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## The Corfiot

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# ear to the ground

I'D WRITTEN SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR THIS MONTH'S EAR TO THE GROUND, but between putting the magazine to bed and taking it to the print shop news broke that Greece was burning.

I'm sure that, quite rightly, speculation of causes and apportioning of blame will follow blanket coverage in the national media. I predict that much of it will be along the lines of the words of one man in a souvlaki shop I was collecting my lunch from on that Black Saturday: 'Το Κράτος έχει ευθύνη' - literally 'The State has responsibility', but carrying the politicized sub-text that 'It's the Government's fault'.

Well, the heatwave is not the government's fault, nor are the strong winds that fanned the flames, nor even the deliberate or stupidly accidental actions that caused the blazes to break out in the first place. On the other hand, it is the Government's RESPONSIBILITY. And there's a lot of difference between that and 'fault'.

The government's responsibility is to protect its citizens, and there will doubtless be protracted post-mortem accusations that services failed in their duty. But who could predict the scale of the fires? While unfortunately forest fires are an ever-present summer danger in Greece, this disaster wasn't like the hurricane that devastated New Orleans: the US government knew it was coming but did not fully activate its forces. In Greece, victims complained that firefighters failed to show up, and many had to battle the flames with their own garden hoses. But nothing short of a fire service several times its present size, and with much, much more equipment (though Greece does have more air-power to fight fires than any other EU country), could have coped with the number and scale of the fires. And a country with the limited economic resources of Greece (partly because its citizens dislike paying their taxes) cannot afford to keep such a force on the payroll year-in year-out, on the off-chance that they will be required.

Listening to the blanket breaking news on the radio, we hear that foreign forces and local volunteers are supporting fire services, and these provisional bodies will certainly make a difference. So maybe greater structuring of top-down (foreign) and grass-roots (volunteer) resources could be a help. The government could call for the establishment of a cross-border, EU-wide firefighting force which could by-pass the protocol of the affected country having to ask for help (a Corfu wildfire in the late '80s could have been prevented if the local authorities had allowed an Italian firefighting plane, called up by the owner of the hotel near where the fire broke out, to enter Greek airspace, instead of sending it back as they did).

At the other end of the scale, a dedicated volunteer firefighting force could be created, made up of volunteers who receive annual training. Soldiers on their largely waste-of-time National Service could be given extensive training in fighting fires, and, once released, stay on instant emergency call-up until they reach 45, as they have to in the event of war.

Then perhaps successive governments could better take responsibility for their citizens' safety - and avoid charges of being at fault.

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## CORRECTION

*Foundation's funding cut for monument restoration  
Bad publicity on Corfu-based website to blame*

THE CORFIOT AND LUVCORFU PROPERTIES correct the allegations which were contained in the article/interview by Harry Tsoukalas in the January 2006 edition.

In the above article Nathan Pascoe and his website were accused of organising a campaign against Luvcorfu Properties.

However the accusations were unfounded and were published due to misunderstanding by Harry Tsoukalas and The Corfiot.

We regret for the harm inflicted on Nathan Pascoe and his informative website and recognize that he had no involvement in trying to damage our name.

NATHAN PASCOE, owner of the 'Corfu Travel Guide' declares that between Nov 2004 and Jan 2006 there remained within the 'Corfu Travel Guide' forums, comments by visitors to the site which were negative and unnecessarily aggressive concerning Hilary Paipeti and Harry Tsoukalas of Luvcorfu Properties. Nathan Pascoe did not endorse the comments and regrets that they were left on the site as he had no intention of damaging the business name of a well established company.

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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 along 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.

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## Walking Season Begins This Month!

Our Saturday Walks begin on September 22 with a trip to Vidos Island (swimming included). Walks will run every week (weather permitting) until May, starting with easy walks and progressing to more difficult ones (alternatives will be offered where possible). Fee per person is 2 euros per walk.

**SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER Vidos Island**  
\*. Meet 10.45 at Old Port for ferry. Sorry, no dogs. Lunch at Vidos Island Taverna.

**SATURDAY 29 SEPTEMBER Agios Simeon \*\*.** Meet 10.30, Doukades Square. Lunch at Doukades.

**SATURDAY, 6 OCTOBER The Dragon Church \*\*.** Meet at 10.30, Strinilas Square. Lunch at Stamatis Taverna, Strinilas.

\* Easy

\*\* Easy but involves some climbing

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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

# Luvcorfu scores two out of four again on UK property show

Yet again, Luvcorfu Properties has demonstrated its media-savvy credentials by dominating a UK television relocation show, with two out of four properties featured on *Fantasy Homes by the Sea* chosen from the agency's portfolio. And, on their return to the UK after filming, punters Lorraine and Angela expressed serious interest in purchasing from Luvcorfu - one of the low-key Katikia Houses near Arillas, built by Luvcorfu's associate building company, Petra Traditional Constructions.

The selection of the two properties by the production team follows the agency's success in similar shows over the last few years, including - last year - *A Place in the Sun*, when Luvcorfu also scored two out of four,

*Fantasy Homes by the Sea* is broadcast on UKTV Style, one of the BBC's commercial channels. It follows presenter Catherine Gee (*Escape to the Country*) as she helps buyers find their perfect property by the coast. Whether it's a relocation move or a holiday home, her aim is to make their dream a reality as they set off to find their ideal seaside haven.

