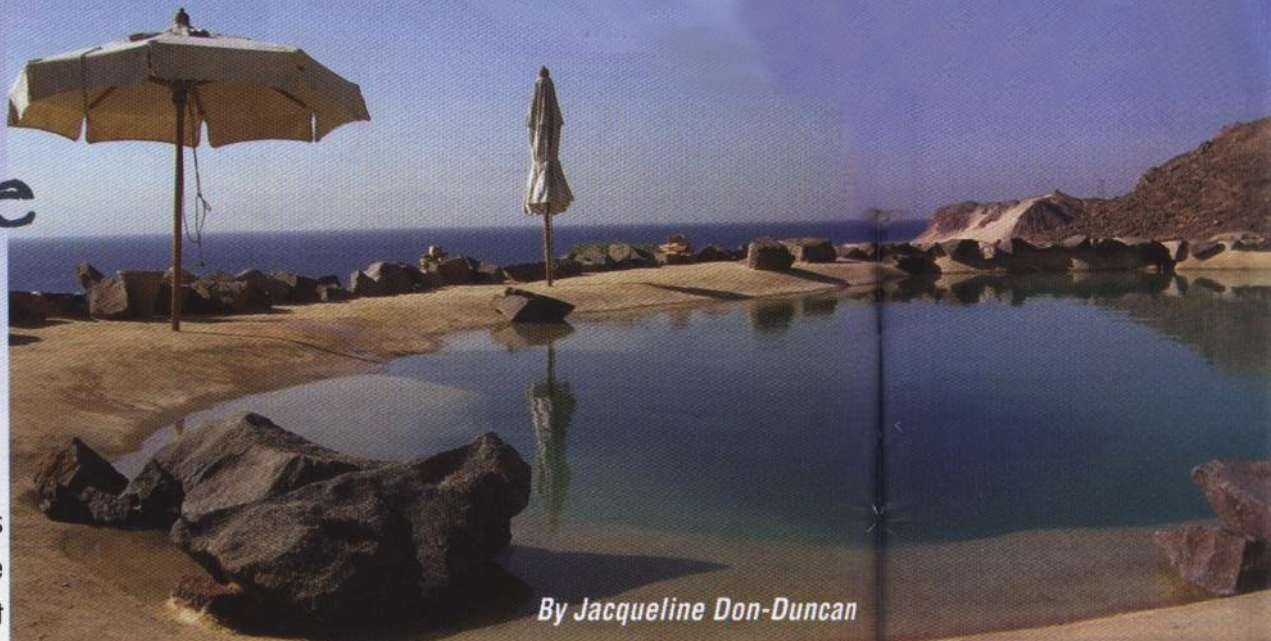


The Castle in the Sky

Castle Zaman in Nuweiba brings authentic Egyptian luxury to the South Sinai, Egypt



By Jacqueline Don-Duncan

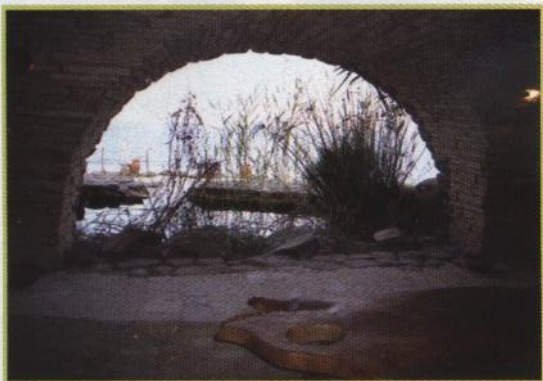
Oh, but to be a real princess for the day! "I will grant you three wishes," said the genie. Now let's see...umm?! Wish no. 1: a castle set in beautiful surroundings? "Mumkin" (Arabic for "that's possible") said Hany; wish no. 2: delicious food served 'banquet-style'? "Mumkin," said Hany; wish no. 3: an exquisite choice of beverages and engaging atmosphere providing escape and caper from day-to-day life? "Mumkin," said Hany. No Egyptian genie, but a qualified architect and ex t-shirt manufacturer, Hany Roshdy built castle Zaman (Arabic for the "past") two years ago and has never looked back. I, no princess (at least by birthright ;) , covered his story on behalf of MIX and visited the castle following the footsteps of a stream of international and local clients who have since made Zaman a favourite haunt of theirs.

