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*“When God wanted to create the horse, he said the south wind: I will leave you a creature that is the glory of my faithful, the terror of my enemies, a beauty reserved for those who obey me ... and God took a handful of wind and made a horse.”*

*An Arabian legend*

At the foot of the Atlas Mountains, away from the hustle of the medina, what seemed like only a mirage has become a reality: Selman Marrakech, a palace of distinct, sublime and alluring charm. Passing through the immense portico, the gaze is drawn over the whole property by the geometry of the facades and gardens dotted with fountains, creating a sublime harmony. Across the Mechouar, the traveller gets a glimpse of the interior, a sensual contrast to the grandeur of the exterior.

Designed by Jacques Garcia and built by the best artisans, Selman seduces with its timeless harmony. At this intimate, personal and family-owned property, each guest shares in the joy, love and dreams of their warm and passionate hosts. In this timeless palace whose construction was the vision of the owner, the art of traditional Moroccan hospitality has been revived. Precious moments are embodied in the presence of the beautiful thoroughbred Arabian horses, symbols of a bygone grandeur, which capture the spirit of Selman and invite the joy of living. There are views of the horses from the terraces and the gardens where one can admire the majesty and poise of these animals. Moments of pure grace add to the perfection of this timeless experience.

An essential and unedited experience, a return to the source of forgotten luxury, now found again under the light of the Selman's stars.

[www.selman-marrakech.com](http://www.selman-marrakech.com)

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## Owners:

### **-Saida and Abdeslam Bennani Smires-**

*A dream without stars is a forgotten dream*  
*Paul Eluard*

The Bennani Smires family pursued their dream, without forgetting a single star. Everything is in place to receive friends and travellers as if into their own home.

Like all great hotel stories, at the root of Selman is a family history. Saida and Abdeslam Bennani Smires are creating their grandfather's dream which was to see his family create a project in his hometown. A collector of Arabian thoroughbreds, educated at hotel school in Lausanne, Abdeslam is a young man driven by his endless enthusiasm, and in 2005 launched a project to combine his two passions within an extraordinary hospitality concept which would set new benchmarks: Selman. An unique project which would not have been possible without the support of his parents and most of all, his sister Saida's help, who brings to the table a calmness and pragmatism. Complementary personalities, Saida and Abdeslam have managed to create a place which reflects their characters, as spectacular as it is coherent, a reflection of their family history, brought alive by a lightness of touch.

*With Selman, you have taken a new twist on tourism. Where did the idea come from to create this new concept? Have you got a history of hotelkeeping in your family? Why did you choose Marrakech?*

No, hotelkeeping is not part of our family history. Our family has always been in Finance in Casablanca. But as children we were lucky enough to travel a lot with our parents. I remember, says Abdeslam, when I was about five or six years old, when I spent hours with the Concierge at a Parisian palace hotel. I was delivering messages and giving keys to guests! I loved that! Later on, I was naturally drawn towards hospitality studies at the hotel school in Lausanne. And what better than to return to Morocco, in particular Marrakech, a city that moves everyone with its history and magic?! And then our parents, continues Saida, have

always pushed up to develop a spirit of enterprise and initiative. And today they are alongside us as we fulfill our vision.

*You have entrusted the design of Selman to the famous architect and interior designer, Jacques Garcia, most known in Marrakech for having carried out the entire renovation of La Mamounia in 2009. Why did you choose him and how did the collaboration go?*

Amazingly well! He is a rare person; sensitive, cultivated and he immediately grasped the history and atmosphere that we wanted to convey for Selman, far, far away from the international norm. The principle idea was to create not just a hotel but something much more, a place to be and to live, to generate a unique and timeless experience... whose soul is part of the history and heritage of Morocco. And he succeeded in adapting his artistic vision to incorporate the authentic Moroccan style that we wanted to achieve.