During the Corfu filming, Lorraine and Angela viewed a house in a small development with a heated pool at Agnos in North Corfu, a plot of land above Kalami together with a show house near Arillas (all with Luvcorfu/Petra), plus an apartment and a restored village house with other agents. In addition, they went on a boat trip from Kassiope to Avlaki on a 47 foot powerboat (supplied by Luvcorfu/Petra), and experienced a ride along Avlaki Beach (Angela on horseback with Dimitri's Horseriding, and Lorraine on a professional quad bike supplied by Petra). They enjoyed a meal and Greek night at Nicholas Taverna in Agni Bay, where they joined in the dancing. The programme is scheduled for broadcast sometime after December.

In 2003, Channel Five's relocation show *Dream Moves* chose an old renovated house with Luvcorfu as one of three Corfu properties - and punter Jane Horner bought it as her holiday getaway. An earlier *A Place in the Sun* show also featured one of Luvcorfu's properties, and, though in the end the punters bought independently of the show, this was their favourite of the four they saw.

'When choosing properties for the show, a small team usually comprising the associate producer and director makes a visit just in advance of the shoot,' explained Luvcorfu co-Director Harry Tsoukalas. 'They view 20 properties or more with a number of agents and decide on the best. So when they have to make a shortlist of just four to be filmed for the show, agents are facing a great deal of competition. Lots of agents don't even make it with one. We have been told that it is almost unprecedented for relocation shows to feature two properties with the same agent, yet we've achieved that twice! And

now it looks like we may have two sales out of the four shows we've been featured in!'

Petra Traditional Constructions builds new homes in village style, each one with a slightly different design according to the requirements of the buyer. The company uses contemporary construction techniques in combination with traditional materials and salvaged items. Several delightful rural plots are currently available, some with sea views. Prices start from 120,000 euros for a two bedroom house with garden. They are for sale exclusively with Luvcorfu Properties.

### LETTER FROM SPLASH MEDIA, PRODUCER OF *FANTASY HOMES BY THE SEA*

*Dearest Hilary, Harry, Kostas and all the Lovely Gang at Luvcorfu*

*We are writing to say a huge thank you on behalf of ourselves and the rest of the team at 'Fantasy Homes by the Sea'. Our Corfu shoot went fantastically well and we can't wait to take it into the edit and see the results. We could not have done it without your kindness, time and patience! In fact, this would have been a totally different show if it weren't for your help. Thank you for sharing your Corfu with us and being at our side every step of the way.*

*We don't know the transmission dates yet but we expect it to be sometime after December 2007.*

*We hope to be so lucky as to go back and be able to film Corfu again (as we both have really grown to love it), until then we wish you well and leave you with a very big: EFHARISTO!*

**Kris Puri - Producer-Director**

**Barbara Cassara - Assistant Producer**

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# Luvcorfu helps with Rick Stein's *Corfu Escape*

Several associates of Luvcorfu Properties were involved with the Corfu episode of *Rick Stein's Mediterranean Escapes*, which was broadcast on 16 August to wide acclaim.

Luvcorfu co-Director (and *Corfiot* Editor) Hilary Paipeti assisted with research for the show, and accompanied the crew as local guide and troubleshooter on their two visits to the island. She was recommended to the producers by the Greek National Tourism Organization.

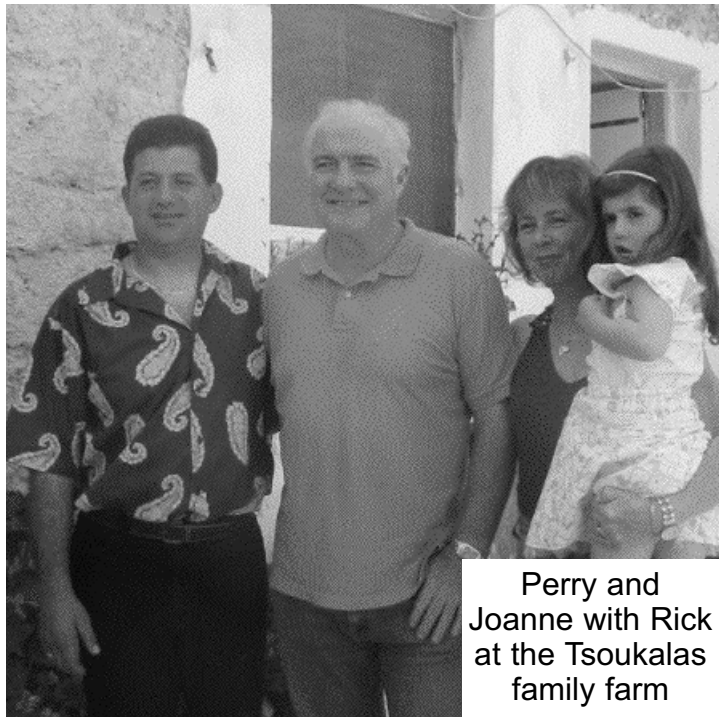
The 'family lunch' which Rick attended was laid on at the home of Papaspiros and Eleni Tsoukalas, parents of Luvcorfu's other director, Harry Tsoukalas (who was in Malta on business at the time of shooting). His brother Perry spoke on the programme to Rick about relocating to Corfu from the UK, where he ran a pub for some years. Perry works for Petra as supervisor for its new-build projects, and acts as agent for Luvcorfu in the north west. His wife Joanne, who manages the Luvcorfu and Petra office near Afionas in North West Corfu, was also spotted in shot, as was Sally Buckley, who is Luvcorfu's agent on the North East Coast and in the north.

Another star of the show was Luvcorfu's North East Coast Office Manager, Angela Daykin, who was sitting beside Rick while he spoke to camera during the meal. Seemingly oblivious of the camera pointing straight at her, she coolly continued munching through the entire shoot!

