

FREE METRO OUT

Swirl for leather **STREET CHIC**

Spitting hatred as yobs ambush Tory conference

Minister needs police escort as candidate is 'punched'

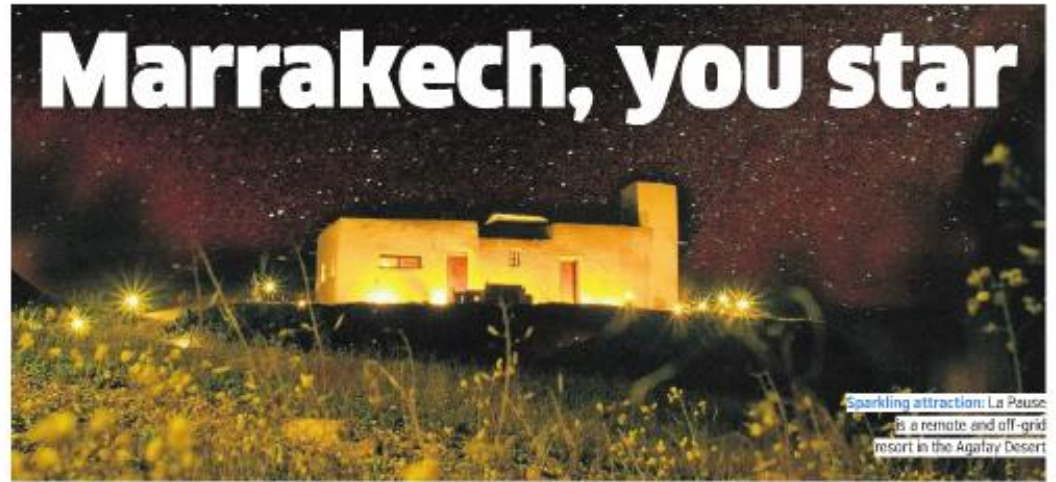
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But today's a duvet day.

CHANGING LIFE INSURANCE FOR GOOD

Stargazers, film buffs and lovers of mountain luxe should go now, says **Maya Boyd**

New altitude luxury
 SET atop a plateau at the foothills of the Atlas Mountains, the much-hyped L'Amandier (lamsandierhotel.com, doubles from £165) opens this month. An hour from Marrakech, L'Amandier is designed by UK architect Nick Gowing and will have six suites, all with terraces and views of the Toubkal National Park and the Ourigane Lake in the distance. Two rooftop penthouses will follow in 2016, with a further 22 beds set for the estate's 14 surrounding villas. Amenities include an outdoor yoga studio, smart infinity pool, sculpted gardens and tennis courts.



Sparkling attraction: La Pause is a remote and off-grid resort in the Agafay Desert



Oasis: Majorelle Gardens offer peace and calm in the city

In Marrakech, October 17 sees the reopening of Amanjena (aman.com/resorts/amanjena) after a three-month enhancement project of the public areas and the addition of a new two-bedroom Maison Jardin.

Desert dreams
 LAWRENCE Max of Moroccan travel specialist Lawrence of Morocco (lawrenceofmorocco.com) is a fan of La Pause, around 20 miles from Marrakech in the Agafay Desert. 'It was founded when eccentric

Frenchman Frédéric Akhime came horse-riding by over a decade ago,' says Max. 'He liked the spot so much he leased it from the resident Berber farmer.' The result is a rustic eco-resort where snoozing, stargazing and staring into space are the order of the day. There's a pool but no electricity and scarcely any mobile reception.

Movies in Morocco
 FRANCIS Ford Coppola has been named president of the 15th Marrakech Film Festival (festivalmarrakech.info, December 4-12).

It is the highlights of Marrakech's social calendar, with Hollywood descending on the Red City's Djemaa el-Fna square for a regal extravaganza hosted by King Mohammed VI. 'The kingdom of Morocco is among my most favourite places on Earth,' says Coppola. 'So the Marrakech International Film Festival is a joy to amend. My paternal grandmother was born in North Africa [Tunisia] and I remember well the stories she told.' Coppola follows in the footsteps of Martin Scorsese, president in 2013.



Views: The infinity pool at L'Amandier

Cool off
 MARRAKECH is rich with the kind of hotels most people could never dream of staying in but many offer day passes to their glorious gardens and pools. La Mamounia (mamounia.com), one of the world's most glamorous retreats, allows non-guests into its majestic manicured grounds and pool for the price of a cab ride in London. Less than ten miles away is the



Screen idol: Francis Ford Coppola

Bekki Country Club where for £15 you can use its enormous pool, while Majorelle Gardens (jardinmajorelle.com) is justly famous for its palms, soaring cacti and blooms. Marrakech's public hammams (steam rooms) will leave you feeling fresh as the proverbial daisy but some are more rough'n'n'ready than others. To cool off with your clothes on, Ben Youssef Medersa (medersa-ben-youssef.com) is a 14th-century Quranic school dedicated to the teaching of Islamic scripture. It's a maze of cool passageways, shady courtyards and serene ponds and pools.

Photo finish
 THE Marrakech Museum of Photography and Visual Arts (mmpva.org), still in its temporary home at the El Badii palace, has polarised opinion among locals and experts. From October 15 to January 15, it will host Japanese photographer Daido Moriyama's snaps of urban life in Japan and Morocco entitled Marrakech: Shooting Light.

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