

FAMILY

TIME SAVERS

Canny destinations to leave the jetlag jitters far behind





PENSAO AGRICOLA, PORTUGAL

If your frazzled teenagers are in need of sunshine and downtime after exam exhaustion, consider this newly opened, whitewashed farmhouse in the Algarve. It's surrounded by green meadows that are home to snoozy cows and Ernesto the donkey (soon to be joined by a wife amidst plans for an equine dynasty). The six bedrooms are all different and all charming, in a sun-dappled rustic sort of way.

Three are in the main house, but if you want a bit more crashing-around space, choose from the other three in the former stables and outhouses. Each of these has its own terrace, where chairs and cushions are laid out for lounging. Parents should grab the Páteo Suite, which has a tiny sitting room facing a courtyard and fountain, and a bedroom filled with artwork. The rain showers are lit naturally by skylights, there's springtime almond blossom by the bathroom sinks, and the polished-concrete floors have underfloor heating for chillier weather. Furniture is a smart mix of antique and retro and you'll spot little piles of books everywhere (Portuguese authors in translation). Housekeepers Barbara and Maria stir up dishes inspired by the childhood recipes of owners Nuno Ramos and Rui Liberato de Sousa, including salt cod with layers of sweet potatoes and fig ice cream. There is a small heated pool, dining tables hiding among lemongrass and lavender bushes, and an honesty bar on top of a wall in the shade of a magnificent olive tree. Deserted beaches, such as Lacém, are a few minutes' drive. Those with urban urges could head to Seville, an hour and a half away, or to nearby Tavira, the Algarve's prettiest town. But actually, why move at all?

INSIDER TIP Load up with films on your iPads as this place is blissfully TV-free but has excellent Wi-Fi.

JOURNEY TIME A two-hour, 20-minute flight to Faro, then a 30-minute drive **TIME DIFFERENCE** None

BOOK IT +351 917 782 189; pensaoagricola.com. Doubles from about £100 including breakfast.

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANA CARVALHO