Rick and the crew had to visit Corfu twice for the show. The first shoot took place in September 2006, and the crew returned to the UK very happy with the 'wrap'. Unfortunately, the camera was subsequently discovered to be faulty (it recorded on playback but not on the tape), necessitating a second shoot in April 2007. This visit was shorter than the first, as only the subject matter that worked editorially needed to be re-recorded. The people

and places featured were **Rouvas Restaurant** near the market, a souvlaki shop in the 'Piazza' (both in Corfu Town), **Foros Restaurant** in Old Perithia, **The River Taverna** in Lefkimmi, **Karidis Restaurant** in Boukari, market stallholder **Effie Michala**, and of course the Tsoukalas family, and colleagues of Luvcorfu and Petra.

During the first visit, when the footage was lost, Harry supplied a powerboat for a night shoot. Pete and Sarah Button (and Sarah's sister Margaret) helped with piloting and hospitality. Pete and Sarah regularly contribute to *The Corfiot*.



Perry and Joanne with Rick at the Tsoukalas family farm

QuickTime and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

### Gjirokastra experience: World Heritage status is not a conclusive solution

Corfu should not regard its recent addition to the list of World Heritage sites as a solution to its problems, if the experience of Gjirokastra in southern Albanian is taken as an example.

Gjirokastra, birthplace of former communist rule Enver Hoxha, is an architectural jewel which was mainly created in the Ottoman era. Most houses were built in the period between the 17th and 19th centuries and boast many unique styles and features. When the town received World Heritage honour in 2005, local people thought the new status would save it from neglect. 'The perception is that UNESCO would solve its problems,' said Auron Tare, director of the Albanian National Trust. 'But UNESCO does not give money - it is just a prestigious title.' Tare emphasized that World Heritage status was aimed at increasing awareness. Local people, he said, should 'try to do something for their own town, rather than expecting UNESCO or other organizations to help them.'

While in theory the UNESCO listing gives the town's traditional buildings very strong legal protection, there is no capacity to implement the laws. Even within the historic zone of Gjirokastra, illegal construction is marring the urban landscape - a tragedy for a town which aspires to be a successful destination for cultural tourism. Tare insists that proper infrastructure for tourists is a priority. Members of the United Nations Peace Corps who are with development says that many of the endangered mansions could be converted into B&B establishments, with no alternative but to use money from abroad. However, Albania is regarded as one of the worst countries in the world for protecting foreign investment.

Corfu, which became a World Heritage site in June this year, has lessons to learn from Gjirokastra. Good looks alone don't make a successful tourism destination.

## NOTICE BOARD

### Sale of Household Goods

Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th September

Town Hall Square, Corfu Town  
12pm until 7pm

Many items for sale, both large and small, old and new including:

Antique Corfiot wardrobe, table lamps, large pine double bed with pocket sprung mattress, pine bedside cabinet, dinner service, books, CDs, teak patio table and chairs, old pine dining table and chairs, various terracotta pots and plants/shrubs (large and small), various hand and power tools, external CD writer, colour laser printer, SUZUKI 3.10m Rib with 10hp 4-stroke engine and more.

Please call 6944 841764 for more info and directions.

Purchases before the date welcome by arrangement only.

Sale will be signposted from Bank Of Greece in the Town Hall Square on the days.

## Book Sale

Organised by and for the Council of Thinali Parents' Association. Held outside the Dimitra Supermarket in Acharavi between 9.30 & 12.30 every Saturday (weather permitting) throughout the summer season. All our books and hand-made cards are 1.50 euros, and proceeds are used to enrich the lives of children attending Acharavi Primary School. Most of the books are donated by local residents, and local hotels and apartments are also encouraged to recycle and donate books left by holidaymakers.

## ACHARAVI

# Despatches from Afghanistan

by Col. Andrew D.C. Whitton

First thing to say is that it is hot. Every day is somewhere between 42-47 in the shade. The hospital is climate controlled which means anywhere from 29-37 degrees depending in which department you sit.

Accommodation is in tents, 8-10 per tent, eight tents to each ablution block. They are also climate controlled and surprisingly comfortable on camp cots with a light-weight sleeping bag. They have power so it is possible to watch DVDs and have light at night to read.

As far as entertainment goes, it is fairly limited. There is a mobile Pizza Hut and a small Spar-type shop run by the EFI (Expeditionary Forces Institute) which sells things like cosmetics, stationary, soap etc. We are trying to arrange film nights, quizzes and stuff. Exercise is interesting in these temperatures. I have been running three times around the camp circuit. This is 3-3.5 miles and varies from clockwise to anti-clockwise. You have to be careful to avoid the dust thrown up by the trucks and military vehicles. There is a small gym - which is very crowded as most of the infantry guys come into it to ogle at the medics/nurses. Obviously I haven't been here long enough yet!

The work is sporadic. Most casualties are delivered by helicopter and can be a mixture of Afghan Police/Army/Civilians. Then the coalition forces can be British, US, Estonian, Danish, French and Dutch. Then add in the contractors who are building & maintaining the camp... they are from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Thailand (males only), India, Sri Lanka, UK and virtually anywhere.

The type of casualties we see is very dramatic. The war is fierce and the fighting ferocious, and bayonets and suicide bombs make it really ugly. The casualties come in with complex poly-trauma. A few days ago we had a guy in who required 18 units of blood before FFP, factor VIIa etc. It does ask a lot of the A&E staff who have not experienced anything like it before both in terms of numbers and type of injuries. One thing for sure is that it is not boring!

