# ‘So this is where Mick Jagger used to stay with… what’s her name? Bianca? And this is where Jackie Onassis used to stay…’



We’re being shown around different rooms at Theoxenia, Mykonos’s first hotel from back in the 60s when what is today party central was just a rocky outpost of windmills, donkeys and beaches. Mind you, the windmills, the famous windmills of Mykonos, are just outside the hotel gates, just up from what they call Little Venice with its waterside restaurants. And Jackie O, the legendary (if tiny!) bar/club named after one of Theoxenia’s original fans is five minutes away if you go down behind the church.

And Mick and Jackie and ‘what’s her name’ certainly knew what they were doing. The rooms in question may be smallish – almost Japanese in their simplicity and compactness with fabric-covered walls in beiges and creams – but the sea is right there on the balcony and there’s a sweet little window that you can leave open so you can go to sleep to the sound of the waves on the beach just down from the hotel.

Our room is bigger. Sorry Mick. In the same modernist, almost Palm Springs mid-century modern style and with 60s-inspired blobby lighting in with the glamorous yet mostly nature-inspired interiors – long, beautiful quality muslin curtains and bedcovers in earth tones then Guerlain in the bathroom – it has a huge terrace overlooking the pool with a built-in daybed, table and totally on-trend and yet timeless rope-covered chairs. Big enough for a small party. We’re speaking from experience here.

It’s all built around that central pool, big enough for there to be an island with a couple of palm trees to swim around and with a big padded platform for lazing on or – sometimes in the evening – performing on. The pool is relatively recently renovated and the hotel staff will give you a little blue mosaic tile from the original as a souvenir if they like you. And they always seem to like you.

Basically, Theoxenia, never mind that it’s Mykonos’s original hotel, doesn’t actually feel that Mykonos. Well, not what you think of as Mykonos (and remember to avoid any part of the island connected with the likes of Lyndsay Lohan and Gemma Collins). Instead of the usual white, it’s mostly natural stone and mostly very horizontal. Instead of the typical roundedness of corners, this is crisp and modern and sharp. And instead of the wide-open sky blazing down on you, this is dappled with trees, the garden being the oldest actual garden on the whole island, dotted with cactuses and herbs fragrancing – if that’s a word – the air. We nicked a sprig of sage for our pizza by the pool. Floors are stone flags, furniture light coloured and modern with the whole space littered with huge earthenware pots.

And it’s friendly. Right there by the pool is a little bar, where you can have your dinner in the evening if you fancy, and people seem to interact. We were trying to watch something on our phones and a guy from an opposite daybed came over with a bigger iPad screen and a bottle of champagne to join us. Then the highly cheeky waiting staff treated us to another bottle. Well, it was the Queen’s funeral. They felt sorry for us.

We’d recovered by morning when we ate our breakfast on the terrace overlooking the sea after a heavy night out down at Jackie O having one too many toasts to HMTQ (Her Majesty the Queen – how soon they forget!) followed by the usual drunken trek through the maze – an actual maze couldn’t be harder to negotiate – of streets that make up Mykonos town.

Mykonos may be changing. There may be a different crowd coming: back in the day you’d be on a plane with mostly LGBTQs and a few old hippies, now there are fake lips everywhere you look. But those people go to different bits of the island and you can avoid them like you avoid them when you go to Ibiza. And if, while you’re avoiding, you want a little glimpse into how delicious and glamorous and low-key and stylish Mykonos used to be – and still can be! – you now have the address of Theoxenia.

***mykonostheoxenia.com***