*The Arabian thoroughbred theme is really original. Is it a personal passion that you wished to share?*

Horses are my passion, as is the hotel industry. I have the privilege of combining the two with a consistent association. Just as palaces showcase pieces of art, we have decided to go for a live installation of the most beautiful breed of horse in the world, the Arabian thoroughbred, which is an integral part of our history and culture.

*One feels that you are on a quest for authenticity, is that what led you to choose as the spa brand, the very select house of Chenot?*

Exactly, and we are very pleased and flattered that Dominique and Henri Chenot have agreed to join us on this wonderful adventure. They have created an expertise and developed techniques and programs that are recognized the world over. As befits the Selman concept, Chenot is about as far away from manufactured brands as you can get. Our parents discovered them as clients a long time ago in their thermal institute in Merano, Italy. And now, Dominique and Henri Chenot have allowed us to bring to Marrakech their exclusive cures and treatments, such as the concept of Biolight cuisine and medical treatments using cutting edge technology which is entirely new to the destination.

## -Interview Abdeslam Bennani Smires-

*Abdeslam, why did you want to associate the Arabian horse with the Selman project?*

The horse gave inspiration for the project and so Selman has been built around the horse. I wanted to create a unique hotel project that offered the traveller a strong portrayal of our culture. The horse, profoundly linked to our history, seemed to me to perfectly encapsulate the spirit. I've had the chance to visit the most beautiful stables in the world. And each time, it was an incredible experience. I wanted to be able to offer people the chance to gain access to and share in this otherwise closed equestrian world, to which access is normally only afforded by the invitation of horse owners. I want the guest to be able to enjoy the experience in all its glory. Through doing so, the guest experiences a sense of sharing which is a principle so dear to the Moroccan people.

*Where does this passion for horses come from?*

I can't remember – I have been fascinated by horses since the day I was born! The horse is an instinctive passion of mine; as a child I was always drawn to horses, wanting to pat and stroke them. For me, the horse is the most noble of creatures; one can't tame them completely, you have to build up a relationship of trust over the long-term. In order to gain the trust of a horse you have to push yourself, digging deep and asserting dominance.

*Have you always competed?*

Yes, ever since I've been up on a horse, I've competed at the highest level and I regularly take part in international competitions. For example, I was selected for the Moroccan team to compete in the Mediterranean Games. It's a passion that takes up a lot of my time. I love competing but above all, I love working with my horse, building up a mutual trust and relationship.

*How did you start the breeding program?*

The program was initiated at the same time as the hotel project, which we started in 2005. The breeding program is inextricably linked to Selman and those horses at the hotel will be those that we show to the public. The stud farm is on our 30 hectare property in Rabat, where there are 22 purebred Arabs. The whole mission is to be on the international equestrian scene and many of our horses have also won international beauty awards.

## Jacques Garcia

### -Biography-

Born in 1947, Jacques Garcia discovered his talent for drawing and his fascination for “Objets d’art” at an early age and it was only natural that he should study at the Penninghen School of interior design, a training which he completed in the field of the applied arts.

At the agency where he started out, he specialized in contemporary architecture, notably designing the interior concepts for the Montparnasse Tower and the Meridien group of hotels. Focused on ultra-modern projects, Jacques Garcia opened up at the same time to contemporary art: he went to all the galleries, was captivated by these young artists who succeeded in breaking with the past, and built up a collection based on coups de coeur, intuition and encounters which, when he decided to sell it, would win acclaim. Having a particular passion for conceptual art, Jacques Garcia discovered many parallels with the seventeenth century, for which he had always had a great fondness.

An inveterate antiques-hunter since his childhood, Jacques Garcia accumulated without realizing it the objects that would fill his interiors ten years later. Honing his knowledge of objects through reading and also endowed with an innate intuition, he built up – the result of his passion but also of a mission to patiently reassemble what the French Revolution had so quickly dispersed – a magnificent collection of furniture and royal objects. These had often been wrongly attributed and he acquired them at little cost: “I knew instinctively that this piece of furniture was different from the others, I felt it full of soul, as if crammed with life.”

