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BY KAREN YATES ON JUNE 29, 2019

A Foodie Foray into the Portuguese Riviera

TRAVEL

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THE LIFESTYLE V

KAREN YATES ON JUNE 29, 2019

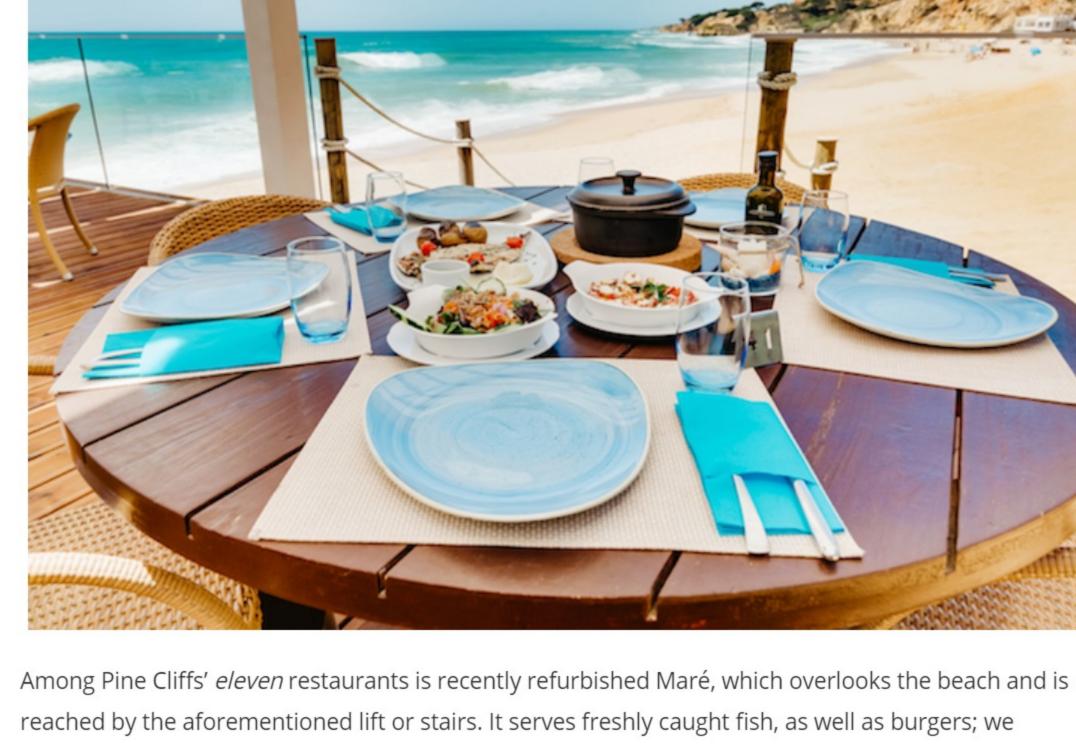
72-hectare resort could be described as Portugal's answer to Portmeirion. The second thing you can't fail to notice is the dazzling white of the walls under the intense Algarvian sun, complemented by the green and rainbow colours of the tropical gardens, with pine and palm trees, agapanthus, birds of paradise, red hibiscus and wild blue garlic flowers, plus giant versions of those trendy indoor succulents, except here they are outside. Then, as you head for the beach, there's the brilliant orange of the precipitous cliff edges, a proper Instagram-worthy setting, offset by the aquamarine Atlantic.

The beach itself, which you reach by an outdoor glass-sided lift or stairs from the top of the cliffs, is

It's the expanse of the grounds that first hits you when you arrive at Pine Cliffs – this village-sized,

while children swim or build sandcastles and collect shells. Indeed, this enormous but serene five-star resort appeals to families with its kids' clubs, gym, Annabel Croft Tennis Academy, nine-hole golf club, swimming pools, boutiques, shops and award-winning spa with 13 treatment rooms, treatment pools, outdoor jacuzzi, steam rooms and saunas.

long and sandy, with parents sunbathing and enjoying the spectacular setting and warm breezes



enjoy the ocean views. Back at hotel level at the top of the cliffs, Mirador Champagne Bar also has superb views of the Atlantic coast, making it the perfect place to watch the sunset, champagne glass in hand.

