

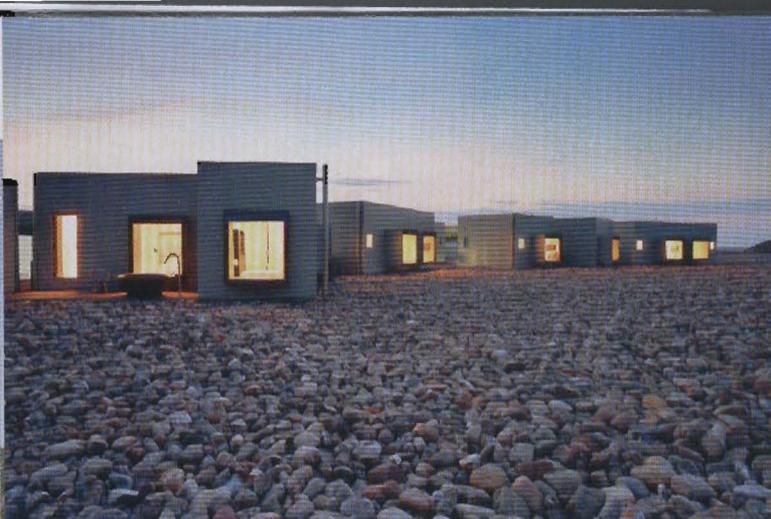
# SCANDINAVIA



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✦ The Riva, which many people consider to be the world's most beautiful motorboat, has been built and tested at Lake Iseo since 1842



The hotel has adapted brilliantly to its natural surroundings

## 5. A breath of fresh Aire

**HOTELS** Whether you choose to trust your own immediate impressions or the praise it has received in a short time, there can be no doubt that the Hotel Aire de Bardenas is a brilliant concept.

Few openings have felt so original yet so obvious since the Hotel Básico in Playa del Carmen on the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico blew our minds in 2005.

The setting in the vast and spectacularly austere semi-desert landscape of the Bardenas Reales de Navarra Natural Park, near the Basque town of Tudela, is simply stunning, and the Barcelona-based architects Emiliano López and Mónica Rivera have adapted accordingly.

From a distance, Aire de Bardenas is reminiscent of some sort of storage facility or temporary quarters – a stray bedouin camp maybe. Large, recycled wooden containers typically found in Tudela crop fields for harvesting fruit and vegetables and transportation have been employed as windbreakers for the outdoor spaces (the strong winds, dust and high temperatures characteristic of the

surroundings give the hotel its name, *aire* meaning “air” in Spanish).

“Given the great views but sometimes inhospitable conditions, we conceived the hotel as a succession of protected and comfortable interior spaces from which to contemplate the exterior,” López and Rivera say.

The building is composed of a series of white cubic structures in steel, glass and wood, arranged around a central court that opens up to the southeast where a plantation of poplar trees and the pool are located.

You enter the main body of the hotel – containing the reception area, hall, meeting room, bar and restaurant, and 10 rooms with private patios – through a plantation of white blossoming cherry trees. The rest of the rooms are freestanding pavilions out in the wheat fields with large projecting windows overlooking the open landscape. Most of the furniture and fittings, including the bathtubs and washbasins, were designed by the architects and made by the metal fabricator who constructed the building – unique features for a unique space.

◆ **Hotel Aire de Bardenas**  
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