- *The 1980s*

Very quickly his passion as a collector gave rise to the desire to exhibit his finds and Jacques Garcia gradually secured a private clientele who solicited the help of the great master in breathing new life into their homes. His customers went by the names of d’Ornano, Bouygues, Mauboussin ...

It was also during this period that Jacques Garcia took up private residence in one of Paris’ most stunning buildings, the Hotel de Mansart on the rue des Tournelles. Under Jacques Garcia’s direction, this residence of one of the principal architects of Versailles was restored

to the splendour of its glorious past. He succeeded in elevating it to the status of a masterpiece, embodying as it does the Garcia style, that of a large-scale vision of elegance and of richness without heaviness.

- *The 1990s*

In the early 1990s Jacques Garcia's work took an important turn following his meeting with Diane Desseigne, the owner of the hotel group Lucien Barrière. Starting with the renovation of several suites at the Hôtel Royal in Deauville, a relationship of trust was established between the heiress and the interior decorator resulting in a collaboration that continues to this day. Jacques Garcia renovated the group's most prestigious hotels, from the mythical Hôtel Majestic in Cannes to the Grand Hôtel d'Enghien, and from Dinard to La Baule.

By moving from the private to the public sphere Jacques Garcia took a decisive step that would bring him luck and give him the opportunity to extend his creative range, drawing inspiration from very different sources, from Zen minimalism to neo-Gothic excess and from the exoticism of the Egyptian revival to Napoléon III extravagance.

By this time the name of Jacques Garcia was already very well known, with the press reporting in detail the progress of one of his most prestigious commissions, the Parisian pied-à-terre of the Sultan of Brunei, which covered no less than 6,000 m<sup>2</sup> in the Place Vendôme. But, in fact, it was only in 1996, when the Hôtel Costes was opened, that Parisians were able for the first time to discover the Garcia style in all its opulence. People had never before seen so much personality in a public space. At a moment when minimalism was all-pervasive, it took a singularly independent mind to display such audacity. The Parisian chattering classes applauded it and the Hôtel Costes became one of the most sought-after hotels in the capital. The myth was born and there are now more than 24 prestigious Parisian addresses that carry the Garcia seal: le Fouquet's, Ladurée, L'Esplanade, L'Avenue, La Grande Armée, Le Ruc, Le Cabaret, the Hôtel des Beaux-Arts, Le Rivoli-Notre Dame... The Garcia fever also spread overseas, with contracts pouring in from all over the world. The public flocked to see his outstanding designs in New York, Chicago, Las Vegas, Beirut, Baden Baden, Geneva, The Hague, Brussels and so on. On the eve of the year 2000, Garcia's reputation was consecrated.

The success of his book “Jacques Garcia ou l’*éloge du décor*” (Jacques Garcia, *Decorating in the French*) published by Flammarion confirmed his popularity ratings among the public. With more than 34,000 copies sold in six months, and this in spite of it selling out three times, it was an unprecedented success for the publishing house.

**- *His achievement: The Château and the gardens of Champ de Bataille***

But it would be impossible to recount Jacques Garcia’s incredible career without speaking about Champ de Bataille. This man, who is in the habit of taking his passions to their conclusion, acquired in 1992 one of the most imposing seventeenth-century French chateaux, situated in Normandy about 100 km from Paris. In the space of five years, Jacques Garcia restored Champ de Bataille to its princely splendor, giving the best of himself to this stately home. Champ de Bataille taken on its own displays the full range of Jacques Garcia’s talent, a blending of genres, combinations and borrowings that exalt fine taste, with a series of drawing-rooms, galleries, games rooms and libraries all richly decorated and admirably furnished. But the passion that inhabits him for all things refined soon led to him becoming interested in the gardens that surround Champ de Bataille. The restoration of the gardens in the French style and in the spirit of the designs of André Lenôtre as they had originally been conceived, with groves, landscaped flowerbeds, ornamental lakes, pathways, terraces, stretches of water, fountains and perspectives, returned to Champ de Bataille its original unity. All in all, more than 17 hectares landscaped, leveled out, planted and irrigated: a Herculean task that makes the gardens of Champ de Bataille one of the largest private landscape gardening projects since the beginning of the twentieth century. And because Jacques Garcia loves to pass on his discoveries and communicate his passions, the master of Champ de Bataille receives more than 30,000 visitors every year.