Zest restaurant is an ideal spot for lunch after a spa treatment. You can choose from freshly made juices, salads and plant-based options such as the chickpea curry (add tofu or chicken if you like). The grilled tuna steak with purple sweet potato purée, asparagus and cherry tomatoes was delicious and virtuous paired with a fresh beetroot and carrot juice. This is flavoursome, colourful, healthy

ordered a selection of fish croquettes and refreshing salads, followed by grilled sea bass with baked

new potatoes. There's funky background music and the vibe is relaxed, a place to take your time and

food. If you are more of a carnivore, try Piri Piri Steak House (chicken and vegan dishes are also on the menu) for alfresco dining under the pine trees into the night, or inside for larger groups.



We then learnt to cook several dishes, including a rice, chorizo and langoustine cataplana (the name of both the dish and the copper casserole it's cooked in) and her grandmother's torta de amêndoa with vanilla and ginger ice cream plus carob crumble and gold leaf, all beautifully presented by Lucia and perfectly matched by Portuguese wines. Every mouthful was excellent.

To learn even more about the local food, I'd recommend a petisco food tour, something like the

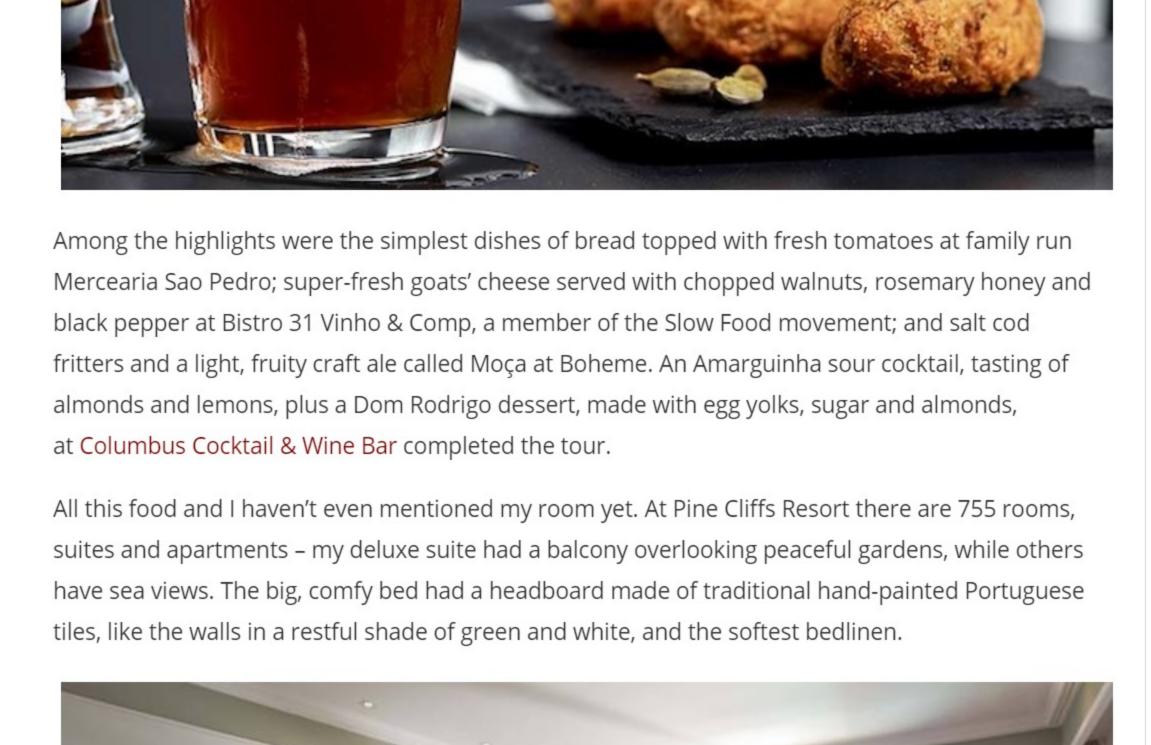
pintxos tour I took in San Sebastian for this very publication. A 40-minute drive from the resort, past

stalls of fresh oranges at the roadsides, is the coastal town of Faro, where our enthusiastic guide

Joana explained how Arabic flavours and culture have influenced Algarvian food. After visiting the

novel way to peel garlic without touching it) in the 300-square-metre, state-of-the art Miele kitchen.

sobering Capela dos Ossos (chapel of bones), where bones and skulls of more than 1,000 monks line the walls, and spotting storks, who fly here each year, feeding their young in nests on top of Sé Catedral de Faro and elsewhere, we tried small plates in local eating places.



