



Astraeus

Discover the Real Greek Cyclades

Newsletter Issue July 2019

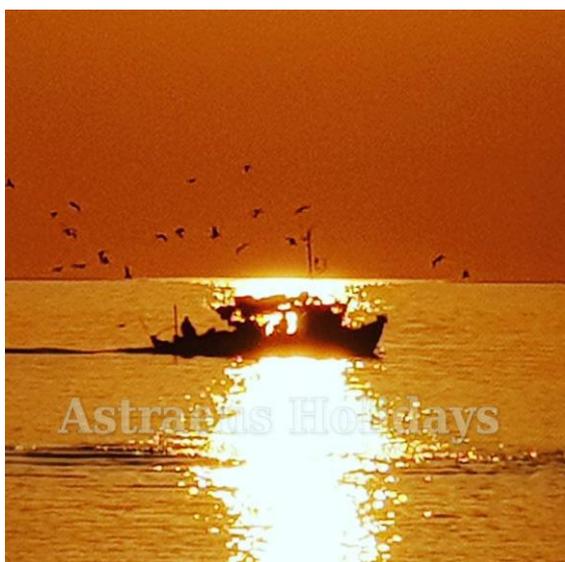


Figure 1 Fishing boat view from our balcony - Syros

Well summer is here!

After a cooler than average spring we now have temperatures of 30 degrees – we still do have a breeze but, nothing like some of the gusts that were driving us crazy earlier on in the season! May and June flown by and thank you to all of our lovely clients who have come and gone, we hope to see you again one day on these beautiful islands

"Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time."

—John Lubbock, The Use Of Life



Figure 2 Lividaki Beach - Folegandros

So coming up, as usual some news from the islands, our best beaches (you may have different ideas!) and some news about a very special October holiday.

Yet again this is mainly my work (Rachel) – so Brian has worked very hard finding some good photos!



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Our News

Summer is here and we are having a heatwave! Temperatures are forecast to be above 30 degrees every day for the foreseeable future and the best place to be is the beach and in the sea – that obviously does not apply to us – although many believe we spend our life on the beach! Syros is filling up as we are now in Greek holiday season and our sleepy beach village is fully woken up – with the sounds of children playing on the beach and Greek music at night – plus the not so nice sound of the horn sounding from the bus as it keeps getting stuck by double parked vehicles

Unfortunately, we had our first ferry strike day on Wednesday (apart from May 1st which is almost an annual thing!) No further strikes are planned at the time of writing this.

Tourism to all of the islands is up and availability in most of our accommodation is virtually non-existent now in July and the first two weeks of August. Travelling round you can't help notice the increase of Americans who are "discovering" the islands as well as tourists from all over Europe. However, as in my opinion the last two weeks of September and early October are the best time to be here and availability and prices are great then

Coming up the 15th of August here is a public holiday known *Dekapentavgoustos* (Dormition of Virgin Mary) In the Greek Orthodox calendar this date marks the moment when Mary, ascended into Heaven, rather than a day of mourning it is considered a day of celebration and whichever island you are on there will be something happening including processions and fireworks, especially on Tinos when you can't get accommodation anywhere near the town for love nor money!



News from the Islands



Figure 3 View from Serifos Chora

Serifos

Vargia Beach in Serifos will become Greece's first non-smoking beach this summer. Although there will be smoker zones! The message is an environmental one when cleaning the beach volunteers found hundreds of butts in the sand, again it is a matter of wait and see as a very cynical friend of ours here said as they can't ban it inside it is highly unlikely to work outside! Plenty of

work is being done to start improving the environment here with Sikinos becoming the first island to ban plastic straws and Donousa the first island to ban single use plastics.

Mykonos

Two things I am not familiar with have been hitting the news in Mykonos, firstly Lindsey Lohan has reputedly shut down her self-named luxury beach bar Lohan Beach House at Kalo Livadi which opened with much fanfare last summer.

