

The Corfiot

Corfu's English Language Monthly Magazine

October 2008

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No. 214

End of Season

Manners Maketh Man

...and maybe the odd Brit holidaymaker

Songs of Blue and Gold
Author interview

Information

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Afra, 49100 Corfu

Mobile: 6948 889174

Messages: 26630 98002 / 26630 91304

email: corfiotm@otenet.gr

Website: www.thecorfiotmagazine.com

Postal Address P.O. Box 445, Corfu 49100

Editor Hilary Whitton Paipeti
6948 889174

Columnists - Contributors

Sarah Button, Clifford Owen, Pete Button
John Forte, Lionel Mann, Maureen McNamara,
Louisa van Vuurde

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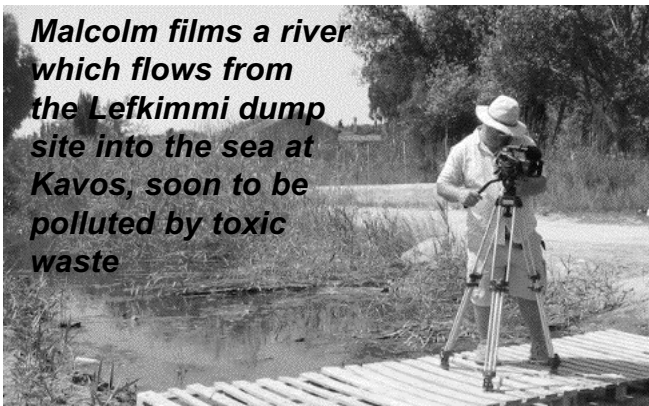
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ear to the ground

BY THE TIME YOU HAVE READ THIS, OFFICIAL WORD WILL BE OUT ABOUT THE RECENTLY INITIATED MOVEMENT FOR CORFU'S AUTONOMY. Just before publication of this issue, I had information that the BBC had scheduled a report on the story for the last weekend in September. The report came about as a result of a recent visit by the BBC's Athens correspondent Malcolm Brabant, best known for his coverage of the Croatian War. The Guardian is also onto the story. Watch this space!!!

At the same time as he filmed his story on autonomy, Malcolm covered the subject of the riots over the Lefkimmi rubbish tip, which we have been reporting on since early this year. Harry and I took him to see the Tembloni dump, to film how bad management of the waste has polluted the surrounding area. We found a ditch full of hard black mud, dry from the summer heat. Or so we thought. We carried on walking and talking, leaving Malcolm to film; then I thought I heard him call 'Harry, I'm stuck!' However, Harry thought he'd said 'Harry, stop!' - we presumed he was requesting silence, and left him in peace for a few minutes. But when we returned to the spot, we discovered that I had heard right; the 'dry' mud was only a thin crust over a pit of polluted black slime, into which Malcolm had gone up to his waist. Unbelievably, he was still filming, and continued the shoot as four people were deputed to pull him out, whereupon he filmed the slime on his legs! I suppose it's what we should expect of a guy who filmed the bombing of Dubrovnik, and it will certainly make good television!

Malcolm films a river which flows from the Lefkimmi dump site into the sea at Kavos, soon to be polluted by toxic waste



ONE OF THE QUESTIONS MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED OF ME IS WHETHER THERE EXISTS A GOOD MAP OF THE ISLAND. A couple of months ago, I reported in this column on the pathetic and grossly misleading attempt at cartography by the 'respected' Greek publishing house of Toubis Editions, which is fairly typical of the junk that passes for maps here on the island. Now, however, I have found one that I can genuinely recommend. It's published by **Freytag and Berndt** (www.freytagberndt.com) and at a scale of 1:50 000 is twice the size of the norm. It has contours and shading, and while not completely error-free is detailed and accurate! It also shows the course of the Corfu Trail.

ANOTHER EXCELLENT MAP IS THE ONE PRODUCED BY GANGADIS PHOTOCOPY SHOP by the City Theatre. Gangadis took advantage of the release of previously top secret planning maps, and has produced a full-island map using the 1:5 000 series. It's only available to order. You can also buy copies of maps at 1:5 000 scale, though they are in black and white and difficult to decipher if you don't know what you're looking at. And a map the size of a bedsheet shows only a couple of villages!

AN EXHIBITION WELL WORTH VISITING THIS MONTH is a retrospective tribute to the artist Mondo, who died in suspicious circumstances at Myrtiotissa a few years ago. The exhibition will be held at the Municipal Art Gallery in the Palace of Saint Michael and Saint George, and runs from 4 to 30 October. Don't miss seeing the remarkable work of this much-missed artist!

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Sundays 10.30 Holy Communion
19.00 (1st, 3rd & 5th of month) Songs of Praise
(Sunday School & Youth Group run same time as Services except Family Service)

REGULAR EVENTS

Tuesdays 10.00 Library & Coffee Morning
Wednesdays 10.00 Coffee & Kids
Wednesdays 12.00-14.30 Lunch Box
Wednesdays 19.00 Scrabble Club (last Wed. in the month)
Thursdays 10.30 Bible Study, the Old Testament (new series)
Fridays 10.30-12.00 Informal Prayer Meeting

HOW TO FIND HTC: From San

Rocco Square: Walk down Alexandros Avenue to the first set of lights TURN LEFT up the hill. Look for the Bella Venezia Hotel sign at the end up a bank. Bear right on up the hill past the Orpheas Cinema. The main road bends left; you should see the sea now! Turn immediately left into Zambeli Street. Holy Trinity Church is 100 metres past the Bella Venezia Hotel.

From the Liston/Spianada: Find the band stand in the middle! Take the street directly opposite (it takes vehicles). The old Ionian Parliament building is at the top of that street and HTC is behind it.

This month's name days

03. Dionysios
06. Thomas
07. Sergios
08. Pelagia
18. Loukas
20. Artemios, Gerasimos
21. Sokratis, Christodoulos
23. Iakovos
26. Dimitrios

Name-day ritual dictates that you visit the home of the celebrating person, who will be holding an 'at home' - no invitation required. Take along a simple gift (alcohol, flowers, cake) and you will be offered a drink, nuts, cake, and some nibbles.

Rev. Dr. Clifford Owen will be finishing his time in Corfu on October 31st.

His new post will be as Priest-in-charge of the English Church in Oostende and Brugge.

We wish Clifford and Avis well in their new life, and hope that they will remember Corfu with affection.

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NEWS

Thousands of visitors stranded as XL goes bust *British authorities accused of neglect*

Thousands of British holidaymakers had their September vacations upset after XL, the UK's third biggest tour operator, went into administration. XL was the second largest UK operator in Corfu after Thomson, and included the well known brand Kosmar.

The Civil Aviation Authority and the travel industry were working together to repatriate stranded tourists, not all of which were on ATOL-bonded packages. It is estimated that the company had 85,000 holidaymakers abroad and 200,000 forward bookings. XL mainly handled destinations in the Mediterranean.

Sky News revealed that British passengers were still camping out in the airport days after the collapse of the company, causing a row to break out between British and Greek authorities. The holidaymakers said they had been neglected by both Britain's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the British consul on the island.

British and Greek authorities disagree over who is responsible for the situation. The Foreign Office says Britain's consul in Corfu was told by Greek authorities there were no passengers in need of assistance at the airport. But the airport's manager says he personally informed the British Consulate that there were tourists there who required help.

Thomas Cook reps face trial *Judges reject poison gas appeal*

Two Thomas Cook employees will still have to face trial in Corfu after a local judge overturned an appeal by the District Attorney. The pair, said to be Richard Carson, 26, a health and safety inspector, and Nicola Gibson, 24, a holiday representative, stand accused of negligence leading to the deaths of Robert and Christianne Shepherd, aged six and seven respectively, of Wakefield, UK. The children died from carbon monoxide poisoning from a faulty boiler in their holiday bungalow at the Louis Corcyra Beach Hotel in October 2006.

Three of the island's most senior judges ruled that the two employees should not have relied on hotel assurances that the gas-powered heating and cooling system was safe, and should have conducted proper inspections themselves.

Thomas Cook said it had a signed contract from the hotel advising there was no gas used in the property. Along with other UK tour operators, it had undertaken comprehensive audits of the property, compliant with the Federation of Tour Operators guidelines.

The company is fully supporting their employees, and believes that they will be vindicated in full when the case, scheduled for November, is heard. Representatives from the management and maintenance contractors at the Louis Corcyra Beach Hotel will also stand trial. The British pair could face up to 20 years in prison if found guilty.

As a result of the Sky report, temporary relief was arranged for the tourists - but not by British authorities. Local hoteliers gave them free accommodation until return flights were arranged.

Holidaymakers from Northern Ireland were rescued by Monarch Airways, but two thirds of the passengers travelling to Belfast returned without their luggage, adding to the misery. Some visitors reported that their reps failed to show up to inform them of the company's collapse, and they only found out from the Internet.

George Doukas, a local travel agent and board member of the Pan-Hellenic Federation of Tourism Enterprises and SETE said that XL's bankruptcy constitutes a big problem for Corfu's tourism, especially as Kosmar was a Greek specialist. 'But hopefully Thomas Cook and the TUI group will take up the capacity,' he added. He said that the travel industry in general had learned a lot of lessons from the crash, especially over insurance.

XL went into administration after failing to secure a multi-million pound rescue package. In a statement it blamed 'volatile fuel prices and the economic downturn.' It is the biggest failure to hit the travel industry in years, and other tour operators are expected to follow.



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Chat about Chaplains

✍ John Forte

Departing Anglican Chaplain Clifford Owen, whose outstanding ministry is going to be so sorely missed, in praising the performance of previous permanent chaplains (Corfiot, August) was unable through lack of space to mention the debt owed to seasonal chaplains. Consequently, as one who was privileged to pay tribute at his memorial service to Brian Woodhams, the most beloved, endearing and dedicated chaplain of all, may I be allowed to fill in the gap by quoting from my address:

For twelve years, on countless occasions, Archdeacon Brian Woodhams came to the rescue of Holy Trinity whenever there was a crisis, to fill an unexpected vacancy for a seasonal or temporary chaplain.

Whether as seasonal, interregnum or emergency chaplain, it is true to say that seldom in the field of pastoral duty has any ministry been conducted with more expertise, more charisma and more devotion than by Brian. Furthermore, seldom - if indeed ever - has any ministry been performed with greater courage and fortitude than that displayed by him on his last chaplaincy.

Shortly before boarding his plane for Corfu on 6 July 1992, Brian suffered a horrific fall which left him battered and bruised, almost beyond recognition. Instead of being hospitalised, it was typical of the man that he adamantly insisted on proceeding to Corfu to carry out his mission. In doing so, he signed his own death warrant.

