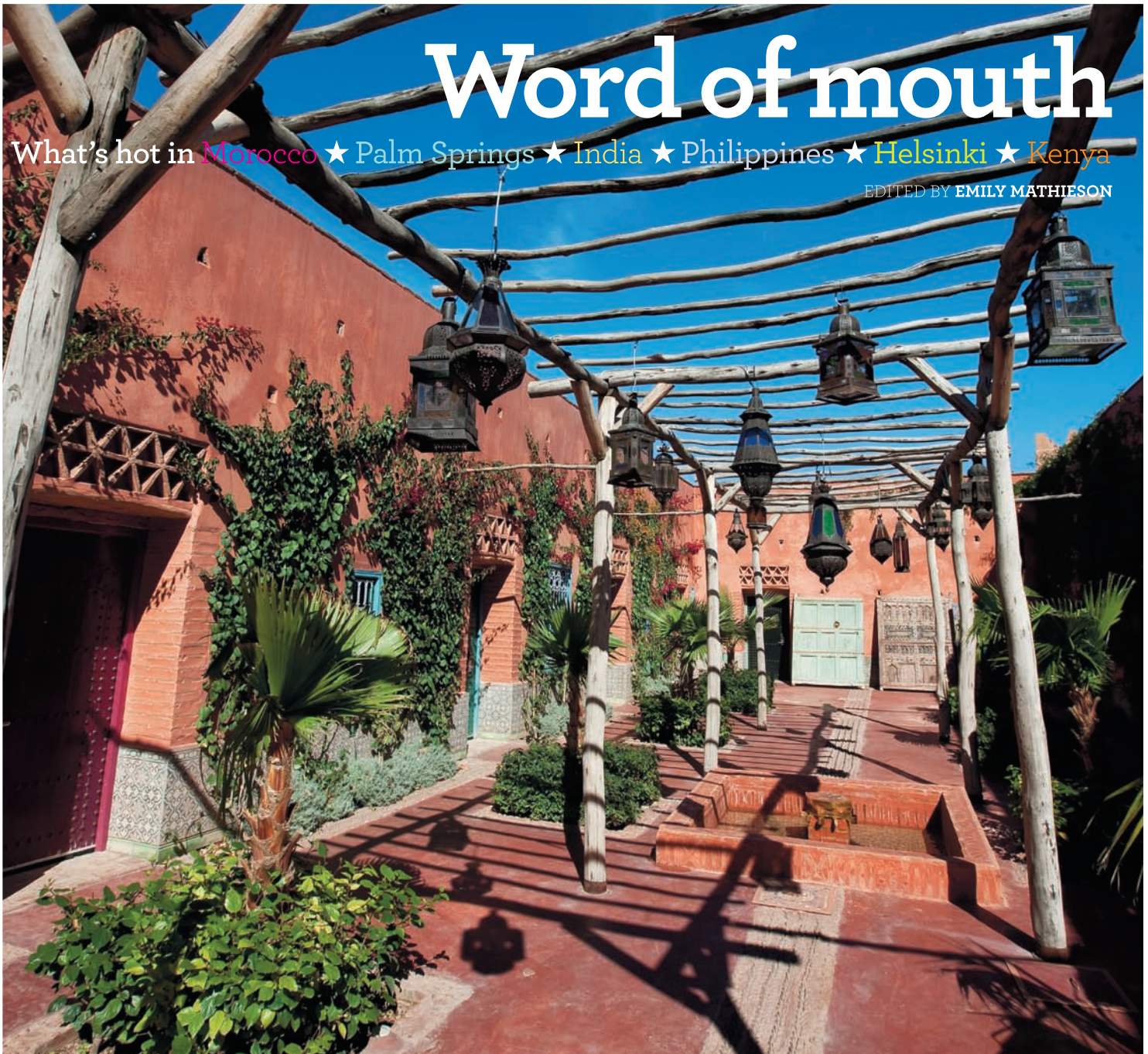


# Word of mouth

What's hot in Morocco ★ Palm Springs ★ India ★ Philippines ★ Helsinki ★ Kenya

EDITED BY EMILY MATHIESON



## THREE OF A KIND

**MOROCCO** The creators of a rustic hideaway in Marrakech are opening two more properties in a similarly traditional style



Above, the Leymarie family at their property L'Iglesia. Top, the Beldi Country Club, their hotel in Marrakech

In Arabic, the word *beldi* means 'traditional'. So the name of the **Beldi Country Club** is a giveaway: everything at the beguiling, 27-room hotel amidst fields of roses – from the earth-based pisé walls to the sackcloth bags gardeners gather blooms in – is done as it was centuries ago. The approach of Moroccan-born owner Jean-Dominique Leymarie, who retired from masterminding golf courses for a simpler way of life 15 years ago, is unorthodox: 'There's no architect, no landscape designer, just the earth.' His daughter and son, Géraldine and Alexandre, live with their young families on the Beldi estate and help to manage a growing empire that includes two new properties, both extensions of Beldi's Berber-chic aesthetic. Opening this month is **L'Iglesia**, a

harbourside hotel within a converted church. It is in the old Portuguese city of El Jadida, 45 minutes' drive south of Casablanca, which was once a working port but is now popular with holidaying Moroccans. There are 15 suites with 1940s furniture and terraces overlooking the ocean, as well as a fish restaurant 100 metres along the harbour and a local fisherman's boat for lunches and sunset drinks.

**Kasbah Beldi** is set within 15 hectares of grapefruit and olive trees on the banks of Lalla Takerkoust lake, an hour's drive south of Marrakech. At present there are two pools and a restaurant to enjoy along with the views; but you can't stay here yet. There are 20 lake-view suites to come.

LEO BEAR  
00 212 5 2438 3950; [www.beldicountryclub.com](http://www.beldicountryclub.com);  
[www.liglesia.com](http://www.liglesia.com). Doubles from €165