And secondly the 2019 Gumball Rally was launched in Mykonos on the 8th of June with an official opening party at another luxury beach resort Nammos. (I hope you are enlightened by those two stories as I am!!)



Figure 4 Mykonos the windmills!



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Santorini

The world's "first" museum dedicated to the fabled city of Atlantis has opened on Santorini, situated near the village of Megalohori. Many theories abound about Atlantis and its connection with Santorini. Meanwhile in regards to Mykonos and Santorini *Greek Reporter* recently had an article based on research by Trivago which found these two islands are the two most expensive in the Mediterranean with an average of 705 on Mykonos and 589 on Santorini for a room for night in the summer, the prices are blamed on high demand and limited capacity on what are two relatively small islands. (tell us something we don't know!).

"But afterwards there occurred violent earthquakes and floods; and in a single day and night of misfortune all your warlike men in a body sank into the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like manner disappeared in the depths of the sea."

— Plato, Timaeus/Critias



Figure 6 Glyfada Beach Naxos

Beaches with character

You will be familiar with a lot of the beaches here if you have seen my previous newsletters as we try and include a few pictures every month – but below are our ten that are just that little bit different

Eva Beach **Glyfada**
-well we have to start on Naxos don't we! Glyfada is a huge white sandy unorganised beach in the south-west of Naxos, surrounded by sand dunes and cedar trees the beach even in the height of summer is a tranquil and peaceful place, grab your towel and relax! (Brian)



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Δύο **Apollonos Beach** in the north of Naxos is the recommendation of one our clients “right by friendly tavernas, fantastic snorkelling from the rocks near the car park, and a great drive across the mountains to get there” (SD)

Τρεις **Plaka Beach** – (the last one on Naxos) – Gloriously long and sandy with views of Paros (just avoid the nudist bit unless that is your thing!) also you don’t have to drive to this beach hop on a bus and get off at Plaza Beach Hotel the further south you walk the quieter it gets, there are also plenty of beds and umbrellas to hire. (Rachel)

Τέσσερις **Livadakia Beach** – Folegandros “It’s remote and otherworldly, you can hike there from Ano Meria or get there by boat. Pure white stones, turquoise water and diving from the cliffs” (Lindsay)

Πέντε **Agios Ionis** – Mykonos, this narrow sandy beach faces Delos – we don’t come here to sunbathe but to sit in the restaurant Hippie Fish which was originally the bar in *Shirley Valentine* (this maybe only of relevance to old people like me!) (Rachel)

Έξι **Kolimithra Beach** – Tinos. Around a 20 minute drive from Tinos town this beach has emerald green sea with a lovely yellow sand – it can be windy and that is why there is a surf school here – there is also a fantastic beach bar, which is actually a classic VW camper van – there are mushroom shaped wicker umbrellas to rent on the beach and everything is designed to be completely removed in winter so the beach goes back to nature (Brian)

Επτά **Paleochori Beach** – Milos. Surrounded by multicoloured rocks this sheltered beach with crystal-clear water is a popular tourist beach on Milos – so why does it stand out, well it is situated above the remaining volcanic activity on Milos and a couple of taverna’s still cook their food in pots buried in the sand – also in the sea there are sulphurous springs making it quite a different swimming experience (Rachel)



Figure 7 Beach Bar Kolimbretha Tinos



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Οκτώ **Grammata Beach** – Syros. One for the purists you need to take a boat trip from Kini or hike for about an hour from St Michalis, this beach is in a secluded bay which in antiquity was used by sailors to shelter from the wind and they left graffiti! These inscriptions of sailors with wishes and entreaties to the Gods to continue safely on their travels are still preserved today in the smooth rocks of Grammata,, according to archaeologists, they date from classical antiquity to the middle ages (Brian).