**Col. Whitton** TD MBChB MRCGP DRCOG DipOccMed is currently **Hospital Squadron Commander for the UK Joint Force Medical Group at Camp BASTION, Helmand Province, Afghanistan**



**Exclusive scoop photo!!!** Colonel Whitton (right) with David Cameron during the Conservative Party leader's recent visit to Camp Bastion. The trip was kept quiet for security reasons.



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## ECOLOGY

### Symposium: *Cleaning up the Mediterranean*

What are the the priority issues in the Mediterranean environment and in relation to the seas and coastline around Corfu, and what is being done about them?

The **Durrell School of Corfu** and the **Institute Dikeoma** are co-sponsoring and organising a Public Symposium in Corfu, which will be of interest to anyone concerned with the state of the Mediterranean Sea and the waters around Corfu; with biodiversity, environmental, species preservation and pollution issues. The Symposium will take place from 24 to 28 September (English section, 24-26 September; Greek section, 26-28 September).

The symposium will be introduced by Jim Potts, new Academic Director of the Durrell School, who will talk briefly about the Durrell Legacy and the Mediterranean - Reasons for Concern and the Need for Greater Awareness and Public Understanding.

Top Mediterranean marine scientists and specialists will be addressing crucial topics like Biodiversity in the Mediterranean and Pollution and Priority Issues in the Mediterranean. Amongst the many topics proposed or being finalised at the time of writing are Strategies for De-pollution (including Dumping and Hazardous Wastes); International Action Plans, Conventions and Strategies; Alien Species in the Mediterranean; Legal Implementation Issues; Threats to the Sea Turtle in the Mediterranean; Corfu and Ionian Islands Biodiversity Issues; The Greenpeace Campaign for Marine Reserves; Coastal Zone

Management Strategies; Conflict Resolution; Marine Reserves/ Parks/ Protected Areas and Discovery Visitor Centres; Management of Urban and Industrial Activities to protect the Mediterranean and the Marine Ecosystem; Biological Indicators.

There will also be presentations about the problems and priorities for Corfu and the Ionian Sea, the regional Environmental Baseline; about toxic elements from the Adriatic; about overfishing; the pros and cons of fishing methods and fish farming; about ship-generated waste and cargo residues & waste management from ships (new EU policies and rules). Please note that the programme is still subject to change.

It is hoped that there will be opportunities for small group discussion as well as plenary sessions, and consideration of local and civil society initiatives and volunteer action plans, including the possibility of making the case for a Marine Reserve. On Wednesday 26 September we are planning a field trip by caique to visit the area of the Diapontian Islands to explore the case for a protected area or eventual Marine National Park/Reserve. Discussion on board may focus on fishing methods, overfishing and species preservation and conservation. The final two days will be for Greek-speakers, organised and chaired by Apostolos Petroulias.

Participants will pay only 50 euros for the two day Symposium in English (the Wednesday caique trip will be extra), and 50 euros for the two day Symposium in Greek, or 100 euros for the four days (Wednesday caique trip extra).

Contact the Durrell School of Corfu ([durrells@otenet.gr](mailto:durrells@otenet.gr)) to ensure early registration.

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# Music Week at Agios Ioannis

Concerts at Villa Theodora, near Agios Ioannis (Aqualand) this year will be:

TUESDAY, 4TH SEPTEMBER: Elke Hornig (Flute), Dr. Lionel Mann (Organ)

THURSDAY, 6TH SEPTEMBER: Jim Knight (Folk)

SATURDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER: Richie Henderson (Popmaster), Russ Bartlett and the Good Old Boys

All concerts start at 8 pm. Admission is 15 euros and a buffet meal is served in the concert interval.

ELKE HORNIG studied flute with Hans-Jurgen Pincus at Hamburg Conservatory from 1976 to 1980. She has played as soloist and as a member with orchestras and chamber ensembles, performing music ranging from early Baroque up to contemporary. Elke lives part of the year in Corfu and, also a very accomplished artist, has regularly exhibited both here and in Germany.

A church chorister and playing the pianoforte from the age of six, later the viola and oboe, LIONEL MANN envisaged becoming an orchestral musician or conductor until he was pitched at the tender age of twelve and at three hours' notice into becoming organist and choirmaster of a church choir of twenty-four boys. They were locally famous, determined to remain so, and therefore made sure that he quickly learned his job. He was completely hooked! Following some very unmilitary military service he studied from 1948 to 1952 at the Royal College of Music with Dr. Harold Darke (organ), Dr. William Lloyd Webber (theory, composition), Dr. Thornton Lofthouse (harpsichord, continuo), Dr. Edgar Cooke (choir-training, liturgy). After holding church and cathedral appointments Lionel became a concert organist in 1970 and, also having scholastic appointments, has performed for radio and television with orchestras and choral societies in Britain and New Zealand. Dr. Mann 'retired' to Corfu in 1994 and has since been quite busy making music, teaching and helping with tourism.

The electronic organ used in this performance is the smaller of Dr. Mann's two Ahlborn instruments. Its twenty-five registers reproduce with good fidelity the tone of a typical mid-eighteenth-century German instrument; it has slightly larger specification than had J.S. Bach's organ at Weimar.

JIM KNIGHT, who is well-known as a frequent visitor and performer in Corfu, was born in Glasgow. He became involved in folk singing some thirty years ago, forming a band which travelled all over Scotland and down into England. As a solo entertainer, who produces most of his own material, he has sung in folk clubs all around Europe and still performs regularly in Germany. His last tour there won the accolade, 'Jim plays guitar in a very precise finger-picking style and has a Pandora's Box of songs.'