In one of the hottest summers on record, Brian - at the age of 83, under medication and in pain and discomfort - unflinchingly set about officiating at routine church services, funerals, memorial services, baptisms, nuptial 'blessings' and numerous church functions, as well as visiting the sick and those in prison and undertaking other demanding tasks. All this in temperatures in which a lesser man would soon have wilted. On his departure of 17 August, Brian was clearly saddened to be leaving Corfu, which he loved so much and in which he was so much loved.

Nevertheless, at the same time he was bubbling over with enthusiastic joy and delight that Holy Trinity had found a worthy permanent chaplain in Bill Elliot. At that moment the thought crossed my mind that perhaps this was an expression of Brian's 'Nunc Demittis' - and so it seemingly turned out to be.

Shortly after returning home, Brian was admitted to hospital where, barely eight days after leaving Holy Trinity, the merciful Lord let him depart in peace without pain or suffering.

Here at Holy Trinity, as long as he is remembered, Brian will live on in our hearts.

John Forte is Honorary Life Governor of the Commonwealth & Continental Church Society, now renamed the Inter Continental Church Society.

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Miners choose Corfu

What has the CEO of Mongolian development company, a gold mine owner from Mexico, a industrialist from India and an Uranium speculator from Canada in got in common? And what connection do they have with Agios Stephanos in North West Corfu?

Answer: They were all graduates of the Cambourne School of Mines in Cornwall (recognised as the best mining school in the world), and they came to Corfu from all over the world in September for a reunion. Their visit was hosted by Gavin Mackay, also a graduate of the school, at his apartment and villa complex in Agios Stephanos.

A total of 23 - graduates of 1963-66 and their spouses - took part in the event. For most, it was their first time in Corfu, and they were 'impressed'.

The Arillas Wine Festival was a highlight. 'I was amazed that the local people were happy to let us join in the dancing, even though we hadn't a clue what we were doing and were therefore unintentionally disruptive,' said one graduate. Cornish Pasties were ordered specially for the sake of nostalgia.

Though this was the third reunion, the majority of the graduates had not seen each other for 45 years. 'Even though we were all student together so long ago, it's like the years haven't passed,' said Gavin. The next reunion will be in three years, in India or Mexico. And, apart from happy memories of Corfu, the lasting

memorial to this one is a plaque which the graduates presented to their hosts: *This plaque commemorates the reunion of 1963-66 graduates of the Cambourne School of Mines in Cornwall held in Agios Stephanos September 2008, with enormous gratitude for the generosity and hospitality of Gavin and Angela.*

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Volante Strings are here again!

The Worcestershire String Orchestra 'Volante Strings' will be making it's fourth visit to Corfu this October.

Following an extremely wet British summer, the members are hoping for some strong Corfiot sunshine to accompany some music making in what's become a favourite destination, as well as meeting up with friends once more. They're bringing some new music as well as one or two old favourites, plus a new venture in the form of a chamber music concert at Villa Pacolina. Each concert will include a light supper and drink. Early booking is advised as seating is limited at each venue.

For each concert, contact 26610 31467 or 6947 287816
All tickets 15 euro to include light supper and glass of wine

Winter Walks

SATURDAY, 4 OCTOBER Porto Timoni and the Afionas Headland. Includes swimming, weather permitting (1½ hours ***). Meet at Night Owl, Afionas, 10.30 for 11.00 start. Lunch at Night Owl, Afionas.

SATURDAY, 11 OCTOBER Liapades Hinterland and Limni Beach. Includes swimming, weather permitting (2 hours **). Meet at Liapades Square, 10.00 for 10.30 start. Lunch at Cricketers, Liapades.

SATURDAY, 18 OCTOBER Strinilas Circuit and the Dragon Church (1½ hours **). Meet in Strinilas Square, 10.30 for 11.00 start. Lunch at Stamatis, Strinilas.

SATURDAY, 25 OCTOBER Doukades and Saint Simeon (1½ hours **). Meet in Doukades Square, 10.30 for 11.00 start. Lunch at Doukades.

SATURDAY, 1 NOVEMBER Konstanti Hill and the Dandolo Tower (2 - 2½ hours **). Meet at Freddo Bar, Acharavi, 10.00 for a 10.30 start. Lunch Skondros Taverna, Acharavi Beach.

Harvest Festival and Gift Day will be held in Holy Trinity Church at 10.30 on Sunday, 5 October. The guest preacher will be Mrs. Jackie Dallos from Lefkada. Jackie is now a Reader (Preacher) in training in the Diocese in Europe.

CORFU CONCERT SERIES 2008

Sunday, 26 October at 18.00

Villa Spanopoulos, Ropa Valley

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Monday, 27 October at 18.00

Casa Lucia, Sgombou

Programme as above but will include Bob Thomas - Worcester Brawls

Tuesday, 28 October at 18.00

Villa Pacolina, Gouvia

An evening of Chamber Music
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CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

Sitting at an angle to the traffic

 **Clifford Owen**

This is my swansong and, like all 'famous last words', they risk being taken down and used in evidence against one. September 30th marked my 35th anniversary of Ordination as an Anglican clergyman and I have to confess the secret of mostly loving it, most of the time. It has had its difficult, stressful, and hurtful times. They are inevitable. But 'being a vicar' has mostly been a fulfilling life.

So what would I say has been the most endearing and enduring feature of this life spent behind a piece of white plastic around one's neck? At the top of my list I would have to say: the privilege of access to people. I have had knocks on my door on a Friday night with money-less desperados trying to feed their kids over the weekend (or so they said!). I have walked nervously through tough council estates to visit people in distress. I have attended name-dropping dinner parties with the 'mess silver' on the polished tabletop. I have listened to the heartbreak of couples feeling their relationship had ended. I have blessed everything from wedding rings to rowing boats. I have heard words from broken people that they could entrust to no-one else.

So I have to say that being a Christian minister gives one not the right, but certainly the privilege, of access to people. I have found few sentences better that sum up the chaplain's job description than that enjoined upon Royal Navy Chaplains. They are to be leaders of the Christian community and 'the friend and adviser of all on board'. The Chaplain sits slightly outside the system. He offers friendship to all without pushing his way in where it is not requested. There is another phrase I came across

some years ago about Christian ministers: 'they sit at an angle to the traffic'. They are part of the traffic of human life. They move with it, but carry a constantly reflective stance about life and people. They seek to understand in the encounters with many individuals what makes them tick. The minister is a relationships person. By his relationship with God - his spirituality if you like - he witnesses both to the Almighty as encountered reality and also in a human context of relationship. The vicar is a 'connector' of people with themselves, their fellows and God. He does not do it alone, but with the whole congregation. Having said that he does it imperfectly. If his own spirituality dims he may not be quite as useful as he should be. He should help people to find their roots and identity.

So having said that it is time to say farewell to Corfu in the sure knowledge that this place is also filled with a kaleidoscopic expat community, who have made my time here very interesting! I am only going to single out one person on this occasion to thank: Hilary, our Corfiot editor. She has not only granted me a monthly column in this publication. She has also mostly tolerated and printed what I have written these last 5.5 years! She has clearly taken my advice from parish magazines: that if you want people to read them, they need a slightly sharp provocative edge! (well done H). I would also like to thank Hilary for her enthusiasm and leadership of the Saturday morning walks over the years. Not only have they been a unique way of reaching those parts of Corfu that the tour buses cannot reach, they have also been the means for Avis and me to meet so many wonderful people. So in thanking Hilary I am using her in a representative way for all of you out there who have been such good pals these last five years or so.

Finally Hilary, I do hope that one day you will be successfully rewarded in organising a Corfu Half-Marathon; preferably before I am too old to run it!

...and so to pastures new. On October 30th we will take our leave on the 07.00 to Venice, from where we will fly to Paris (CDG) and on by TGV to Brussels. Then to our new city of residence: Oostende, where I will have to pastor the English Church together with St. Peter's Brugge. There will be another language to learn (Flemish Dutch), but of one thing I am sure: there will be more human beings, just like us, needing to be listened to, befriended, whom the Almighty will place across our path. I shall still be sitting 'at an angle to the traffic'. Thus we shall engage with a different part of Europe. As we give, so we shall receive.

Thank you Corfu for all you have given to us these last six years. We shall miss you. May you 'fare-well' ...and God Bless.

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The Ark finds new homes for Ollie and Dassia

✍️ **Louisa van Vuurde**

In the August edition we mentioned the many reports of dogs hit by cars and injured. Mostly they have broken or fractured legs. Some have been lucky in that we could rescue them, operate and even rehome them. Two of those injured dogs have been rehomed in Holland, where they found new owners who did not mind that their dog couldn't run a marathon. StichtingAAI, the Dutch animal welfare organisation, kindly sponsored the operations. We named these two dogs Spaso and Spas, from the Greek spasmeno, meaning broken.

Here at the Ark, it is not always easy to find good reliable new families for those dogs. We do try, but we need time and cooperation to find a solution. We are a small group of people with limited means and space. Therefore, if you have a bit of the time and space we are lacking, please help us by fostering a dog for a while. We are not like the RSPCA in the UK, so we have to disappoint the people who phone us and ask, 'Where can I drop off the dog which has been dumped in my garden?' We don't have any facilities to cater for this.

So although we cannot help everyone, some successes do count.

At the Summer Garden Fair, organized by Jon and Christopher, the Ark 'promoted', Ollie a dog which needed a good home. And the result was that Ollie found a very nice home with an English family and their other dog, right here in Corfu. He is doing very well, is very loyal to his new owners, and playful with the other dog. So Ollie is one more dog which will be safe for the winter...



Then another example of a new safe future is Dassia, a gentle dog who is now with her new owner - near Chicago, USA! Very coincidentally, two families were interested in giving her a new home; the other was an English family with three kids and two similar dogs, who wanted to give Dassia a safe future in the UK, and were willing to pay all expenses related to quarantine period. But when they heard that Helen in Chicago was so in love with this dog, they were happy for her to go America. When all was arranged, Dassia went via Amsterdam to Chicago. She stayed a few days in Holland to be ready for her next long trip. There, Jennifer took care of the dog at her house, where she has three dogs of her own, amongst them a galgo, saved from Spain.

Dassia is now reunited with Helen and her family. They have already two older dogs from a local rescue centre. She very quickly got used to the American lifestyle of

life; the family have a big fenced garden and woods around, so for sure Dassia has found her 'golden basket'.

This brings us to the matter of the quarantine regulations in the UK and Ireland. For most other European countries, a valid rabies vaccination and a pet passport allow a dog to travel. But to travel to the UK and Ireland one needs to have the so-called 'bloodtest' results. At least a month after the rabies vaccination, a blood sample is taken and sent to an Athens laboratory. Six months afterwards, if all is OK, the dog is permitted to enter the UK or Ireland. If one keeps the rabies shot updated, the dog will be able to travel for the rest of its life to UK and Ireland. For this reasons, we strongly recommended citizens of the UK and Ireland who live on Corfu to ensure that their dog is vaccinated. Although right now you think you will never leave this beautiful island, we have had many cases where people unexpectedly HAVE to return on short notice. Then we get a phone call: 'We are so sorry but we have to leave our lovely dogs behind. Can you find a home?' So please, if you want to be a responsible owner, take this into account.