Εννέα **Santa Maria Beach** – Paros. Beautiful sandy beach around a ten-minute drive from Naoussa or take the boat from Naoussa Harbour – clear beautiful waters with a great view of Naxos – but there is a caveat!!! This beach is extremely popular and has a water sports centre so it is one you may want to avoid in the high season but at the end of September and even October it is a little piece of heaven on earth. (Rachel)

Δέκα **Galissas Beach** – Syros – this is a more sentimental choice – Galissas was the first resort we stayed in all those years ago when we first came to Syros – it is a long (for Syros) sandy beach with clear blue sea which is perfect for swimming (Brian swam there in December but would not recommend it!) If you want some exercise you can walk to the little Catholic Church on the hill overlooking the beach – otherwise just relax and when it gets to hot take a lovely lunch in the restaurant on the beach! (Brian and Rachel)

"To myself, I am only a child playing on the beach, while vast oceans of truth lie undiscovered before me." William Manchester



Figure 8 Galissas Beach from the church in March



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Three weeks in Syros in October

Are you interested in three weeks in stretching out summer – immersing yourself in life on this all year-round island? We are offering a stay in one of our favourite hotels on the island Syros Atlantis with a night in Athens or Mykonos on either side dependant on your departure airport. You can also add on a few nights on Paros/Naxos or Tinos, should you wish or extend your Athens stay so you can get in a bit of sightseeing and early Christmas shopping. The weather will not always be hot and sunny October is a combination of beach days and walking days – (If you can't make the full three weeks but are interested please don't hesitate to ask as always, we will tailor the holiday for you) We will be organising some activities such as dinners out in local restaurants – tours of the Capital and Ano-Syros, and with the wonderful family that run the hotel you couldn't be in safer hands!

Base price for 21 days in Syros (o/n Mykonos/Athens) – commencing 1st week in October (including one night in either Mykonos or Athens) on a bed and breakfast basis (half board in Mykonos and Athens) including all transfers and ferries £1000pp (this price is based on two people sharing – excluding flights – which are generally much cheaper in October – if you wish to travel on your own please contact me for the price - Rachel

And finally!



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What to read – not a beach one this time, with another trip to Athens on the horizon I am really interested in reading this;

Walking in Athens with Constantine Cavafy – by Constantine Cavafy. A cosmopolitan by birth, Cavafy travelled for the first time to Greece in the summer of 1901, accompanied by his brother Alexandros. His stay in Athens constitutes the topic of this book

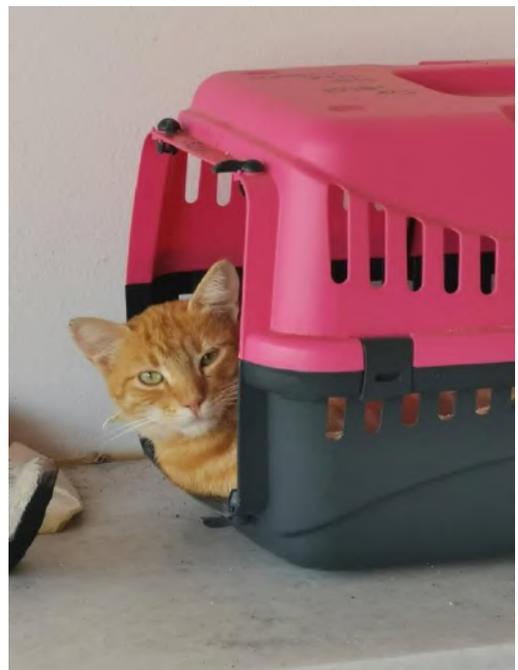
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts and eloquence.

John Milton



An update on the three baby kittens that took to hanging out by our apartment last October that Brian nicknamed the three stooges

Well Larry remained and here is now (he does not have a lazy eye he was just waking up!



Thank you for reading this, look forward to seeing you soon

Rachel and Brian

Syros – July 2019



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Figure 9 The Usuline Convent - Loutra Tinos