**- *Rewards***

Over the years, Jacques Garcia has become a public personality. He received the medal of the City of Paris in 1994 and was made Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur in 1995. His boundless creativity and visual flair were put to use by the national museums. In 1993 he designed the Marie Antoinette exhibition at the Musée Carnavalet. The press wrote of it: “Emotion was at



its apogee. There we have all the power and probably the magic of matter steeped in spirit – human and sensual, burning and luscious, never dull or dead.” In 1996 he was involved in a large exhibition organized by the city of Paris entitled “All the Gardens of the World” at the Bagatelle Garden. In 1997 he set to the task of resuscitating the Musée de la Vie Romantique, which houses the emotional memories of Georges Sand and her friends. Jacques Garcia has made it one of the most welcoming museums in Paris. The Pharaonic tasks, made in Champ de Bataille garnered him much acclaim that he was made “Chevalier de l’Ordre du MériteAgricole” in 2005. Since March 2006, Jacques Garcia is proud of having been honored by Renaud Dutreil, the Minister for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in receiving the insignia of “Officier de la Légion d’honneur” that crowns his entrepreneurial dynamism and his abilities to promote the excellence of the French expertise throughout the world. A distinction he associated his team with on that memorable day.

With more than 40 large-scale projects completed each year, Jacques Garcia is one of the most sought-after French interior decorators. It was this growing fame that led him to develop his own line of furniture, lamps and fabrics at the turn of the 21st Century, which are the world, and more particularly in the United States. Specializing in mythical places such as James Joyce’s favorite restaurant (Le Fouquet’s) and Oscar Wilde’s Parisian residence (the Hotel des Beaux-Arts), Winston Churchill’s favorite hotel (La Mamounia), Jacques Garcia has also secured a prestigious and international private clientele, not listed herein due to confidential reasons.

## **-Interview with Jacques Garcia-**

Jacques Garcia needs no introduction. Aesthetic, bargain hunter, lover of curiosities and Orientalism, this prolific designer is unrivalled in his ability to imagine and apply a design that becomes the soul of each place. Sought after the world over, Jacques Garcia succumbed to the Bennani Smires family's crazy project. Excited by the audacity of the project, it was at the very first meeting where he sketched the silhouette of the palace, drawing inspiration from the Golden Age of Marrakech and the haciendas typical of Andalucía. Architect as much as interior designer, he imbues his work with an astonishing play of contrasts between the intimacy and confines of inside space with the spectacular perspective that the gardens enjoy.

### ***How did the meeting with the Bennani Smires family come about?***

At the time, for various reasons, I was convinced that I didn't want to take on any further projects in Morocco. Abdeslam came to meet with me and he was full of conviction, overflowing with new and unusual ideas. He conveyed to me his passion for horses and how he wanted them associated with the project. I was completely bowled over by his enthusiasm. He showed me the architect's drawings that had been submitted for planning permission and I really didn't like them. So during this meeting I sketched out for him the project as I saw it, with the sunken central area, and the bricked facades. The hotel was built exactly according to that original sketch.