And just one tip for all dog owners. We often receive a call reporting a lost dog. It had never, never run away before, but there's always a first time... Do put some identification on the dog: write your mobile number with a permanent pen on its collar; put a tag on the collar. It is a legal obligation in Greece for dogs to have a chip, but in all these years we have found only one dog with one. And that dog had already been on the streets for five months, and the owner could be identified from the chip! So make it visible that you own your dog.

4 October is World Animal Day, so give your dog some extra protection, and give it an identification aid.

For World Animal Day on 4 October, the Ark is organizing a small bazaar and information stand. You can find us at the Ark Shop, which is located behind Serano Cake Shop opposite Marks & Spencer. Tell your friends and come to see us.

Whilst typing the last lines of this article, I was informed that another animal had been hit by a car... This time it was my own big white fluffy (deaf) pussycat. She was not lucky - her head was completely smashed and she died on the spot. A cat life of six years might be long by Corfu standards, but not by mine...

Poor Asprouli mou.

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FEATURE

Manners Maketh Man...

And with a little encouragement,
maybe even the holidaying Brit!

✍ Sarah Button

An English couple seated themselves at the table next to us in a taverna last week; they were with two teenage girls - hers I think, because they called him 'Greg'. Greg says: 'You 'ave ta pay fer ejucation 'ere, so in the win'er the kids 'av to pick olives ter pay for it'. He sits back complacently, apparently proud of his knowledge of Greek life. He then chats up the very polite waitress in a manner that wouldn't go down well in a pub in the roughest part of Sunderland. No-one is impressed. The waitress manages a smile supported by an expression that suggests she is used to this form of abuse, takes his order and walks away. I can imagine her thinking: 'That arrogant git is cruising for a bruising'. Then, short of attention from his embarrassed looking partner, our fellow Brit decides his step-daughter's skin needs moisturising. 'It's all dryin' up in the sun, it needs oilin'!' he shouts, looking around for approval, then proceeds to rub olive oil from the table cruet onto their necks, shoulders and backs.

I resist asking him if he knows what happens to meat drizzled in olive oil before you put it under the grill when I see the size of mum's muscles which are vaguely visible under her tattoos.

My personal offence at Greg's behaviour pales in comparison to the insult he throws at his hosts, not least the damage he is doing to the already tarnished reputation of British holidaymakers. I just can't help feeling cross that some folk don't bother to do a little homework before taking a holiday, some, for example, should take the trouble to look at an atlas and actually locate Corfu. A friend - a holiday rep - tells of a disillusioned and disorientated holidaying Brit who couldn't understand why waiters were failing to respond to his orders for drinks. The chap, clutching a Spanish phrase book, genuinely thought he was in the Balearics. This would be funny if it were not such an affront to the Greeks. I was also told of a complaint from a couple who requested a transfer from Sidari; they didn't like it - because it was too Greek.

I am amazed by the stoicism and patience of the Greeks. If I ran a bar or an hotel I could see myself adopting a Basil Fawltyesque temperament and club anyone who dared to ask for Daddies Sauce to pour over their spit-roast lamb, and I would be tempted to 'accidentally' tip hot soup right into the crotch of the bare-chested ignora-

mus in Union Jack shorts with 'Kill' tattooed on his arms. But I do know one taverna owner who turned away some customers who asked for Bisto gravy, suggesting they might enjoy 'that kind of food elsewhere'. Good on him.

Travel, as we know, 'broadens the mind', so why do some people refuse to allow the experience of another country to interest or challenge them? Are they idle, or ignorant? I think possibly a bit of both, it seems most holidaymakers want the easy life, sitting in the sun and downing cheap drinks. That's fair enough to a certain extent - after all, if you haven't seen the sun for months the temptation to crash out by the pool might be irresistible. But that is no excuse to shun Greek food in favour of homogenised sterile pap like real English sausages and Mother's Pride white sliced. My son worked for First Choice last summer in their Sidari office, and his most frequently received request was for directions to McDonalds (now thankfully closed down).

Booze is the biggest killer of sensibilities, and the temptation to go on the binge can be irresistible. It's cheap too; just what a carousing Brit needs, and in the small hours the streets of some

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places are awash with inebriated lager louts and ladettes who appear to have lost their way, psychologically as well as geographically. One such drunk holidaymaker rang his tour rep late at night; he was lost; could she tell him where his hotel was. She asked him for the name of the hotel. He didn't know. So, trying to establish his exact whereabouts, she asked him if there were any signs within sight. 'Yesh' slurred the well oiled man.

'What does it say?' asked the rep.

'Coca Cola', he replied.

Most reps I have spoken to say their time is filled with dealing with alcohol related incidents and requests for hang-over cures. Holding a bar owner responsible for accidents in which someone has slipped on a 'beer soaked' floor - whilst drunk - is common, as are injuries incurred when holidaymakers fall off the tables they have been dancing on, damaging themselves on the floor as a result. This, according to the complainant, was 'not their fault', and, reflecting the blame culture rife in the UK, they threaten to sue.

Tour operators should take some responsibility for informing visitors and should recognise that some need educating too. How about a really watchable movie on the plane that explores and demonstrates respect for local culture. It could tell people that wandering around semi-naked isn't done (unless heading for the flesh pot of Kavos where it seems bad behaviour is mandatory). Cabin crew could be part of the process by encouraging a few words of Greek; a simple 'Parakalo' and 'Efharisto'; a please and a thank you; the building blocks of good manners. Perhaps Thomas Cook could ask Rick Stein if he didn't mind sharing his passion for Corfiot cuisine, adding a little spice to the original 'Cook's Tour'.

I don't know about you, but we actively encourage our guests to 'go local' when they come here. We have a collection of recipe books, DVDs and novels all with a Corfiot theme. I could find no evidence of such information in the hotels I looked in recently. Maybe they have tried and failed. Anyway, I'm off to check my olives - maybe this winter, once picked, we'll sell enough to pay for some Greek lessons.

Man with Van
Removals
Rubbish
Removed



Neil

26630 92226

6977 161036

Ryanair slashes winter fares in face of recession fears

Ryanair will respond to plummeting consumer confidence by slashing fares this winter.

Europe's largest no-frills carrier has initially released five million seats for €5 one way for travel in October and the first two weeks of November.

It also warned of further airline failures following XL Airways, Futura and Zoom.

"Ryanair believes that many unviable loss making European airlines will cease trading this winter because of unsustainable losses and insufficient cash reserves," a statement issued to coincide with its AGM said.

CEO Michael O'Leary said: "We believe there will be further airline bankruptcies in Europe over the coming weeks, as more of Europe's non-viable, loss making airlines run out of cash or their credit facilities are withdrawn."

He added: "The extraordinary pace of European airline consolidation will also continue.

"There is no doubt that most of Europe's flag carrier airlines will merge into three large high fare groupings led by BA, Air France and Lufthansa this winter.

"We expect that the European Commission will rubber-stamp approval of these mergers, which will help Ryanair's appeal against the EU's prohibition of our 2006 much smaller merger with Aer Lingus."

He said the airline would continue to fight against screen-scraping websites despite the European Commission rejecting complaints by Ryanair.

"Ryanair is continuing to secure injunctions in Ireland, the UK, Spain and Germany against these mis-selling ticket-touts and cancel screen-scraping bookings which have been made in breach of Ryanair's terms and conditions," added O'Leary.

He welcomed recent falls in the price of oil but said this would not have much impact on the carrier's full year results "because we have already hedged Q.3 at \$124 per barrel and any Q.4 fuel savings may be absorbed by lower fares and yields as we stimulate growth in a recession this winter".

Ryanair expects to carry more than 58 million passengers in the year ending March 31, 2009 and expects to break even.

"Whilst Ryanair expects to pay less for oil in Q.4, these savings may well be eaten up by lower yields this winter, as the UK, Irish and European economies go into recession and consumer confidence plummets," the airline said.

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AUTHOR INTERVIEW

Songs of Blue and Gold

**Hilary Paipeti interviews Deborah Lawrenson,
author of the new novel set in Corfu, based on the experiences of Lawrence Durrell**

What was it that drew you to Lawrence Durrell as the main character for the novel?

His persistent charm on paper. As a matter of fact I was writing another book, or trying to, when he barged in and captured my imagination. His sensuous writing, rackety life in the sun, and the particular persuasiveness of the Durrells' escapism, took hold like a drug. There's something very charismatic about Lawrence's writing, which makes it impossible to enjoy his words without feeling that you would enjoy his company as a person. I gave up on the other novel after a good six months work because my thoughts were somewhere else - in Corfu, to be precise.

As a child I'd loved Gerald's book *My Family and Other Animals* and always enjoyed the scenes with Larry as the pompous, hilarious, world-weary older brother. As relaxation from my book researches, I'd been engrossed in Douglas Botting's biography of Gerald. It's a terrific read, which brings the whole family and their setting to life - and again I found Larry intriguing: the way he popped in and out of Gerald's story, usually with a different wife in tow. So I re-read my old copy of *Prospero's Cell*, and that's how this book began to germinate.

Originally I wanted to write Lawrence into the novel as himself, but my publishers were horrified: a combination of legal concerns, and (very wrongly in my outraged opinion) the worry that not many people knew or cared about Lawrence and his books any more. Eventually it was agreed I would write a fictionalised version of him - Julian Adie - and I have to admit that they were right in that sense, as fictionalising allowed me to weave a more satisfying imaginary plot.

How long was the research period for the novel and what did it involve?

Longer than you might think! I was reading all about the Durrells in winter 2004, and by October 2005 I had abandoned my other book and booked a stay at the White House in the old Durrell apartment on the top floor. I came back with a notebook full of ideas, observations and descriptions and started writing immediately. I delivered the final draft of the novel at Christmas 2007 and now here it is.

How much of Adie is Durrell and how much is fiction?

Apart from pastiches of some of his work and vaguely correct biographical details, the only aspects of Lawrence Durrell's life I have described with any true accuracy are the places where he lived in Corfu, Egypt and the south of France. So Julian Adie is Durrell in that he lived at the White House in Kalami in the 1930s with his first wife, an artist, then was forced to flee Greece for Cairo and Alexandria during wartime, and went on to marry three

more women. But the rest - his character, particularly - is simply an impression, with tiny details that might strike chords with anyone who knows his work well.

Did Durrell's own fiction themes play a part in your novel, and how much were these themes involved in your plot?

Durrell's own fiction themes are closely - but subtly, I hope - interwoven into the plot of my novel. The idea of using different points of view and excerpts from other books, for example.

There is always ambiguity, as in the circumstances of the drowning, but uncertainty also in minor details like how exactly the Kiotzas family came by the money to buy their first boats for hire: was it won in the Casino, was it earned from the first Adie-inspired tourists or did it come from the sale of an old Adie manuscript? Then there is the shocking version of events presented by Dr Braxton in his (rather sneering and self-interested) new biography, in which his agenda is to create academic waves and challenge the version of Adie's life given in earlier studies.

