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THE 5 BEST GREEK ISLAND HOTELS FOR 2020

Condé Nast Traveller's editors reveal their pick of the best Greek island hotels, spanning the coolest island hideouts on Santorini, Skiathos, Zakynthos and Mykonos. Edited by Stephanie Rafanelli



1. ISTORIA SANTORINI, GREECE

The designer digs

Istoria means ‘story’ in Greek. And when Antonis and Kalia Eliopoulos drove down a narrow track to Perivolos beach to explore socialite Christina Tassou’s abandoned mansion and stables, they saw the chance to tell a very different one; not of [Santorini’s hotel](#)-clogged western caldera but of human obsession and the wild, black sands of the remote south-east. At the age of 15, Tassou caught the attentions of a Saudi sovereign, 35 years her senior, at the Greek royal court where her father was equerry. The king doggedly pursued her across [Europe](#) but to no avail. To trim a very long tale, she eventually escaped here and seems to have preferred horses: her home was hung with oil paintings of her five steeds.

**«ISTORIA OPENS A NEW CHAPTER
IN SANTORINI’S STORY»**

Captivated by her epic life, the maverick hoteliers behind Mystique and hilltop Vedema engaged [Athens](#)-based Interior Design Laboratorium to create a barefoot retreat, a homage less to Tassou than to organic storytelling by design. The departure from the whitewashed hotels and jet-skis of Oia, and the physical isolation here, are reinforced by a stripped-down ethos which allows the original stone structure – and wilderness itself – to dominate. Its translucent waters are arch-framed from 12 suites, six of which are converted from the original stables, where nature's palette is repainted in blush plaster, polished cement floors and clay-toned linens. On a taverna-less part of the [coast](#), quantity is replaced with an impressive strike of quality at Mr E, the invention of [Noma](#) alum Alexandros Tsiotinis. Ingredients for his re-tellings of classics are sourced from Tassou's former gardens. Her spirit remains in little reminders: water troughs and bridles are the hotel's [art](#). But the showpiece here is the 30-metre slate [pool](#), with the caldera-rivalling drama of monolithic Mesa Vouno range rising behind. It's said to be the largest pool on the [island](#) – or perhaps that's just a fable. Either way, Istoría opens a new chapter in Santorini's story. *By Roxy Kavousi-Walker*