### ***What is so special about this project? What inspired you? How would you describe it?***

It is an oasis. At the heart of the hotel, there is water, a large sunken space onto which all rooms and public areas open out. With the abundant vegetation tumbling down the slopes between the buildings and the pool, this grand perspective evokes the gardens of Hadrian's villa or the Alhambra....The timeless living legacy of ancient Persia. All these buildings had central areas which were completely protected from the outside world. And this is also very typical of Marrakech. Once in the room, it doesn't feel as though one is in a hotel, you feel cut off from the world. The association with horses also inspired me; the stables, a mix of Indian and Andalusian styles, also denote much character to Selman.

***Every single brick of the facade was laid by hand. It was an epic task that displays huge craftsmanship. Was it important to you to remain faithful to traditional Moroccan craftsmanship?***

When the artisans are well directed, they can produce work that is faithful to the 13th century. Wood, plaster, Zelliges – everything is carved and laid by hand. Since the materials don't age, if they are properly applied and the models are good, it will never turn out like a pastiche.

***How did you design the interior spaces?***

The interior spaces are a critical part of the overall design; the Reception is off to one side of the entrance, hidden away so the guest enters into the heart of the place with a direct view onto the gardens and the sunken space, and on either side there are views of the bar and the restaurant, with the eye drawn by the path to the spa.

***What atmosphere did you want to create in the rooms?***

They are very mysterious. It is something really different from anything else in Marrakech. With 61 rooms, it was important to stand out. I was particularly pleased with the bright bathrooms. The fact that each room has a little alcove which opens onto a terrace gives them a bit of sex appeal. The guest has the feeling of being the only one in the hotel. This hotel is fun and sensual. It's the same with the riads – the atmosphere is hazy and romantic. The rooms are covered in curtains so one feels really cocooned. The guest can while away a whole day in their room without getting bored.

***How did you design the spa?***

The spa is of course inspired by the Orient. It reminds me of the Hammams of ancient Istanbul. For me, the ultimate is at the harem of Topkapi. The optical illusions of light and shade cast by the Mashrabiya screens.... It's quite fleeting and mysterious. It is a place of pure comfort and refinement. With its two private pools, the spa is an oasis within an oasis.

## **-Food & beverage-**

### **Restaurant:**

#### **\* The Selman**

The main restaurant of the hotel, which stretches over 300 m<sup>2</sup> from the lobby. Designed by Jacques Garcia in sparkling shades of green and purple in contrast to the austerity of grandiose architecture, Selman is a chic but casual dining place that is open to the outside. With a direct link to the lobby the restaurant is made up of two parts; a large room with a fireplace sharing the perspective of the lobby and bar, and an extended covered patio. Open to outside guests, The Selman offers an international menu without being pretentious.

#### **\* The Pavilion**

The Pavilion is the perfect place to restore your energy at any time of the day. At the other end of the pool, The Pavilion provides a stunning view over the stables and paddocks where the Selmans' thoroughbred Arabian horses parade. One can eat lunch just a few steps from these spectacular creatures, taking advantage of this unique show. From 12:00 to 16:30, the Pavilion offers a Mediterranean-inspired menu: simple, tasty and fresh.

#### **\* Assyl**

#### **\* Lounge, pool & room service**

At any time of day, guests can enjoy food at Selman. In the lounge or the lobby, a light snack menu is available from late morning to late evening. If you want to enjoy the sun at the pool there is a choice between the Pavilion and a selection of surprising finger food. And of course room service is available from the privacy of the rooms or Riads.



## **\* Bars**

The Selman Bar, the Pavilion Bar and the pool Bar, three spots, where the guests can enjoy their moments of relaxation or meetings around a drink or around a cocktail.

## The Chef: Ludovic Gomiero

### -Biography-

Ludovic Gomiero is a chef whose soul and aspirations are those of a traveller. Toulouse born Gomiero takes his inspiration from Michel Bras and Pierre Gagnaire.

