

OVER THE MOON: *Desert Dreaming*

Nestled in the Catarpe Valley in Chile lies Alto Atacama, a remote desert lodge and spa in a truly out of this world location. *NATALIE BOLLU* reports

UNLESS YOU CAN AFFORD the sky-high fare, or, of course, if you're lucky enough to be pally with Richard Branson and you get a free trip like Kate Winslet and new husband Ned RocknRoll, a trip into the stratosphere may be a little out of reach. Opt for the next best thing instead and head to Catarpe Valley in Chile, where its awe-inspiring mountainous landscape is said to resemble the surface of Mars.

The Alto Atacama hotel provides all of life's little luxuries such as restorative massages, Turkish baths, yoga fields, hot springs, firepits and complete silence in which to utterly relax. Besides relaxing, there are also plenty of places around the hotel to explore for the more adventurous, including the historic

pre-Columbian Pukará de Quitor ruins and the San Pedro River which neighbour the hotel. Guests can hike the salt flats, trek the Valley of the Moon or even bike ride across the Inca pass.

The hotel has purposely been designed to capture the look and feel of traditional, and local, village architecture and the patterns of the Likanantay people. Llamas and native crops are even looked after on site to add to this traditional feel.

Overall, Alto Atacama is a one-of-a-kind hotel where the location and the astounding setting make it an unbeatable place to unwind and explore. ■

www.altoatacama.com

