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One for all

A stylish, grown-up Cyprus hotel that welcomes families

IT'S ALMOST MIDNIGHT when we touch down in Paphos and after a short taxi ride, windows all the way down to let in the warm night breeze, we pull up outside Almyra, a minimalist, whitewashed, seafront hotel. After a swift check-in and a moonlit walk from the main building along a path framed by gnarled olive trees and fringed by fragrant beds of rosemary, we arrive at our room, one of a handful in a single-storey block. We kick off our shoes, throw open the glass doors and pad out on to our terrace to gaze up at the stars and breathe in the sea air before flopping into bed.

We don't fully appreciate how glorious the setting is until the following morning, when we throw open the



curtains and find the sea at the foot of the lawn, sailing boats bobbing about in a little marina below and a parasailer gliding past, attached to a giant yellow parachute with a big smiley face on it.

Almyra does a clever thing. It feels stylish and grown-up in a 'before we had kids' way, while catering for the needs of families with children. It also sits on the fringes of the touristy centre

of Paphos, so you can dip in or stay put.

Between our room and the main restaurant, Mosaics, where a vast and excellent buffet breakfast is eaten at tables overlooking the pool, about 12 different members of staff banter expertly with our six-year-old, Eva. The hotel is arranged so that everyone has the space they need to relax. There's the large family pool (with a smaller one next to it for toddlers), surrounded by shaded double daybeds big enough for whole families to snooze on; another a little away from that hubbub, to which those without children gravitate; and then two more – one indoor, the other out, at the peaceful adult-only spa.

Our favourite lunch spot is Ouzeri (open April to November), the hotel's waterfront taverna. Its menu of local Cypriot specialities includes taramasalata, grilled halloumi and wonderfully garlicky sardines. For dinner, we gravitate towards Notios (open



March to December), a Japanese-Mediterranean fusion restaurant between the two main pools, for sushi, sashimi and tempura.

Eva spends several afternoons at the well-run kids' club. She's the perfect age for it and loves hanging out with the other children. Meanwhile, we sip icy mojitos by the pool, I head to the spa for Ilâ treatments and on one occasion – and I'm thrilled we do this because it is unexpectedly wonderful – we stroll along the seafront to Paphos Archaeological Park, the sprawling site of the ancient city of Paphos, which begins just beyond the last shop and stretches for miles, its beautifully preserved Roman villas and mosaics dating back to the 4th century BC. ♦

ALMYRA HOTEL

Doubles from approx
£154, including breakfast
(almyra.com)