After spending four years under the guidance of Michelin-starred chef Michel Bras, Ludovic Gomiero left France and travelled through the Mediterranean to Morocco. This culinary journey led him to the kitchens of Amanjena in Marrakech where he was appointed chef. From 2002 to 2006, Gomiero perfected his craft, refining his knowledge of Moroccan dishes, his taste for local products and interjects this with his passion for Eastern culture. The result in dishes that are simple, sincere, with a subtle blend of flavors and colors.

In 2006, Gomiero found himself in the kitchens of Le Pavillon, Mauritius, renowned for its lush tropical gardens. By 2009 he had developed a reputation for light yet ambitious dishes with seafood at the heart of the menu and lobster cocoa was his signature dish.

In Cairo, 2009, where different flavours abound, Ludovic Gomiero found himself engaged in a whirlwind venture: He was enlisted to drive several ambitious projects with First Arabian Hotels Hotel & Resorts. Placed at the head of four restaurants and a nightclub spread throughout Cairo, he developed new recipes whose watchwords were authenticity, simplicity and colour; all for outstanding properties. From a high-end French brasserie (La Gourmandise) to a gastronomic restaurant (La Maison Blanche), to an Indonesian restaurant (Indigo) and another luxury brasserie (La Gourmandise Maadi), Ludovic Gomiero demonstrated his multi-faceted talents, excelling in each culinary variation.



In late summer 2011, the Moroccan sun beckoned once again. Here, transfixed by the highlands of the Atlas Mountains, he now imparts his impressive know-how, within the magnificent walls of Selman. In Marrakech, Ludovic Gomiero is anything but a stranger.

Although a connoisseur of the Moroccan tradition, his inspiration extends to the Mediterranean as a whole. Trained in several Michelin-starred establishments, Ludovic Gomiero remains influenced by the culinary poetry and passion of Alexander Bourdas and Michel Bras. He pays close attention to the quality of produce he uses - the most fundamental element - to convey the very characteristics of the land; the key which informs the play of flavours, sober elegance and sincerity of his unpretentious cuisine.

By the summer of 2011, the highlands of the Moroccan Atlas calls Gomiero back to Marrakech where he is now a true connoisseur of Moroccan tradition. Gomiero's work is still very much inspired by Gagnaire and Bras and he brings passion and dedication to the kitchens at the Selman.

## The Stud

The Arabian horse, originally from ancient Persia, is at the heart of Moroccan culture. Its introduction, at the beginning of the 7th century, and then from the 11th century from Arabia, coincided with the gradual Islamisation of the country, and is synonymous with peace and civilization. As such, the thoroughbred stands, as much as Moorish architecture, for a golden age of Moroccan culture.

As such, Abdeslam Bennani Smires decided to pay tribute to this horse that has fascinated the world for millennia. It is the horse that has given his name – Selman is the father of a line of thoroughbreds – and its spirit to the hotel. It is of huge significance. Facing the Andalucian pavilion, the Selman stud has two lavish stables which have been designed and decorated by Jacques Garcia as palaces in their own right. In the gardens, five paddocks, fenced with post and rails are home to the Selman horses, bred from the hotel's own breeding program, roaming in their paddocks for the guests' delight. This equine ballet gives meaning and magic to the place. A visitor feels like the guest of honor at an exclusive stud farm whose doors would normally be open to privileged collectors. This is a truly unique experience.

Adjacent to the paddocks is a huge spring garden which will play host to prestigious events themed around the Arabian horse; garden parties with Arabian horse presentations, and international contests which pay homage to the horses' beauty and refinement and allow guests of Selman to share in this experience.

### *How did you start the breeding program?*

The breeding program emerged from an idea I had as the Selman project was taking shape. I did not want to merely acquire beautiful horses to showcase once the hotel was built. I wished to genuinely create the story of this project myself, leaving nothing to chance. I therefore decided to dedicate myself to breeding, which is now the main activity at the Selman stables.



So, at the time, I bought my first two Arabian horses, even before the work began on site. I carefully selected them on the basis of their Moroccan origins, in order to give the breeding programme a stamp of authenticity.