Standing 35 metres above sea level, in the H-Borqa mountain on the Taba-Nuweiba road, Castle Zaman is primely located. In the middle of what is known as the 'Golden Beach', overlooking the Ras Burka bay, the castle has its own private sands as well as the added beauty of surrounding sapphire waters and colourful corals. With a dramatic mountainous view across four countries - Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Saudi Arabia - Castle Zaman is still adequate in size but simply breathtaking in stature. A work of art, the castle itself was constructed stone-by-stone using nothing but natural materials: reclaimed wood was used in all construction and furniture and every single stone was handpicked from nearby mountains. Strict adherence was also given to ancient construction techniques, which were specifically revived for the project: a true architectural achievement, the castle revived ancient techniques of building stone vaults and cross vaults. The only building of its

kind in the Sinai, Hany Roshdy explained: "The idea behind Castle Zaman was to develop the local theme within the tourism market: from the architecture to the food, I wanted everything I used to derive from Egypt and preferably the Sinai - nothing imported. There already existed a multitude of 5-star hotel chains and international brands but nothing authentic Egyptian." The brainchild of Hany Roshdy, Castle Zaman was born through his vision and the existence of King Zaman. Hany explained: "Because of the location chosen, the building had to be a castle. The theme of the castle was built around this idea of King Zaman: an underground treasure room was excavated beneath the castle - Zaman's ruins, dug up and discovered." It is obvious it is this very visionary ability which has sporned so many of his successful projects to-date, including the hugely successful cartoon character King Dude and 'Say Cheese' rats greeting cards and t-shirts...

The castle itself has an outdoor pool, lit by night, with an over-looking bar area serving a selection of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks - palm fronds cover the roofs and clay pots are used as lighting units to add atmosphere. Inside, the castle boasts an impressive dining area complete with huge heavy wooden tables and log fireplace. An extensive menu provides food fit for King or Queen: aside from specials, Zaman offers the choice of two staple menus, namely Castle or Slow food. Able to pre-book and reserve a meal, the castle will prepare the food ahead of your arrival with notice. The Slow food menu serves impressive platters of fresh vegetables, royal portions of meats, turkeys and fish, which roasted at a low temperature over long periods of time, guarantee a tasty feast always prepared in original Egyptian earthenware. From the chandeliers that hang throughout the castle to the Japanese Koi pond that meets and greets you at the castle's entrance to the catacombs and underground dungeon-like tunnel, the fine detailing of the castle is astounding.

The castle is open to guests who wish to use the pool throughout the day and into the night. Castle Zaman is available for private hire (special events, shoots, etc). Please note: High heels are not recommended. Please be careful and use the pool at your own risk, the castle management and the castle management reserves the right to stop serving alcohol when they see fit. Do not drink and drive. Please refer to as simply "safety statements". Castle Zaman is open 7 days a week, from 11am to 11pm. Castle Zaman concludes: We are not liable for any injuries, melancholy or depression cases that might occur during the ultimate Sinai experience. Make your safari trips, broadband and additional travel arrangements. What Hany sees as the immediate future...





The castle is open to guests who wish to eat, drink or use the pool throughout the day and into the night and is also available for private hire (special events, shoots etc.). Castle Zaman states: High heels are not recommended, no life guard is available, use the pool at your own risk, the castle is not child-friendly and the castle management reserves the right to refrain from serving alcohol when they see fit. Do not let what the castle refer to as simply "safety statements" deter you from visit. Zaman is open 7 days a week, from 11am til guests' request. Zaman concludes: We are not liable for any claims of recurring melancholy or depression cases that might result from missing out on the ultimate Sinai experience. Massage therapy, kayak safari trips, broadband and additional treasure room gifts are what Hany sees as the immediate future for Zaman.

The castle can be reached by private bus, taxi or local bus. There is a selection of camps offering overnight accommodation located within a short distance of Zaman.



For More Information

On reservations, prices and how to get to Castle Zaman, contact your local travel agent or call

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www.castlezaman.com