RICHIE HENDERSON writes, 'I've been a working musician for thirty years, not really specializing but a general jack-of-all-trades, working mostly in my native Scotland although I've travelled extensively, performing in Scandinavia, Europe and South America. I have worked with such names as K.D. Lang, James Taylor, Richard Thompson, Runrig, The Proclaimers and Nancy Griffiths. I have released one album through my band, The Liberties, signed to Chrysalis Records, and made many television and radio appearances.'

'I mostly perform interpretations of other people's songs, by songwriters such as Randy Newman, Elvis Costello, Neil Finn, Ron Sexsmith and Cole Porter – something for everybody! Presently I am performing at Jools Holland's Jamhouse venue in Edinburgh. Although it's mainly acoustic guitar and vocals, I don't consider myself a folk musician as such, just a bit of a troubadour.'

RUSS BARTLETT AND THE GOOD OLD BOYS are a pop group well known around Corfu. They have been slaying them locally for years. Come and be slain!

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# PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

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## ART EXHIBITION

### Angeliki Parginou

2 - 12 October

Art Cafe Gallery, Corfu Town

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of the Municipality of Corfu

### Criticism by Markos Banos - Painter

The painting of Angeliki Parginou reflects the woman's nature in the most kind and sensitive way. It is not only the subject of her paintings, but also the colour and light in them that pacify the soul and subsequently open the way to a journey towards a dream. The landscapes and the shapes are drawn with pastel hints that give you the sense of a gentle touch on the soul.

The painter has the charisma to understand, reveal and give a perfect and at the same time sensitive image of nature. In the same way, she understands all human beings, their feelings and the situations of their every day life. Her persistence as well as her love of and devotion to her painting indicate a milestone of very important progress in her art as she moves towards the future.

**Angeliki Parginou-Tsiotsi** was born in Corfu where she still lives. After graduating from High School, she attended a private institute for decorative studies in Athens. A member of the Corfiot Art Institution, she has been painting, using mostly watercolours, for more than 20 years.

She took part in all the group exhibitions of the Greek Women's Association from 1995- 2005 and has also participated in many other group exhibitions: in the Municipality of Thinali in 1995, for the Serbian People in 1999, for the Association 'Floga' in 2001, in the group exhibitions of the Corfiot Art Association in December 2001 and in April 2002, and in Carnival 2004. Her paintings were also on display in group exhibitions in Lefkada from 2003 to 2007, in the group exhibition 'Chase of Art' at the Achilion Palace, in a group exhibition at Stablus Gallery organized by the Pontiac Association of Corfu in 2006, in a group exhibition at the Corfu Palace Hotel organized by the Association for the Protection of Animals.

Some of her paintings were published in 'Image', the Corfiot cultural magazine in June 2003 in which they received complimentary criticism. They have also been part of the set decoration of the TV Show 'Maties Pantou' on the TV Channel 'Tilekerkyra'. Many of her paintings adorn the University of Aigaion on Chios Island where her paintings constitute a significant part of private collections belonging to University Professors.

## First Choice



A unique Chamber Music Festival will take place in Corfu from 21 September to 5 October, with concerts by the great Czech Quartet, the Herold Quartet, joined by some wonderful Greek musicians.

This year Chamber Music Holidays and Festivals celebrates the 20th year of Chamber Music Holidays in Corfu, as well as the 25th Anniversary of the company, and they plan a special party for this double celebration as well as a spectacular Gala Concert.

'We also celebrate the new status of World Heritage Site for the Old Town of Corfu,' says Chamber Music Holidays Director Vivienne Pittendrigh. 'Corfu offers much for the sophisticated and discerning traveller. Here are the sparkling seas, beautiful beaches and lively atmosphere of a Greek island, but Corfu has its own very special character. Its varied and colourful history, a merging of great civilisations is reflected all about you. During the Festival, we visit the Old Town and some of the wonderful museums as well as taking a fascinating day excursion to Butrint in Albania, one of the great archaeological sites in Europe. This is an ideal holiday for both players and listeners - so much for the cultured visitor who loves history and natural beauty and enjoys world class music in superb settings and a relaxed sociable ambience with like minded people.'

This year the Festival features the outstanding Czech musicians, the Herold Quartet from Prague, who delight audiences with their wonderful concerts. The programmes will include Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Dvorak, Smetana and Ravel. There will be a Baroque evening, which includes the Telemann concerto for viola and strings.

**TUESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER** The Dassia Chandris Hotel  
Outdoor Theatre, Dassia

Mozart - String Quartet K 590  
Zahradbuk - String Quartet no. 2  
Dvorak - String Quartet op. 106

**THURSDAY 27 SEPTEMBER** Casa Lucia, Sgombou

Baroque Music by Candlelight - Albinoni, Pachelbel, Richter, Vivaldi and Telemann.

**SATURDAY 29 SEPTEMBER** Villa Boupides, Kommeno

An Evening of Bohemian Music  
Dvorak - Cypres  
Smetana - String Quartet no. 2  
Dvorak - String Quartet op 96 "American"

**MONDAY 1 OCTOBER** St George's Country Club, Acharavi

Mozart - String Quartet K 157  
Ravel - String Quartet  
Beethoven - String Quartet op 131

**TUESDAY 2 OCTOBER** Dr Anthony Steven's Villa,  
Kefalovrisso near Kokkini

Haydn - String Quartet op 64 no 5 "The Lark"  
Mozart - String Quartet K465 "Dissonance"  
Schubert - String Quartet in d minor "Death and the Maiden"

For information about prices, tickets and exact locations, please call Vivienne on 26610 90820, or email  
info@chambermusicholidays.com

## North Corfu Wine Festival

The first *North Corfu Wine Festival* is planned for September 22 and 23 (Saturday & Sunday) at the 'Made in Corfu' complex ('Doppio') between Acharavi and Kassiope, close to New Perithia and Saint Spiridon Beach.