But I don't want to give the impression that this is one of those annoying books that has no proper resolution! It has a very definite, and I hope, satisfying conclusion - a proper beginning, middle and end.

Another recurrent Durrell theme I have reworked is the transforming effect of time. The emphasis at the start of *Songs of Blue and Gold* when Melissa arrives in Kalami is of barren time, the dregs of a season. "By the time I reached Corfu..." She is looking back in time, looking to find her mother as she once was, but has nothing to go on but the hope of finding her through the place and a book by Julian Adie. It is as though she were looking for ghosts.

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AUTHOR INTERVIEW

Melissa has with her a standard biography of Julian Adie, but her mother is not mentioned in it. Which begs the question: what of all the people who are there, in a life, but only between the lines? She is drawn into Adie's world, but beyond her search for her mother, she becomes fascinated by him, his romantic adventuring, the ease with which he seemed able to move on from his marriages, as she is trying to do from her unfaithful husband. "What makes men behave the way they do?" she asks, and looks to his life for an answer. At the end of the book, when she uses the word 'time' in the last sentence it completes a circle, now freighted with new knowledge.

Perhaps most ambitiously of all, I've attempted to recreate some of Durrell's pure joy at the luxuriance of the landscape, and the lushness of his prose descriptions that I find so entrancing, especially in *Prospero's Cell* and the *Alexandria Quartet*. There's also the idea of imaginative memory which is closely related to nostalgia, of something recalled and described with yearning years later.

How far does landscape and the 'spirit of place' play a part in your work?

I love writing about what I see around me and what might lie beneath that - perhaps it's a facet of once being a journalist that never quite leaves. The difference when you're writing a novel is that it's no good just describing; you have to find a way of making the words say something more, trying to give depth by adding layers of insight as well as observation.

In my previous book *The Art of Falling*, which was set in Italy, the evocative depiction of Tuscany and Umbria was a crucial aspect of the story, as the reader had to believe that a man of 60 would walk out on his family in England because he had never been able to forget his wartime experiences and the relationship that had transformed him as a young man. Although he had apparently sublimated the desire to rediscover the life he might once have had in Italy but for tragic circumstances, in fact, he hadn't succeeded. His imaginative memories had too strong a pull for him.

When readers say to me, 'I can visualise it all, I felt as if I was there,' that's a real boost. Then I feel I have really done what I set out to do.

What does your novel have to say about the process of biography?

I'm well aware that any 'knowledge' I have of Durrell's character is gained from biographies and his own books - but to what extent do these details accurately show the man himself? Any version of Durrell I can write is really only an imaginary construct using my own experiences and interpretations. This is a consistent theme in the novel and it reflects Durrell's own literary concerns: there is no one stable, unalterable version of a character or a story, only what one finds oneself.

Each section of my novel is introduced by an excerpt from a biography, either from the standard biography of Julian Adie; or from Dr Braxton's sub-academic showboating; or Melissa's more idiosyncratic travel-memoir 'Looking for Julian'. Each has a different agenda and is not necessarily correct in every part. Melissa's work is the most personal and heart-felt, but is it really any more reliable in its picture of Julian Adie?

In the end, the reader must decide from the only narrative in which Julian Adie actually appears - that is, in Corfu in 1968 -



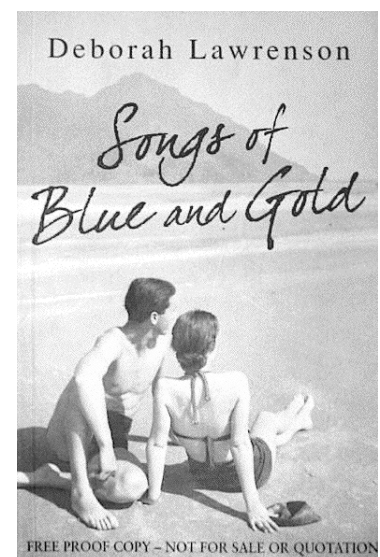
whether subsequent accounts of his character and behaviour are fair or plausible.

Would you like to give us a few personal details?

I'm married to Robert, with a 12 year-old daughter, Madeleine. We live in Kent, in a village much as the one described in the book. Rob and I met as students at Trinity College, Cambridge. He works (now part-time) as a City consultant and is also a music composer. We spend our summers - and as much other time as possible - in Provence, like the Durrells in later years.

As I write in the acknowledgements at the front of the book, I'm very grateful to Tassos and Daria Athinaios at the White House in Kalami for their friendliness and allowing me to write in such detail about their property. Not every detail about their immediate surroundings in

Kalami is totally accurate, but I'm hoping readers both in Corfu and the many visitors who love the north-east coast enjoy the rose-coloured descriptions of places they know well, such as Agni (where I decided to amalgamate two fine tavernas for fairness) and the extraordinary beauty of the sea below the Saint Arsenius shrine.



Who was Buddha?

 **Maureen McNamara**

Buddha Shakyamuni was born as a Royal Prince in 624 BC. 'Shakya' was his family name and 'muni' means 'able one'. His birthplace was Lumbini, originally in Northern India but now part of Nepal.

His mother, Queen Mayadevi, dreamt that a white elephant descended from heaven and entered her womb, indicating that she had conceived a child who was a pure and powerful being. It also meant that the child came from Tushita heaven - the pure land of Buddha Maitreya.

She experienced no pain during the birth but had a vision of the Gods taking the child from her side and then honouring the infant. His father King Shuddhodana was delighted and named the young prince Siddhartha and asked a seer to predict his future. The seer said that the boy would be either a Chakravatin King or a fully enlightened Buddha whose influences would pervade the thousand million worlds.

The young prince became adept at all the traditional arts and sciences; he knew 64 languages and was an expert mathematician without the need to study. But he did this to please his father.

He also became a skilled sportsman but constantly tried to encourage others to follow a spiritual path. Once at an archery contest he declared with the bow of meditative concentration: 'I will fire the arrow of wisdom and kill the tiger of ignorance in living beings.'

The prince would occasionally go into the city to see how people lived, and he noticed many old, sick people and also a corpse. This made him aware that all living beings have to experience the sufferings of birth, sickness, ageing and death and, understanding the laws of reincarnation, he realized that they suffer again and again in life after life. He then developed deep compassion for these beings trapped in this circle of suffering, and determined to free them.

Knowing that only an enlightened Buddha has the wisdom and power to help all living beings, he resolved to leave the palace and engage in profound meditation in the forest until he became enlightened.

Upon hearing of his intention his father tried to change his mind, and arranged a marriage to a suitable woman. But the prince had no attachment to worldly pleasures and realised they are like poisonous flowers which at first appear appealing but later cause great pain. However, to please his people he married and served them in every way.

At the age of 29 he had a vision in which he was told that it was time to go out and accomplish his wish to help. The king refused to let his son go and tempted him to stay with all sorts of worldly pleasures, also placing guards round the palace.

Then one night the prince used his miracle powers to send all the guards into a deep sleep, and he escaped. He went to Bodh Gaya in India and, finding a suitable place, he remained in space-like concentration, focusing single-pointedly on the ultimate nature of all phenomena. He travelled for six years and then, realising that he was close to his goal, he sat beneath the bodhi tree and vowed to stay until he attained perfect enlightenment.

He was beset by many fearful apparitions manifested by a demon, but remained undisturbed - and through concentration the weapons hurled at him appeared as flowers. He was then tempted by manifestations of beautiful women, but developed even deeper concentration and thus became known as 'conqueror Buddha'.

At dawn the final veils of ignorance were gone from his mind and he became a Buddha. 49 days later the Gods requested him to teach, and these teachings have been passed down as oral lineage to the present day.

If Tommy Cooper Were Alive Today... it was the way he told 'em!

(A note for non-British readers: Tommy Cooper was a famous comedian, once voted the funniest man ever. Sorry if you don't 'get it'!)

I met this bloke with a didgeridoo and he was playing Dancing Queen on it. I thought, 'That's Aboriginal.'

Told my girlfriend I had a job in a bowling alley. She said 'Tenpin?' I said, 'No, permanent.'

I went in to a pet shop. I said, 'Can I buy a goldfish?' The guy said, 'Do you want an aquarium?' I said, 'I don't care what star sign it is.'

I bought some Armageddon cheese today; it said on the packet: 'Best Before End'.

I went into a shop and I said, 'Can someone sell me a kettle?' The bloke said 'Kenwood' I said, 'Where is he then?'

My mate is in love with two schoolbags. He's bi-satchel.

I met the bloke who invented crosswords today. I can't remember his name, it's P something T something R.

I was reading this book today, The History of Glue. I couldn't put it down.

I phoned the local ramblers club today, but the bloke who answered just went on and on.

The recruitment consultant asked me 'What do you think of voluntary work?' I said 'I wouldn't do it if you paid me.'

This policeman came up to me with a pencil and a piece of very thin paper. He said, 'I want you to trace someone for me.'

I phoned the local builders today; I asked them 'Can I have a skip outside my house?' He said, 'I'm not stopping you!'

This cowboy walks in to a German car showroom and he says 'Audi!'

I fancied a game of darts with my mate. He said, 'Nearest the bull goes first!' He went 'Baah' and I went 'Moo.' He said, 'You're closest!'

I was driving up the motorway and my boss phoned me and he told me I'd been promoted. I was so shocked I swerved the car. He phoned me again to say I'd been promoted even higher and I swerved again. He then made me managing director and I went right off into a tree. The police came and asked me what had happened. I said 'I careered off the road.'

I bought a train ticket to France and the ticket seller said, 'Eurostar'. I said, 'Well I've been on telly but I'm no Dean Martin.'

FOOD FEATURE

'If Food be the Music of Love, Cook on'

 **Pete Button**

With apologies to Shakespeare

I like cooking. In fact, I LOVE cooking. Although I used to see it as a chore, I have over the years grown to understand more about it, and now love all things culinary. These days, I am really enjoying pursuing an art which has for centuries been used to seduce, befriend and entertain.

A few years ago I had a realisation that made an enormous difference to my enjoyment of cooking. It was this: Cooking is creative; it is art. I like to paint watercolours and I like music, and cooking is just the same. In paintings you use shades of colour, perspective and line quality to produce a picture. In music you have scales, harmonies and resonance to make tunes that sound right. Cooking is just the same; you use tastes and textures to create dishes and match the dishes to produce a meal. Like fireworks - which I love too - cooking is a transitional art: it's here, you enjoy it and then it's gone, never to be repeated in exactly the same way and conditions again.

So why, a few nights ago, did I have the most awful time preparing a meal for a couple of friends? Well, our cottage was all set up for summer guests, so we had de-camped to our cellar studio - which contains the barest minimum of equipment. This meant that I was without all our favourite pots, pans and utensils. And it was horrible!