I then travelled extensively, exploring the most prominent stables of Arabian thoroughbreds, discovering various lineages which were always different and surprising. This was an extremely important time for me, in the sense that it allowed me to develop a vision and a comprehensive knowledge of the Arabian horse and its history. It gradually guided my choices and preferences, so that I could acquire new horses with different genetic influences and provide a unique identity to the breeding program at Selman.

The world of Arabian horses in Morocco, which lagged far behind the breed standards due to inbreeding, has undergone a revolution. The first show competitions in which we participated were a success, with our horses winning first prize for their beauty. Since then, they have become the leading reference for breeders.

I am Moroccan and I am proud to today see the decedents of our stallions throughout Morocco.

## Espace Vitalité Chenot

### « An oasis within an oasis »

Built away from the grand pool, sheltered by the main building, the spa is a tribute to Oriental well-being. Arranged around a central square pool, its seven treatment rooms are hidden behind latticework screens. The vaulted ceiling seems to sparkle like a starry sky, perforated to let light gently filter down from above while the main room and arcade are plunged in semi-darkness, promoting utter relaxation. Light and dark, shadow play, shimmering mosaic tiles, traditional plasterwork... unquestionably inspired by the Orient, equipped with two heated outdoor pools and completely secluded from the rest of the hotel, evoking the ancient Hammam of Istanbul. Steam room, sauna, water jets, hydrotherapy... all contribute to a matchless state of being.

The “Espace Vitalité Chenot” offers a treatment using the Chenot method, as it is practiced at the Henri Chenot Centre at Palace Merano with world-renown success. His concept of health focuses on the principle of "Biontology", based on understanding the evolution of vital resources for the human body at different ages of life.

The Henri Chenot method is completely unique and is based on 40 years of experience. Its mission is to rebalance the body by helping it rid itself of toxins. Through a personalized care program it restores the body's wellbeing.

## **-Interview Dominique Chenot-**

### **What is the Chenot method?**

In as much as man is a competent of a larger natural system, every principle of personal care must extend to a total assessment of the quality of life: from what happens to us to what surrounds us, all of this, influences our daily being.

This is our philosophy: To better understand each individual in order to offer new opportunities for health and physical, mental and emotional well-being, in our treatment centres, our well-being centres and on a daily basis through the cosmetic and dietary products which carry our brand.

All of this is in accordance to a broad and interdisciplinary concept of the individual, with principles developed by on-going research in our laboratories and verified daily by those who come to us and have come to us now more than four decades.

**The principles of Biontology:** The term Biontology, created by Henri Chenot himself, is "the study of the essence of life and its evolution".

Biontology was born from an understanding of Chinese medicine, combined with the most advanced technology of Western medicine. It ultimately seeks a complete vision of the mechanics of man, to work on the balance between the mind, the unconscious and the physical body, alleviating the problems and the aging process, fatigue and organic toxicity.

#### **• The aging process**

The aging of cells, tissues and organs is an inevitable fact. The first signs are dehydration of tissue and skin, the accumulation of fat in blood vessels, a decrease in muscle function, brain function, the nervous system, digestive system and immune defences.

Aging is a phenomenon intimately linked to our lifestyle, the way we use our body and especially the quality of our food: the fuel, which, as it burns, should produce energy without polluting the body.

- **Organictoxicity**

Every day our body metabolizes food and produces not only energy but also toxins, thus causing "**deterioration**" and "**aging**".

This process can be compounded by hereditary factors or particular environmental conditions, by poor physical activity or incorrect food consumption and the unnecessary use of drugs.

A Toxaemia is thereby generated which reduces the vitality of cells, tissues and the overall functioning of our organs. A body like this should and can be rebalanced. Timely intervention may actually slow the aging process.