Entry price of five euros gets you your own locally-made carafe/wine flagon and free wine and retsina from Corfu and Greece. Beer, soft drinks and coffees are also available from the bar, and spit-roasted lamb and souvlaki will also be on sale.

Visitors will be able to buy locally-made items, including kumquat and pork products and ceramics. In addition, they will be able to watch a traditional barefoot wine-pressing, and experts will be on hand to answer any questions about wine-making. Orders of grapes for you to make your own vintage will be taken, with the grapes delivered direct to your house.

Throughout, a local band will play Greek and foreign music, and it is expected that Corfiot guests will put on some impromptu dancing!

A proportion of the money from entry will go to the Corfu Heritage Preservation Foundation, so you can do good while having a great time!

The event begins at 6 pm; grape pressing from 7 pm. Phone 26630 98002 for details.



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# The Minefield of Church Music

## A Reply to Lionel Mann

by Clifford Owen

The first thing I must say is that Lionel Mann is a good friend of mine and his musical professionalism as a choirmaster and organist is not in doubt. Attend the Agios Ioannis Music Week (4 - 8 September) if you want proof. However, his 'Opinion' feature 'Bravo Ratzinger,' in the August 2007 Corfiot has put such bait under my nose that I cannot resist a reply!

There is an old church joke: 'What's the difference between an organist and a terrorist?'... 'you can negotiate with a terrorist'! I am not suggesting for one moment that Lionel falls into the latter category, but there is no doubt that relations between the vicar and the organist in a church are absolutely crucial. I read with interest about the encounter Lionel had with the bishop-or-bust vicar some years ago. There have been many similar encounters over the years where the Director of Music has clashed with the spiritual leader. Cathedrals are the chief minefields in this matter, and I know of stories where arrogant new Deans have waded into famous Cathedral choirs and organists early on, to 'let them know who is boss'. I could make this article a little more 'juicy' by recalling some incidents, but I will resist! However, if I mention Worcester Cathedral as an example of a Cathedral which is part of the Three Choirs festival, it goes without saying that the Director of Music not only has to be an accomplished musician of the first rate, but he also needs to understand something of what the worship of Almighty God entails. Worcester was both a worship centre and a notable performing centre. This inevitably means persons and personalities. (The two musical directors I remember were excellent, as one would expect in the home Sir Edward Elgar.)

But as far as the rule book is concerned, there ought to be no fight to the death in the Anglican churches, because Canon Law is very clear in the matter. The exact words are something like: 'The minister is responsible for choosing hymns, settings and chants in worship. Where there is a director of music, the incumbent shall pay due heed to his advice in such choices, but nevertheless the minister shall have final say.' The organist may be from Westminster Abbey, and the vicar may be a musical Philistine, but Canon Law is on the vicar's side! I have been extremely fortunate throughout my 34 years to be blessed with a good variety of musicians, with whom I have been able to work, and they with me. That's not true everywhere.

One of the problems in Anglican English Church music is that many of the larger parish churches naturally try to, and indeed are expected, to ape cathedrals in their style and selection of music. Most cathedral organists are career men (and women?) who have come up through the ranks of the bigger parish churches, have reared choirs and have established musical excellence behind them. The trouble is that the lesser fry can't quite meet the same standards and many a parish church's attempt to be a mini-cathedral falls short with woeful results. Nevertheless, there are many performers and accomplished

musicians around who began life singing in church choirs.

This brings me to the issue of whether church music is worship or performance. My answer is not the usual one. I refuse to accept the false polarisation of worship or performance, because I think the two are closely related. If music is to be worshipful, it should be of the very best that can be offered by that group of people. It needs to be performed, which basically means 'executed or done' well. I have little patience with people who don't make an attempt to sing their best. Often the retort is given: 'Ah, God looks on the heart, this is just outward show. So and so only likes the sound of their own voice (or keyboard).' Well, I am sure they do, but apart from ego satisfaction, the fact is that musical gifts are not primarily given to enhance the egos of their possessors - they glorify God the giver, and are to be used to inspire the rest of us. (Parable of the talents?) I remember having an argument many years ago with my eldest son (now a professional concert pianist). He wanted to give it all up as he was finding it hard. I said: 'Ok, so you really want to finish and spare yourself years of heartache and struggle and possible 'failure'. But think of the rest of us who will be deprived of your music.' He carried on! But I have two complaints as far as church music is concerned: the first is that cathedral style music can be so altruistic it can be exclusive. We are not able to join

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## CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

in, excluded by our musical inability; this renders worship leading to the few 'professionals' who do it vicariously, on our behalf whilst we look on. I saw this problem overcome in a French Roman Catholic Mass, where a cantress chanted the first line of each song, sang most of the verses, but then gradually drew in a choir of moderate ability, and finally the whole congregation. We actually participated in the act of worship, rather than being mere spectators.

My other complaint is that professional church musicians tend to absolutise a particular style of music and worship, where everything else is judged second rate. I have to differ from Lionel here because I think that the Second Vatican Council was a marvellous step forward for the Roman Catholic Church, which has brought them into the 20th and 21st centuries and enabled them to recognise that there are other Christians on the same planet! (I am an ecumenist, as you know). I apologise that because of shortness of space I cannot pursue this further.