This experience made me think. Just what are the basic tools you need to really enjoy cooking? I'm not talking about producing 'cheffy' meals here. I'm talking about enjoying the process of cooking even if the results don't quite come up to scratch. My answer came down to a few basics, and these I would like to share; if anyone can add to them, or give a good reason for removing them from my list, let me know.

Two good knives and a steel

A big 25 cm cook's knife, and a 7.5cm paring knife. These must be as good as you can possibly afford. After all, it's an investment - you will use your knife in every meal you prepare. Good knives will last more than 20 years, so it has got to be worth the outlay if it makes all those occasions enjoyable.

A steel for your knives is vital; the best knife is no use if it's not razor sharp. You should literally be able to shave with your cooking knife. I can't get on with those various knife sharpeners available, but a little practice with a steel can give a great edge. There is a secret to keeping knives sharp: 'sharpen them before they are blunt' or 'little and often'; a

couple of passes over the steel every meal keeps them tip top and a joy to use.

A good chopping board A chopping board needs to be wood. Plastic bends and cuts, storing bacteria - and I think it feels horrid. Wood is the business, and best is a hardwood butcher's block, made using the end grain which is glued together to a suitable size. No matter what people say, 'size matters' for a chopping board; you need to be able to fit the whole of your left - or right - hand on it to hold whatever you are cutting, leaving space for 3 or 4 chopped items to keep separate.

Two good pans and one a large frying pan A chef once gave me some sound advice about pans: 'Imagine someone attacks you and all you have defend yourself are your pans, so you use one to hit them over the head. If the pan dents before the head, it's no good!' The heavier they are the better the heat distribution will be - so, get the heaviest you can lift. Include a steamer with your pans too.

A cast iron casserole with lid Perfect for slow cooking, either on the hob or in the oven and because it's heavy like the pans it distributes the heat efficiently.

However, to go with the basics you also need some **Attitude**.

Like music and painting, there are a few basic rules to cooking. Like complementary colours or harmonies, certain flavours always work together: tomatoes and basil, ham and eggs, cumin and coriander, for example. In dishes from anywhere in the world these will always work no matter what you do to them. Like perspective, there is a rough order to taste: salt then sharp



Multigenerational meals are the norm in Corfu. Families bond at the common table

followed by sweet. In fact, food is really the only art that encompasses all the senses - the sight of the dish, the sound of sizzling, the smells, the textures in your mouth and finally the taste. There is so much art about cooking - your kitchen is your recording studio, or a workshop allowing you to be creative.

Like with all art, it takes some time to prepare a working environment, and I like to get in the mood first. So I'll put some music on, pour a glass of wine and get ready for a wonderful experience. A recent study shows certain music tracks enhance the enjoyment of specific wines, and I wonder if that theory could expand to cover cooking. I would go for Van Morrison with a curry and maybe Oasis with a paella.

The creative muse sometimes needs some inspiration, and I look for recipes that appeal through my collection of cookery books. But recently I have found that the web is better. www.bbc.co.uk/food has thousands of recipes that you can search by ingredient, genre or your favourite chef. The timesonline.co.uk site is good too. I always follow the recipe fairly closely until I am familiar with it, then start improvising. Of course, most are written for the UK palette not the Mediterranean one. Even the recipes in Rick Stein's *Mediterranean Escapes* are a bit short on the garlic and oregano. Once I have the dish working, I can take it for a spin and make it my own, with subtle additions or changes.

The whole activity is enhanced by company, a friend to cook an accompanying dish or different course. Preparing an evening meal is a special time for Sarah and I. We can relax and talk, sharing a bottle of wine whilst sharing the cooking. We miss the input of our children, back in the UK, when we encouraged them to stir a sauce or chop some vegetables whilst telling us what they did at school. Our kitchen was the focal point of family activity.

'Love enters by the eyes', so spending a few extra seconds presenting a dish can make the simplest of food look grand. If the flavours are harmonic their colours will be too. I like to use large plain white plates; they are like a canvas ready to paint on, and I have stolen that haute cuisine trick of getting as much height as possible on the plate. The final ingredient is ambience; some music, candles and course conversation.

Then there is the washing up...

Eating out in October

Brouklis Taverna - Arillas

Phone: 26630 51418

In its third generation and the oldest in Arillas, Brouklis cooks and serves food just as the locals do. The Bourdetto (fish stew with hot paprika) and mum's savoury pumpkin pie are musts!

Vavilas Restaurant - Arillas

Phone: 26630 63728

Vavilas' owners are fishermen and pride themselves on fresh-caught seafood. Pick your own from the selection in the kitchen. The speciality is Lobster Dinner with a lobster per person, plus boiled potatoes and Greek salad.

The Blue House - Afionas

Phone: 26630 52046

German chef Katharina Wahl prepares dishes of various ethnic origin with a local twist. The chicken liver pate is renowned island-wide. Watch the sun drop over the offshore islands as you dine on the outside terrace.

Trilogia Restaurant - The Headland, Kassiopi

Rub shoulders with the Kensington-on-Sea set at this stylish restaurant featuring Nouveau Greek Cuisine. Unusual starters include Prawn Balls, Beetroot Hummus and Feta in Pastry with Honey. Rack of Lamb and Stifado with Plums and Basmati are recommended main courses.

Kostas Taverna - Village Square, Agios Ioannis

Phone: 26610 52304

Celebrating its centenary this summer, Kostas Taverna serves a local 'dish of the day' plus 'ethnic' cuisines: Italian on Wednesdays and Indian/Thai on Fridays.

Raffles - Near Aqualand

Phone: 6938 818189

Bryn has been cooking Indian since 1991, and has travelled extensively for research. Now he's added Thai and Vietnamese cooking. Try duck with chili, hot and sour prawn soup, Ho Chi Min Omelette. Authentic tandoori oven.

Spiros and Vasilis Restaurant - Near Aqualand

Phone: 26610 38763

Top Athens chef Spiros returned to his home island and established Corfu's most respected French restaurant in his family mansion. Try Frog's Legs, Entrecote Cafe de Paris and divine Chocolate Souffle Pudding with chocolate sauce and cream. The steaks are locally sourced and organic.

Græco Restaurant - Main Dassia Road, Kommeno

Phone: 26610 91765

Eat with the Greeks in this blue-and-white themed taverna. Try hand-made dolmades, and the best fried sardines or anchovies with boiled wild greens and skordalia (garlic sauce - Rick Stein first encountered it here!) for seconds.

Etrusco Restaurant - Kato Korakiana, Dassia

Phone: 26610 93342

Etrusco proprietor Ektoras is Greek Chef of the Year. The restaurant is the most-awarded in Greece, and judged 65th in the world. The produce is organic, sourced from their own farm. The food is avant garde: Swordfish Carpaccio, Slow-Cooked Lamb with kumquat 'sand' and olive 'stones', Goat-Cheese Ice-Cream with tomato marmalade and lemon cream.

The River Taverna - Potami, Lefkimmis

Phone: 26620 22958

Tables are set on the quayside of the canalised river, and the food is from the family's own table. The rice- and herb-stuffed vegetables and casserole green beans are a vegetarian's dream.

British dishes for cool evenings

A UK survey has revealed that the British are rejecting traditional dishes in favour of foreign foods. Classic dishes such as toad in the hole, bubble and squeak and hot pots are disappearing from the family dinner table, and almost one in three people now opt for curry, pizza or spaghetti bolognese at the majority of meal times. Cooks say that British dishes take too long to prepare, whereas foreign foods are 'quick fixes'.

We disagree. While many British dishes take time to cook, in many cases most of the preparation 'time' is time in the oven or simmering on the hob. Hot Pot used to be left in a low oven all day, to be ready when the family returned from 't'Mill'. Other dishes, like Liver and Onions, take minutes. Some foods can be part-readied in advance and put together quickly just before eating - Bubble and Squeak is one. Or, like Cottage Pie, they can be made beforehand and just need a last minute blast in the oven.

Now the evenings are chillier and the nights longer, British dishes provide warmth and comfort. Just compare a few of the top foods for dinner 50 years ago with those diners choose today. Which would you prefer to eat on a cold and rainy evening?

50 years ago: Stew and dumplings; Hot Pot; Oxtail Soup; Toad in the Hole with Onion Gravy.

Today: Pizza; Salad; Pasta Bake; Stir Fry.

No contest, is there?

During the next months, we will provide recipes for many British favourites. In the first part of the series, these pages will carry the old, authentic recipes, then during the second two months we'll run a 'nouveau' twist on each one, bringing it up to date and perhaps making it a more acceptable offering on the modern dining table! Maybe if our traditional recipes can evolve, they will survive.

Lancashire Hot Pot

1 kilo lamb chops from the neck, 1 tablespoon olive oil, knob butter, 4 lamb's kidneys (optional), 3 onions sliced into 1 cm wedges, 1 tablespoon plain flour, 570 ml freshly boiled water, ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, 1 bay leaf, 2 thyme sprigs, 1 kilo potatoes, sea salt, freshly ground black pepper, extra butter

Pre-heat the oven to 170C/325F/Gas 3.

Skin and core the kidneys and cut into bite-sized pieces. Trim the lamb of any excess fat and pat dry with paper towel.

Heat the oil and butter in a large heavy-based frying pan until very hot. Add the lamb, two or three pieces at a time, and fry until brown, turning once. Once browned, put them in a wide 3.5-litre casserole. Brown the pieces of kidney and remove to the pan.

Place the onions in the pan. Fry over medium heat, adding a little more butter to the pan if necessary, for about ten minutes until browned at the edges.

Stir in the flour then gradually add the hot water and Worcestershire sauce, stirring until the flour and liquid are smoothly blended. Season with salt and pepper and bring to simmering point. Pour over the meat in the casserole.

Add the bay leaf and thyme, then arrange the potato slices on top in an overlapping pattern. Season the potatoes and dot the surface with a few dabs of butter.

Cover with a tight-fitting lid and put in the oven. Cook for 1 ½ hours. Towards the end of cooking time, remove the lid and brush the potatoes with a little more butter. 15 minutes before the end of cooking, remove the lid and increase the heat to 200C/400F/Gas 6.

Stew and Dumplings

750 gr shin of beef or stewing steak, 500 gr small onions, 40 gr olive oil, 1 tablespoon flour, 900 ml hot water, salt and freshly ground pepper, 500 gr carrots, 1 bay leaf

For the dumplings: 175 gr self-raising flour, 75 gr shredded suet, 1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley, good pinch salt and pepper, water to mix

Remove any gristle and surplus fat from the meat and trim into neat 4 cm cubes. Slice the onions thickly.

In a large casserole, fry the meat and onions in the oil until lightly browned all over. Sprinkle in the flour and mix well. Gradually stir in the water and continue stirring until it boils. Season to taste.

