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A sustainable vacation

by Christiane Burklein on Thursday 2nd February 2012 in Materials

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Dar-Hi Hotel in Nefta, Tunisia, at the desert's gate



In an extreme place such as southern Tunisia, on the edge of the desert, awareness of the environment is essential. And it is even more so in a hotel, a facility with a significant impact on its social and environmental surroundings in which case it is important not to draw too heavily on the scarce natural resources available on the site. The village of Nefta is famous for its natural geological wonders and its palm trees, and renowned as the setting of the film 'Star Wars'.



The local architecture is based on use of solid ochre bricks of rammed earth with palm wood roofs and doors. The same materials were used in the hotel designed by Matali Crasset for the Hi-Life hotel chain, with which the architect is working since some time.

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- Events
- Materials

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- Fuorisalone 2010
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This is the premise of the LiveGreenblog editorial project which has been exploring energy savings, eco-friendly design and environmentally-aware innovation daily since 2009

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From the outdoor spaces to the interior design and the building itself, the French architect based her research on the harmonious inclusion of the building into its setting on the edge of the village and the desert, using only local materials without resorting to any imports.



The spa waters come directly from a hot spring that heats the hammam and the swimming pool and is also used to irrigate the oasis.



The warm hues of the walls were created with lime and natural colouring materials, while the furnishings were made by local craftspeople.



And so an oasis of rest was built in an oasis on the edge of the desert, limiting its impact on the fragile balance of its natural surroundings.

Design: Matali Crasset. <http://www.matalicrasset.com>

Location: Nefta, Tunisia

Link: <http://www.hi-life.net>, <http://www.dar-hi.net>

Photographs: Jérôme SPRIET

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