### **How did the “Espace Vitalité Chenot” at Selman come about?**

I love Marrakech. I play golf and I've been coming here to play regularly since the 1970s. I feel the need to immerse myself in this country at least twice a year. When I met the Bennani Smires family, I realized that we had many similarities. We both have two children involved in the family business. I loved Abdeslam and Saïda's enthusiasm. They really lead with the heart. I was happy to do this project with people for whom I felt an affinity.

### **Was it difficult to adapt your method to the specific environment of Marrakech, which is usually associated with Oriental style treatments and “cocooning”?**

The Chenot philosophy remains true to its own principles throughout the world. That's one reason we stand apart from other spas. The Selman Marrakech took a very conscious decision in choosing us to differentiate themselves in today's commoditized market. There aren't really any adaptations specific to Marrakech; we just sent our expertise, our method and our techniques to a place we love for people to discover.

### **How have you organized the spa in Marrakech?**

It has been organised in line with the application of the Chenot method and like all the spas that carry our insignia. Our spa consists of different departments that work together and complement each other:

- The Biontology Department for massage and beauty treatments for the face, body and scalp.
- The Biontology Department for hydrotherapy which involves whole body wraps, water jet massages and immersion in corrective mixtures of essential oils.
- The Biontology Department of corrective aesthetics that uses advanced technology, soon to be in the presence of a cosmetic surgeon.
- The Fitness and Wellness Department equipped with the latest machines.
- The Culinary Biontology Department that offers a choice of Biolight menus in the restaurant.

All of this allows us to offer our guests a complete program to help restore harmony, wellness and energy.

### **Is "bio-light" cuisine a major component of your method?**

Absolutely. The Biolight proposition serves to demonstrate that our 'diet' is well-harmonised with good food that is beautifully presented. The Chef at Selman Marrakech learned the philosophy of our cuisine with me. It is a diet which above all considers the selection of produce and methods of cooking. It teaches us that to follow a healthy diet is also a pleasure. The cuisine presented is part of our true identity and our research.

## The Chenot Rehabilitation Program

- *Biolight diet*

The Biolight menu, consisting of light, healthy foods, prepared using methods that preserve all of their beneficial nutritional properties, presented in "well-being" portions.

- *Biontologie Aesthetic Interventions*

- ✓ *Application of active ingredients and essential oils from the "Chenot" Range*

Including exclusive blends of selected botanical and marine ingredients such as trace elements, salts, algae, plants and flowers; the effectiveness of which is the result of continuous testing in the research and development laboratories of the Academy of Biontology.

- ✓ *Drainage*

This is practiced manually and by means of traditional but highly effective glass suction cupping.

- ✓ *Stimulation of Musculotendinous Meridians*

Musculotendinous meridians are the paths of energy flow. Bodies release their energy throughout the body. This energy can be localized and controlled for each organ by acting on Musculotendinous meridians. Each organ has its own power: It can be measured and stimulated.

✓ *Energy Point Stimulation*

The technique of electro-stimulation through the Chenot method works on energy points that are on the main meridian paths and can also improve the tissue tone, as, for example, in the treatment of the face.

✓ *Musculotendinous Massage*

Tendon and muscle massage is performed manually and by means of instruments capable of releasing energy blockages, by acting on muscles and tendons tissues to tone and regenerate. The use of “cupping” can accelerate the rhythm of fluids in the body and stimulate the removal of impurities and cell regeneration.

• **Hydro-energy Treatment**

Restores the smooth flow of liquids through the body, involving three phases:

✓ *Hydro-Aromatherapy*

A special massage technique using essential oils. Variations of temperature and water pressure act with plant extracts on the vasodilatation or vasoconstriction of capillaries.

✓ *Phyto-mud Therapy*

Mud, soft and comforting, is enriched with pure microalgae, white or green clay and pure essential oils.

✓ *Hydrojet*

This is the third and final phase of the Hydro-energy Treatment: jets aimed at precise points on the body restore energy and vitality. Toning and firming.