Cover and simmer very gently for an hour. Then add the carrots, thickly sliced on the bias, and bay leaf and simmer for a further hour, when it will be time to add the dumplings.

To make the dumplings, sieve the flour into a bowl and add the suet, parsley, salt and pepper. Next add enough water to make a soft but not sticky dough, about 3 tablespoons. Lightly flour your hands and roll the dough into eight small balls. Add to the stew and cook for a further 15-20 minutes.

Toad in the Hole

6 good-quality pork sausages (Cumberland, Lincolnshire or mild Greek sausages - some good ones come from Lefkada), 1 tablespoon oil (if necessary)

For the batter: 75 gr plain flour, 1 large egg, 75 ml semi-skimmed milk, salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the onion gravy: 225 gr onions (peeled and sliced), 2 teaspoons oil, 1 level teaspoon golden caster sugar, 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce, 1 level teaspoon mustard powder, 425 ml boiling water, 1 vegetable stock cube, 2 rounded teaspoons plain flour, salt and freshly ground black pepper

You will also need a solid-based, flameproof roasting tin with a base of 23 x 15 cm, 5 cm deep, and a baking tray 35 x 25 cm.

Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7.

Begin by making the batter. Sieve the flour into a large bowl, holding the sieve up high to give the flour a good airing. Make a well in the centre, break the egg into it and add some salt and pepper. Measure the milk and 55 ml water in a measuring jug, then, using an electric hand whisk on a slow speed, begin to whisk the egg into the flour. As you whisk, the flour around the

edges will slowly be incorporated. Then add the liquid gradually, stopping to scrape the flour into the mixture. Whisk until smooth. Set aside until required.

Place the sliced onions in a bowl, add 1 teaspoon of the oil and the sugar and toss the onions around to get the lightest coating, then spread them on the baking tray. Next arrange the sausages in the roasting tin, then place the onions on a high shelf in the oven, with the sausages on a lower shelf, and set a timer for 10 minutes. When the timer goes off, remove the sausages from the oven but leave the onions in for a further 4-5 minutes - they need to be nicely blackened round the edges. When they are ready, remove them and set aside.

To make the Toad, place the roasting tin containing the sausages over direct heat turned to medium and, if the sausages haven't released much fat, add the tablespoon of oil. When the tin is really hot and the oil is beginning to shimmer - it must be searing hot - quickly pour the batter in all around the sausages. Immediately return the roasting tin to the oven, this time on the highest shelf, and cook for 30 minutes.

To make the gravy, first add the Worcestershire sauce and mustard powder to the stock. Remove the onions from the baking tray and place in a medium-sized pan. Add the second teaspoon of oil, then, using a wooden spoon, stir in the plain flour. Stir over a medium heat for a minute and then switch to a whisk. Gradually add the stock to the pan, whisking all the time, until it's incorporated. Bring it up to simmering point and gently cook for 5 minutes. Taste to check the seasoning, then pour into a warmed serving jug.

When the Toad is ready, it should be puffed brown and crisp and the centre should look cooked and not too squidgy. Serve it immediately with the gravy, and mashed potato and baked beans if you like.

Hongy Gammon with Potato and Carrot Mash

60 gr butter, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 4 gammon steaks (about 175 gr each), 1 chopped clove garlic, 1 finely chopped onion, 1 peeled and diced apple, 30 gr flour, 500 ml dry cider, 1 teaspoon honey, 4 sage leaves, 2 teaspoon Dijon mustard, salt and freshly ground black pepper, juice of ½ lemon, 150 ml meat or vegetable stock

For the carrot and potato mash: 4 large potatoes, 2 large carrots, 1 teaspoon sugar, 2 peeled garlic cloves, 2 tablespoons olive oil, handful of chopped parsley, juice of ½ lemon, salt and freshly ground black pepper

Place a large flameproof casserole dish on a low heat and gently melt the butter and oil. Add the gammon steaks and cook until golden on both sides (about 10 minutes). Remove the gammon and set aside.

Place the garlic, onion and apple in the casserole and cook until the onion is translucent. Add the flour and cook for one minute, then add the cider, bring to the boil and reduce by half. Then add the honey, sage leaves and mustard, and cook for five more minutes. Season.

Put the gammon steaks back into the casserole, squeeze in the lemon juice and pour in the stock. Check the seasoning, then

cover and simmer for a further 20-30 minutes.

For the mash, half-fill a pot with water (about 2 litres), add salt, cover and bring to the boil.

Add the potatoes, quartered, and the carrots, cut in chunks to the water, together with the sugar and garlic. Boil for 20 minutes on a moderate heat until the vegetables are tender.

Drain and mash vigorously, mixing in the olive oil, chopped parsley, a squeeze of lemon juice, and seasoning to taste.

Return to a low heat and stir gently for 2-3 minutes. Serve with the gammon and its sauce.

ALBERT'S RESTAURANT, PYRGI

Drop-In, on the main road above Pyrgi, changed hands earlier this year and is now called 'Albert's Restaurant'. New owner Roger Smith has pared down the main menu - and this is no bad thing, for it often indicates a chef who prefers to prepare everything from scratch. Roger shops daily in the market for fresh, local ingredients, and the menu changes accordingly each day.

We started with the Greek Meze. Reading the menu, most customers will assume that it's meant for one person. I ordered two lots, just to keep the seven of us busy while the main courses were being prepared. What arrived was a platter with four bowls containing hummous, tzatziki, taramosalata and aubergine dip, surrounded by slivers of grilled pitta bread. The quantity of each dip was not much less than you'd get as a single portion in a Greek taverna, making this dish, at 4.50 euros, the best value starter on the island. The taramosalata was the real stuff, creamy and not the cheap commercial bright pink version many tavernas dupe tourists with. The hummous - which you rarely find in Corfu, was great; but we all agreed that the smoky aubergine dip was the best we'd ever tasted.

For main courses, four of our party chose the Cumberland Sausage, a dish from my part of the world and close to my heart. We couldn't, of course, expect it to be like the Cumberland Sausage I grew up with, I commented. Then out popped Roger from the kitchen and told us that he MAKES THE SAUSAGE HIMSELF! He also cures the gammon.

My own choice was the pasta with courgettes, wild garlic and chilli. The pasta was al dente, boiled to order, the courgettes and garlic just slightly crispy, and the chilli sufficient to cause me to blow my nose afterwards. Locals may find this sauce, with no lashings of tomato and oil, minimalistic; I thought it was accomplished.

Meal at an end, gravy mopped up by mash, carrots devoured, we were all full, and unable to sample pudding, even though there was Sticky Toffee. A very good reason to go back...

The menu includes traditional English and Mediterranean dishes, prepared to order. A la Carte and fixed price menus are available. Sunday lunch menu includes a choice of traditional English roasts. The restaurant boasts a romantic, panoramic view across the bay to Corfu Town. It's open Friday and Saturday 18.00 - 22.00, Sunday 12.00 - 22.00, and is located at Ano Pyrgi, Ipsos, on the main road to Barbati, opposite EKO petrol station. For reservations call 26610 97879 / 6938 835585.

Squiffy Squirrel

 *Lionel Mann*

When I was living as a guest at The Old Grange, Hampton, it was a custom that before Sunday lunch my host, Colonel Muller, and I and any other guests who might be present, would enjoy a sherry whilst sitting chatting. On one such occasion, because the weather was very pleasant, the Colonel and I were seated at a table out on the lawn.

The garden backed on to Bushy Park, a royal park extending from Hampton Court Palace. While we were conversing, a little grey squirrel clambered over the wall from the park, ran along the lawn towards us, stopped about four feet away and looked enquiringly up at us. In astonishment we stopped talking and stared at the intruder.

Apparently satisfied, the tiny creature scampered towards the house and entered the open French windows of the Music Room.

“Hey, we’d better find out what he wants.” The Colonel followed the animal while I went in the back door to trap the animal between us.

“He’s here, Lionel. He only came in to call up his friends.”

I found Colonel Muller in the Library staring at the squirrel seated on a table beside the extension telephone. Even as he spoke, the squirrel sprang to land upon his shoulder and, as he tried to grasp it, swung to hang on his back.

“Get it off, Lionel!”

As I made to snatch it the animal jumped down, raced back out of the French windows, but then stopped to sample local delicacies. Almost every morning some of the breakfast toast would be accidentally burnt but then crumbled out on the lawn as food for birds from the nearby Thames.

Now the squirrel was displaying a hearty appetite for burnt toast. We left our visitor to his snack, went back to our chairs, picked up our glasses and resumed our conversation.

Presently our new acquaintance joined us, sitting beside us and watching intently. Suddenly it sprang on to the table, then on to the Colonel’s arm, ran along it and took a swig from the glass that he was holding.

Colonel Muller quickly shook it off. “Hey, you’ll land us in trouble, plying alcohol to minors.”

The squirrel was not pleased. He ran to my foot and took a bite from the edge of the leather sole of my shoe before I quickly withdrew it.

However, my friend collected some pieces of toast, dipped them in his sherry and dropped them to the creature. They were very eagerly received!

Mrs. Muller came to join us and was introduced to our visitor, who jumped on to the table and then on her lap. She plied him with toast dipped in vermouth, and from then on he shunned the sherry-impregnated diet. I make no deductions from that.

When Mrs Muller returned to the kitchen the squirrel hopped along in her wake, but presently emerged from the cat-flap in the window, scaled the grapevine that covered the wall and entered the window of a second-floor bedroom.

At the time we had staying with us Monsieur and Madame Schmidt, teachers from Paris in charge of an exchange group of French schoolchildren staying with hosts in the village. They were occupying that room above mine. Quickly the pair of us

ran upstairs, but found the squirrel harmlessly curled up, sleeping in the middle of the bed. He briefly opened one bleary eye. Since he was behaving with perfect decorum we tiptoed out, leaving him to sleep off his hangover.

We resumed our seats, but soon there was a loud scream from upstairs.

“Madame Schmidt’s found the squirrel,” the Colonel observed calmly. Nevertheless, we hurried up to where our guests were staring horrified at the creature, now sitting up and inquisitively returning their gaze.

Colonel Muller took up the unprotesting animal by the nape of its neck, carried it down to the lawn and handed it another piece of toast. The Schmidts’ ten-year-old son, Alexandre, took over the feeding while his parents filmed the scene on their movie-camera. Boy and squirrel established a good rapport.

When we went in to dinner the squirrel came to sit on the floor beside Mrs. Muller, who plied it with little samples from her plate. The creature displayed well-developed taste.

Then, “Wow! ... Wow!” The approaching cry of a hungry Siamese, Mrs. Muller’s pet, ‘Mtoto.

The cat looked suspiciously round the door-jamb. The squirrel gave it one terrified glance and sprang urgently on to our hostess’s shoulder.

“Here, I know where they’ll look after you.” The Colonel picked up the squirrel and took it next door, where the young girl fed wild creatures.

‘Mtoto also having been catered for, dinner was then pursued uninterrupted.