But including others in worship brings me to one of the main minefields of church music today: the charismatic culture. Holy Trinity Corfu has taught me a lot in this area, but much of it I knew before I came. Modern church music reflects, as it ever did, the prevailing culture. Whilst I don't believe that all music in church comes from 'below' as opposed to 'above', yet I have doubts about the spiritual origins of much rock-style music in church. I remember with what tension I played some 'Jesus Christ Superstar' music earlier this year! But there is much popular modern music in church which is good, even beautiful, and will still be here in a hundred years time. On the other hand a

great deal of Christian music is hardly 'music', has much in common with Glastonbury Festival, and evokes a kind of bodily response which some find rather frightening. I could go on!

But on the whole, we fly by the seat of our pants somewhat in worship leading; it is something we have very little training in at theological college. But it is a crucial area and one can see why the Vicar is finally responsible for making choices in the matter. Worship has to be culturally relevant in whatever context, and if some tunes seem as though they have emanated from a nursery group workshop, then so be it. At the end of the day, the object is to bring people closer to Almighty God and to lift their sights, and give them hope. It is never just filling the air with sound. Good church music, like a certain beer, can reach the parts that other things cannot reach. I think even Lionel would agree with that!

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## ANIMAL WELFARE

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# Tina and Max - Two Canine Emigrants

Vangelis, Tina and Max's owner, cared for his dogs. He found Tina nearly four years ago as a small pup, and Max about three years ago. But, complaints of neighbours, and several incidences of poisoning which the dogs only just survived, prompted Vangelis to ask the Ark for help. He had tried to find other, safer homes for his dogs, but without luck.

It took some time, but then via AAI a Dutch family felt sorry for Tina and wanted to help. They came over for a holiday, taking the opportunity to meet Tina; more or less immediately they 'bonded' - and lucky Tina found her new owners. But the Ark still had the problem of Max, the white/black male who had been Tina's companion for the years. He could not be kept behind all on his own, so it was decided was that he would go with them too. Tina soon felt at home sharing the house with two cats, and she is learning to walk beside her owner as he rides his bike. She is also going to school - a busy life for this Corfiot canine.

And the good news is that Max has also found his 'golden basket' with a very caring couple who coincidentally already had adopted a dog from France, Mireille, who is a smaller copy of Tina!!! Max had a bad car accident last year in Corfu, and Vangelis paid to fix his legs, but he still suffers pain in one. On top of that, they discovered in Holland that he has leishmaniosis (an illness caused by a sandfly bite which is common in Corfu), although here he was tested negative a few months before.

Fortunately, his lovely new owners care so much for Max that, despite everything, they will keep him and treat him. Soon all, the couple and their two dogs will go on holiday to France, with the car on the train, and a compartment for all four! Vive la France!... and Vive! the two kind families who have given Tina and Max a new and safe 'golden basket'.

TOURISTS OFTEN REPORT TO THE ARK, by phone or email, their horror and upset at some of the treatment of animals that they see during holidays in Corfu and in other parts of Greece. The attitude in northern countries towards animals is quite different from what they find here, and most tourist are very disappointed by the indifference of the local authorities.

This year the Greek Tourist Organization has produced a new online form (in several languages) that allows tourists to complain about any aspect of their visit to Greece. The form also includes a section to complain about the maltreatment of animals.

If lots of people make the effort to send in the form it can't be claimed that 'nothing is wrong'.

You can find all information and the form on our website [www.corfuanimalwelfare.com](http://www.corfuanimalwelfare.com)

Please fill in the form and send it to the addresses mentioned on the Corfu Animal Welfare website. We have also included the Ministry of Agriculture, as they are responsible for animal welfare.

### THE ARK ANIMAL WELFARE CHRISTMAS CARDS 2007

The Ark has again received a new consignment of delightful Christmas cards. There is another new design for this year: Santa Claus with a lovely puppy; this in addition to the four

other charming designs on sale in previous years. Each pack contains ten cards and cost 4.50 euros per pack. They will be on sale at various locations: at Holy Trinity Church and in the Ark Animal Welfare shop, from Lucy Steele (former British Vice Consul) and from various bars in the Kontokali, Ipsos, and Pyrgi areas.

4 October 2007 is WORLD ANIMAL DAY and anyone purchasing the Ark cards between Monday 1 October and Friday 12 October will be entitled to a free packet of pet food/biscuits.

All proceeds from the sale of these cards will go towards helping stray and abandoned animals in Corfu. We look forward to your continual help and assistance.

TEMPORARY FOSTER URGENTLY NEEDED. If you have a (little) space and are willing to care for a limited time (even a week can make the difference between dying on the street and finding a lovely home). Please help us do something for the abandoned animals of Corfu, mostly dogs. The local authorities do not have facilities, so the dogs depend on you.

Please contact us, if you can give help.

26610 32111 (only Greek)

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## Epiplomania

# We bought a house in North West Corfu

My family and I were on holiday in Arillas, in North West Corfu, in August 2005. This is a resort that we had been visiting two or three times a year for the previous three years. The main reason for returning is that the resort is extremely family-friendly with no crowds of teenagers or youths, with a very safe sandy beach, the friendliest people we have met on our travels and an excellent selection of bars and tavernas. We have travelled extensively throughout Europe and Greece and had found this resort to be one that we love to return to.

One day the weather was not particularly good so we decided to have a trip in the hire car. We were driving through St. George, the neighbouring resort, and noticed an interesting-looking gift shop displaying hand-woven rugs and lace. Adjacent to the shop at the time was the local office for Luvcorfu. We have never had any intention of buying a house abroad, but out of curiosity we had a look in the window there to see what the property prices were like. And advertised in the window was a prototype development called Katikia which was to be located in Arillas. The prices seemed quite reasonable so we popped into the office to get some further details. It transpired that the advertisement had only just been placed in the window. We expressed our interest and a meeting was arranged for later in the week with Harry Tsoukalas, the developer.