A three-hour drive away and just 30 minutes from Lisbon, is five-star Sheraton Cascais Resort, just

over an hour's walk or a 30-minute cycle from Guincho Beach (bikes can be rented from the hotel).

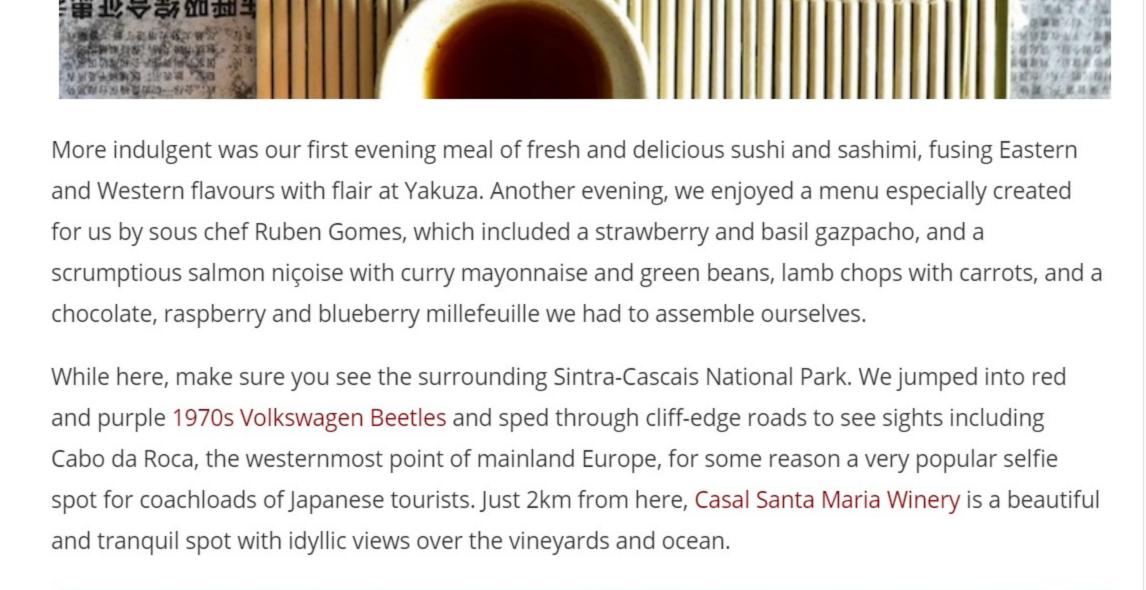
suite, this time overlooking the gardens and people strolling to and from the restaurant and (half-

After breakfast in the Glass Terrace restaurant on the Saturday morning we took the weekly

heated) outdoor pool.

Here there are 156 rooms and suites set in 17 hectares of gardens. Here too I had a spacious deluxe

morning yoga class in the tranquil gardens to a background of birdsong while teacher Isabel guided us through relaxing vinyasas. Afterwards, we enjoyed the hotel's Saturday healthy brunch offering, also at the Glass Terrace, of almond pancakes, seabass with pak choi, and plenty of salads.



As we sat outside and sampled four outstanding wines with notable mineralogy from the terroir next to the Atlantic, we learned about how the vineyard's founder – the grandfather of Nicholas, who now runs it – Baron Bodo von Bruemmer, was born in Riga in 1911, survived pancreatic cancer for 28 years and restored the building, built in 1720, before planting the vineyard at the age of 96, a story as remarkable as the wines. The award-winning rosé is named Mar de Rosas, which translates as sea of roses, a phrase that in Portuguese means everything is fine. Sitting in this peaceful spot,

Rooms at Pine Cliffs, a Luxury Collection Resort, start at €243 in high season and €78 in low season,

Rooms at Sheraton Cascais Resort start at €200 in high season and €100 in low season.

on a B&B basis. Apartments, suites, villas and residences are also available.

sipping rosé and enjoying the sea view, it certainly is.

Classic Collection Holidays offers two nights at Sheraton Cascais Resort and three nights at Pine
Cliffs Resort from £1,253 per person. Price based on two adults sharing on a B&B basis, and includes
flights from London Heathrow to Lisbon and back from Faro, private transfers and rail travel
between Lisbon and Faro. For more information, visit www.classic-collection.co.uk.