Later, when Colonel Muller and I were washing up in the kitchen, the window cat-flap opened and the squirrel entered.

“The drinks here are better than at Andy’s,” suggested my fellow-dishwasher.

For some minutes the creature sat on the window-sill watching us, but then obviously realised that no more refreshment was forthcoming. It left through the cat-flap and we saw it clambering up the grapevine. When we finished washing up we went upstairs to investigate and found our visitor fast asleep on the window-sill of the Schmidts’ room, curled up in a nest that it has fashioned from one of Madame Schmidt’s headscarves. When those guests returned they left their new room-mate undisturbed.

Before Evensong at the church opposite, I told my choirboys of our unusual visitor and showed them the toothmarks on my shoe. After the service all sixteen came over and quietly went up to see where the squirrel lay fast asleep in his ornate bed. He did not so much as open an eye as they, intrigued but silent, looked at him. Neither did he waken when the Schmidts went to bed.

However, he awoke the next morning when our guests started to get up. He cast one amazed look around, obviously “What am I doing here?”, before springing through the window, racing down the vine, over the wall and into the park.

When we made enquiries we found that some boys living nearby had tamed some squirrels. Our visitor had almost certainly been one of those, conducting an exploration of the environs. We were rather disappointed that he never returned. Perhaps he had been signed up by Alcoholics Anonymous.

'Made in Corfu' Antiques on sale at Gastouri

Corfu's first 'village antique' shop has been established in Gastouri, central Corfu, near the Achillion Palace. Up to now, shops selling antiques have concentrated on the upper end of the market, with aristocratic furniture from mansions. In contrast, the Gastouri shop is an outlet for the sort of furniture found in village homes, much of which has in the past few decades been thrown on the dump and replaced by modern items. Most of the articles are made from local cypress wood.

The Gastouri shop also sells a range of 'Made in Corfu' products, including local ceramics and olive wood.

The premises also house an office of Luvcorfu Properties and Petra Traditional Constructions, with a portfolio of available properties.



'Dopio' at Perithia

Part of the same chain is the 'Dopio' (Made in Corfu) Shop at Perithia, on the main road between Kassiopi and Acharavi and next door to the Art of Olive Wood Shop. The shop functions as a bar and snack bar as well as selling local products such as wine and soap, olive oil, kumquat products, ceramics and souvenirs. In addition, there is a small selection of antique furniture.

You can also order 'Made in Corfu' products for delivery at your accommodation. Orders over 20 euros delivered free (see right). And the premises function as an office of Luvcorfu Properties and Petra Traditional Constructions. Other Luvcorfu offices are at Barbati and Tzavros (near Gouvia), by the traffic lights.

Order 'Made in Corfu' and we deliver to your door!

Wine

Grammenos	White	750 ml	7.50 euro
	Red	750 ml	8.00 euro
Theotokis	White	750 ml	10.00 euro
	Red	750 ml	3.00 euro
Goulis	White	750 ml	3.00 euro
	Red	750 ml	3.00 euro
Kakotrygis	White	750 ml	7.50 euro
	Ouzo Lazaris	200 ml	4.70 euro
		700 ml	7.00 euro

Kumquat

Kumquat Liqueur	500 ml	7.50 euro
	800 ml	9.50 euro
Kumquat Brandy	700 ml	11.90 euro

Ginger Beer

Heimarios	330 ml	1.50 euro
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Preserved Fruit

Saint Spiridon	400 gr	3.00 euro
	700 gr	6.00 euro
	Fig Pie	4.00 euro

Honey

Corfu Organic Honey - Chrysanthos	450 gr	9.50 euro
	920 gr	14.00 euro
Greek Honey - Anthi	130 gr	3.50 euro
	250 gr	4.00 euro
	450 gr	5.50 euro
	920 gr	11.00 euro

Nyssos Extra Virgin

Corfiot Olive Oil

500 ml bottle	5.00 euro
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Milk	650 ml	1.20 euro
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Rice Pudding		1.00 euro
Chocolate Cream		1.00 euro
Vanilla Cream		1.00 euro

To order, phone 26630 98002
We deliver all over Corfu

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**Orders over 20 euros
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INFORMATION

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Open 07.30 - 20.00. Stamps for Europe 70 lepta

TOURIST POLICE Samartzi 4, San Rocco Square. Tel. 26610 30265

EMERGENCY TELEPHONES

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Traffic Police 26610 39294
Port Police 26610 30481, 26610 32655
Fire Brigade 199, 191
Radio Taxi 26610 33811-2
Animal Welfare (ARK) 26610 32111
26610 43332
26610 34628

CONSULATES

Great Britain 26610 30055 & 23457
Holland 26610 39900
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Norway 26610 39667 & 32423
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Eire 26610 32469 & 39910
Finland 26610 93438

CHURCHES

Anglican (Holy Trinity Church): 21 Mavili St. Tel. & Fax: 26610 31467. email: holytrin@otenet.gr
Website: www.holytrinitycorfu.net
Sundays 10.30 Holy Communion & Children's Sunday School. 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays at 7pm: Songs of Praise
Roman Catholic Cathedral of St James: Town Hall Square. Sunday Mass at 8.30, 10.00 & 19.00
Evangelical Church of Greece: 3 Iakovou Polila St. Tel.: 26610 37304. Sunday Morning Service 11.00. Evening Service 7.30. email: EV-CH-OF-CO@ker.forthnet.gr

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Walking Information 6948 889174
Mountainbike Hire 26610 93344
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Private General Clinic 26610 36044
Ambulance 166

Regional National Health Surgeries

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Giannades	26610 51210
Kastellani	26610 54333
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Need a reliable weather forecast?

A detailed five-day forecast is at:

www.corfunet.com/weather/index.php

BOOKS

CORFU SKETCHES - A THIRTY-YEAR JOURNEY

BY THERESA NICHOLAS AND JOHN WALLER

This gorgeous book features sketches of local scenes drawn by Theresa Nicholas, with commentary by its publisher, John Waller. Theresa Nicholas has been called the 'Observer of Corfu' in recognition of her talent for capturing the essence of Old Corfu. Having sketched local scenes since the early 60s, her work serves as a record 'of a way of life that no-one at that time realized was already approaching its swansong.'

The book is not just for the coffee table (though it deserves pride of place there too); it's also a guide book which actively helps you track down what's left of the Old Corfu that Theresa first knew. The first section contains five themed walking routes around Corfu Town - a World Heritage Site - which, with the help of the sketches in the book, take the walker back in time. In the second section, which focuses on the villages, the book helps the visitor observe their remarkable architecture with a fresh eye. This is a trip that all Corfu lovers can - and should - take.

Corfu Sketches - a thirty-year journey is published by Yiannis Books (www.yiannisbooks.com), Twickenham, UK. ISBN 978-0-9547887-4-2. 128 pages, RRP 29 euros.



Five Day Excursion to Thessaly

(Larissa - Metsovo - Kalambaka - Meteora - Volos - Pelion - Trikala - Thessaloniki)

Depart: Wednesday 29 October - Return: Sunday 2 November

Have you ever wondered what lies beyond the mainland mountains that we see every day? This is a wonderful opportunity to discover the hidden heartland of Greece. Centrally based in the three star Grand Hotel, Larissa, each day's coach excursion will reveal a fascinating view of Greece. There will be plenty of time to explore on your own and on the final day a chance to shop in Thessaloniki - including a trip to IKEA! This excursion is organised by Papanagiotou Travel, a well respected Corfu-based company with over 25 years experience in Greek tourism.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Metsovo - Kalambaka - Meteora - Larissa

Morning ferry to Igoumenitsa. After driving through Epirus (passing the traditional village of Metsovo) we arrive in Kalambaka, a small town situated at the foot of the Meteora - a collection of huge rocks. Here we visit the famous monasteries perched on top of the rocks and seemingly suspended in mid-air. We then drive to Larissa, the capital of Thessaly, where we stay overnight at The Grand Hotel.

Day 2: Volos - Pelion

In the morning we depart for the port city of Volos and visit the Pelion region and several of its historic villages (Makrinita, Portaria, Milies and Visitsa) which sit high above the coast. These villages boast wonderful architecture and great views. We return to Volos with time to visit the town and enjoy a coffee or two. Overnight in Larissa.

Day 3: Trikala

After breakfast we drive to Trikala in fertile north-western Thessaly. After passing through some of the most beautiful mountain villages in the region we continue to Pertouli, a traditional village within a forest of tall fir trees. The forest is one of the best preserved in Greece and is a refuge for many species of wild animals. We return to Trikala for sight-seeing and overnight in Larissa.

Day 4: Thessaloniki

We leave in the morning for Thessaloniki in central Macedonia - the second largest city in Greece. Thessaloniki has had a continuous 3,000 year history and you will find relics of its Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman past, and of its formerly dominant Jewish population. Here you will have the opportunity to spend the day shopping, either in the city centre or at IKEA on the outskirts of the city. We return to overnight in our hotel in Larissa.

Day 5: Return to Corfu

We travel back to Igoumenitsa via the traditional village of Metsovo. Our ferry will reach Corfu in the evening.

Price 235 euros

(includes: ferry tickets, accommodation in 3 star hotel, breakfast, all transfers)

For further information contact

Katerina Papanagiotou on 26610 94368

or email info@papanagiotoutravel.com

Full details of this excursion can be seen at www.papanagiotoutravel.com/thessaly.html

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE

CARAVAN 24 ft twin wheel, 2 double bedrooms. Cassette toilet. Full size awning with bedroom annex. Offers around 6,000 euro. Tel. 6936 379807

HARLEQUIN GREAT DANE PUPPIES for sale. Pedigree imported parents can be viewed. Phone 6939 394669

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COMPOSTING TOILET Sun-Mar Excel NE (non-electric). Need a toilet coz you are in the process of building and not hooked up to water? We've had years of valuable service and would like to find someone who can make use of our toilet for themselves! For info, see www.sun-mar.com. Tel. 26610 71139

LAND FOR SALE Kontokali, near the new hospital. 400 sq.m. in Town Planning, can build 240 sq.m. Flat with good access. 75,000 euro. Tel. 6948 889174

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PERSONAL

HOMOSEXUAL HELP LINE CLUG (Corfu Lesbians and Gays). Information line: 6934 903726 or email us at corfulg@yahoo.gr We support any people in Corfu with Gay / Lesbian / Bi / Trans information

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR DRINKING and would like to talk to someone who understands, or if you are interested in helping to start an AA group here, please call 210 800 1073.

DOES SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU HAVE A DRINK PROBLEM? To help someone, you need to help yourself first. Al-Anon family groups give courage, comfort and support to the partners, families and friends of alcoholics. The Corfu group meets on Monday at 8.00 pm. Any Greek speaker welcome. Call 26610 38776 or 26610 23871 between 08.00 and 13.00 weekdays

ARE YOU FREE AND ACCEPTED BUT WITHOUT A MOTHER? Then contact WB on 6945 717223

HELP OUR ANIMALS For successful rehoming, the Ark local animal charity is in constant need of helping hands. Urgently needed are homes were the stray dog/pup can stay for a limited time - just a few weeks will give us the opportunity to find a permanent solution and the dog will be saved from being left on the street on his own. Phone 6979 798202 or 26610 80308.

RENTALS

DOUKADES House for long term rent. Two bedrooms, lots of storage. Tel. 6948 479840 Spiridoula

AFRA Ground floor apartment, 3 bedrooms, furnished or unfurnished, shared garden. 6942 881222 Angelos

Small ads (for sale and offers categories) are only accepted if paid for in advance. Copy BY EMAIL ONLY. No attachments and no caps. You can leave your payment (5 euro up to 50 words) by advance telephone arrangement at the 'Made in Corfu' shop in Gastouri, the Petra office near Arillas, and the Luvcorfu Properties offices at Barbati and Saint Spiridon. Phone 6948 889174 for information.

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10 Key Things to Look For in a Good Web Designer

When you are investing in a new or newly refurbished website you need to find a company to get that website up and running. This means more than simple design. You also need someone who can help you conceive and write copy; plan functional site structure; get a domain registered; upload files; set up email accounts; and deal with other technical details. Below are ten things to look for when choosing such a company.

EXPERIENCE You will need someone with all the techniques, tools and tricks that will help you prepare your web site and accomplish your online goals. Ask all prospects for a portfolio and find out how many years of experience each one has.

CUSTOMER SERVICE As important as experience is a mindset and attitude of making customer service a priority. If a designer/developer is too busy to answer e-mails or phone calls, will they be able to keep the production schedule? Ask for references, and make a point of actually calling them. Ask the prospect's previous clients if the web developer was responsive, on time and effective.

ORIGINAL COPY AND DESIGN Creating professional and 100% original web graphics separates the men from the boys every time. Anyone can do some quick copy writing and slap it on a page with some pictures and hyperlinks. On the other hand, a talented and veteran designer will demonstrate knowledge of page layout, have a way with colour and know how to place elements on a page for best appearance and web site performance.

CREATIVITY You need to decide right away (before you even start talking to designers) just how much the designer you find will be involved in the conceptual process. Your designer may need to help you with some of the "big picture" questions, such as marketing, web copy writing (for search engines) and how to generate traffic. You want someone creative, but who can also work with your ideas to bring them to fruition.

MARKETING EXPERIENCE The easiest way to find out if your prospective web designers are good at marketing web sites is to view their website and their portfolio. You'll want to ensure that you can find what you're looking for on their site quickly and easily and that you can do the same on some of the sites in their portfolio.

COST For a full picture of all the costs involved in the project, ask for all the costs to be broken out individually - domain name and hosting, graphic design work, marketing fees and web development matters. You may need to place a deposit if the job is large enough, and you should have all payment terms worked out before work starts. Get every detail in writing, including deadlines and how many revisions are included.

JOB TIMELINE After you ask the developers how long the process will take, make a point of asking references if their project was, in fact, completed on time.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS Don't hire anyone who insists on speaking to you in "computer-ese" or won't explain unknown terminology. You have to communicate with this person about things that are important to your business, so you need to be clear at all times.

FULL SERVICE There may be one or two things that your designer/developer cannot do and will have to buy in from a third-party, but for the most part you should be able to find a reasonably-priced professional who can handle just about everything.

AVAILABILITY Are these prospects full-time web professionals? Or are they moonlighting from some other job, even a completely unrelated one?

Having asked all those questions you should end up with a website design and management company like Truetype web Solutions. Our speciality is designing and optimising cheap, but highly efficient and visible websites. Our websites enjoy high rankings on the search engines and we are proud of our close personal relationship with all our clients.

We offer a free analysis of your website, pointing out any defects and suggesting ways in which it could be improved. For details of this offer, or if you have any queries regarding your site or our services, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us. You can also visit our website where you will find a wealth of information about website design, search engines and the Internet, as well as a portfolio of some of our latest work.

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SINARADES (Central) Spitaki Cottage (Traditional - renovated) Tiny, immaculate one-bedroom house in popular village near sea. For sale fully furnished and equipped. 78,000 euro

KATO GAROUNA (Central) Almond Cottage (Traditional - restored) One bedroom cottage, beautifully restored and only needing kitchen finishing. Garden with nice view. 80,000 euro

LEFKIMMI (South) Zervos House (Traditional - in need of renovation) Substantial old house in wonderful traditional town. Two floors with garden and parking, can make three bedrooms. All facilities a short walk, excellent beaches close. 90,000 euro

ARILLAS OFFICE - CALL 6948 889174

KAVADADES (North West) Mulberry Cottage (Traditional - in need of renovation) Sweet little one-bedroom stone cottage, edge-of-village in generous garden with lovely country view. Walking distance to shops etc, beach five minutes. Ticks many boxes - lots of potential! 35,000 euro

ARILLAS (North West) Manatos Apartments (Modern) Six immaculate apartments close to Arillas Beach. Each two bedrooms. Top quality construction and finishing. Each has garden and/or veranda(s) with sea view. Fitted kitchen, CH, designated parking. Top holiday homes. From 175,000 euro

ARILLAS HEADLAND (North West) Two Bay View Land (Land) Amazing plot with views to the sea on both sides! Can build 200 sq.m. Good access and terrain. Close to Arillas and Agios Stephanos. 250,000 euro ONO

ARILLAS (North West) Sunset View Manor and Olive Press (Traditional - part renovated) The most enviable old property in Arillas - manor house with olive press. Can be occupied whilst upgrading. Huge veranda, large garden. Commanding location with fabulous sunset sea view. 500,000 euro

DAFNI (North West) Villa Kouramila (Modern) Charming country villa offering huge rural tranquility and state-of-the-art installations. Three bedrooms plus guest suite. Set in park-like gardens with lovely pool. Mountain and distant sea view. Med living at its best! 550,000 euro

TZAVROS OFFICE - CALL 6947 269112

SPILIA (Corfu Town) Shop premises in central location, near new city marina. 100,000 euro

SAN ROCCO (Corfu Town) Ground floor two bedroom apartment with garden, in town centre. Only needs rearrangement. 165,000 euro

WEST COAST (West) Fortyacore Land (Development Land) One of very few huge plots of land with one owner! 170,000 sq.m. in west coast location, seafront, view of Paleokastritsa. A great opportunity for development. 4,000,000 euro

BARBATI OFFICE - CALL 6948 180195

GIANNADES (Central) Bruni House (Traditional - restored) Amazingly designed one-bedroom house with huge roof terrace and wow-factor country view. Style-magazine interior by up-and-coming Italian artist/designer. Must be seen! Reduced to 94,500 euro

BARBATI (North East) Bay View Land (Building Plot) Exceptional plot, 1,500 sq.m. in Town Planning, at the unspoilt end of Barbati. Can build 400 sq.m. Beautiful sea view. Resort facilities and beach a few minutes walk. 130,000 euro

Avlaki (North East) Sea View Plots (Land) Four magnificent building plots of 4,000 sq.m. above Avlaki Bay, short walk to beach. Top two plots with great sea view. A great foothold on the prestigious North East Coast at a reasonable price. From 175,000 euro

KOULOURA (North East) Kouloura View Villa (Modern) An affordable villa on Corfu's sought-after North East Coast! Now at planning stage, to be stone-built and fully finished. Tranquil location with dramatic sea view, a couple of minutes from Kalami and Kouloura. Garden with room for pool. 350,000 euro

COYEVINAS (North East) Epavlis Land (Development Land) Perhaps the last big plot left in Kensington-on-Sea! 200 metres from Coyevinas Beach, 10,000 sq.m. with excellent access, all-round view. Perfect for prestigious villa(s) or quality commercial development. 650,000 euro

PERITHIA OFFICE - CALL 26630 98002

KLIMATIA (North) Troussas Plots (Land) Two plots of land in Town Planning. Rural location on edge of quiet village. 30,000 euro and 35,000 euro

ACHARAVI (North) Beach Plots (Land) For the first time, affordable almost beachfront building plots in one of Corfu's most popular resorts! Can build 100 sq.m. 100 metres from beach and its facilities! 45,000 euro

ACHARAVI (North) Axonas Land (Land) Giant building plot, 11,000 sq.m., in lovely elevated location near the sea. Dramatic all-round views. Good access, can walk to beach. Builds 340 sq.m. plus same basement. Also half-plots to build 200 sq.m. plus same basement. 250,000 euro or 130,000 euro for half-plot

KALAMAKI (North) Shore Houses (Modern/Commercial) Two semi-detached maisonette-style houses right on the coast - take a footpath 100 metres to the beach! Ready to occupy. For sale separately as homes, or together as lucrative buy-to-let on Corfu's prestigious Kassiope coastline. 350,000 euro or 700,000 euro

KALAMAKI (North) Land on the Beach (Land) Absolute seafront - step out of your garden onto a lovely sandy beach! Set on edge of relatively undeveloped resort with low-key facilities and natural character, three minutes drive to Kassiope. 550,000 euro

SAINT SPIRIDON (North) Villa Felice (Modern) Perhaps one of the grandest villas currently for sale, with four bedrooms and vast living area. Wrap-around sea view, can walk to quiet beach, good tavernas. Futuristic installations, beautiful aesthetics! A very fine property of international standard. 2,000,000 euro

NORTH COAST (North) Hotel (Commercial) Viable modern hotel in lovely peaceful beachfront location. 98 rooms plus all facilities. Immaculate. Can build more. 9,600,000 euro

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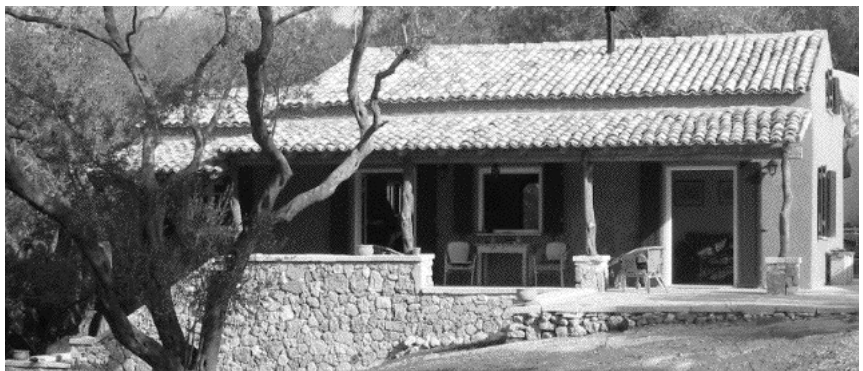
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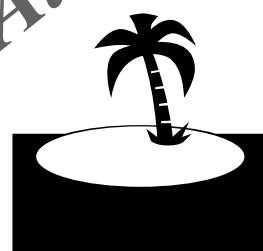
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