We met Harry at the office and were pleased to find that he spoke very good English. We talked about the project in some detail and were shown some typical floor plans and some very

basic artist's impressions of how the houses would look. Three houses were originally planned, to be built in traditional style using as much reclaimed and original material as possible. The internal size of the property would be in the region of 65 square metres which would accommodate two bedrooms, a bathroom and a good size open-plan living room with dining and kitchen area. We were then taken down to view the plot of land and were extremely happy when we discovered that this was located about half a kilometre outside the Arillas village boundary, in a quiet and peaceful setting.

We confirmed our interest in buying a property, and arranged to meet with Harry later in the week to discuss in more detail the specification and what we would be getting for our money. At this point it is worth pointing out that buying a house in Corfu is totally different to what you would expect in the UK. There are no formal specification documents, there are no proper architects or engineers drawings and the contract is very much a brief bespoke document which really just sets out the payment schedules. You have to rely on a lot of trust and to be able to visualize the end product. There do not appear to be any formal 'building regulations' as in the UK but the 'Civil Engineer' inspects the build at all critical points, for the foundations, ground floor, concrete ring beams and so on.

***Rule number 1 - Do not expect the level of documentation or drawings that you would get in the UK.***



We met again with Harry to agree a written specification of our requirements, to finalize the basic price and to lay out exactly what would be included. The final ground plan of the house was also agreed and the position it would occupy on the plot of land. We agreed to lodge a deposit of 10,000 euro for the development when we returned to the UK that would be fully refundable if we had second thoughts or if the 'building permits' were not granted for the project.

***Rule number 2 - Obtain written evidence of what has been agreed and get the documents signed and witnessed.***

We were given the name of a lawyer in Corfu Town who had carried out a lot of work in conjunction with Luvcorfu. This initially gave us cause for concern, as there was an established relationship, but having met the lawyer we had trust in him

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to act in our interests and arranged power of attorney in order that he could deal with the notary, land issues, arranging bank accounts and authorizing payments on our behalf. You will also need to engage the lawyer to obtain tax reference numbers and to deal with the 'pink slip' required from the bank to prove that any money for the building work came in from abroad rather than being earned locally.

**Rule number 3** - *Employ the services of an English speaking lawyer that you trust and obtain a written copy of all of the costs involved including legal fees, land registry, local taxes, agents fees, land costs and the construction costs. Agree a payment schedule that suits everybody.*

The realization of the 'building permits' took a lot longer than Harry originally anticipated and were not issued until March/April 2006. No work had commenced before this other than the plot of land being cleared and levelled. Harry is extremely keen on maintaining the island's natural features and any olive trees affected by the building works were kept wherever possible, or transplanted within the site boundary where this was not possible. This was quite a worrying time for us as we were getting little feedback and had begun to wonder whether we had thrown away our 10,000 euro. The main reason for the lack of feedback is that there really was nothing happening. Once the permits were granted we were issued with more detailed drawings of the floor plans, elevation drawings and a site layout (topographic survey).

**Rule number 4** - *The pace at which things happen in Corfu is a lot slower than in the UK - do not worry!*

Building work commenced in earnest and when we visited Arillas in May 2007 the basic layout of the three houses on the plot of land were visible and the main retaining walls between the houses were in the process of being built. It was starting to get exciting, and we spent much of our holiday visiting other houses with Harry to inspect the different finishes that are available in order to make an informed decision on what we wanted. We also spent a number of pleasurable days with Harry on his boat where he took us to some of the other islands. He gave us some very good lessons on the Corfiot way of life and shared his belief in maintaining the history and heritage of the island. We returned to Corfu twice again in 2006 and were pleased with the progress of the building work. We noticed that this does slow down during the peak summer months as a lot of the tradesmen own bars and tavernas and operate these in the peak periods, returning to the building work when tourists leave the island. During these visits we visited the kitchen showroom, plumbers and so on in order to make our final selections.

**Rule number 5** - *Try to take photographs, keep brochures, of the tiles, kitchens and bathroom fittings so you can remember them at a later date.*

In the late summer of 2006 Harry's brother Perry and his wife Joanne returned to Corfu from the UK with their children to live permanently. Perry took over the day-to-day running of the Katikia project, with Joanne working at the local office of

Luvcorfu. From their arrival the speed of the building work, feedback and information flow improved as Joanne visited the site weekly and emailed us photographs of progress and completed works. This enabled us to make late changes to the specification, and we were able to have a more informed decision on how we wanted things.

**Rule number 6** - *Keep a detailed record of the original agreement and update this with any variations to the scope of work and any extra costs to the basic price agreed. The last thing you want is an argument about the final cost at a later date.*

We arranged to spend our first Christmas in Corfu in 2006 and were informed that the house would be completed by then. Unfortunately, a spell of particularly bad weather in November and December prevented this, but we had made a contingency plan to stay in a friend's house. The first time we actually stayed in our new house was February 2007. At that point there were still a few minor details to be finished and resolved but generally everything was complete. The standard of workmanship, level of finishes and attention to detail surpassed our expectations. The house was built in a very much traditional style on the outside, using Byzantine roof tiles, olive wood posts, timber windows and shutters - but this has been married very well with a modern interior comprising all of the modern fixtures and fittings. The house is even pre-wired for satellite TV and broadband!

**Rule number 7** - *Do not be afraid to prepare and issue 'snagging' lists or defects or a list of uncompleted or unsatisfactory items. If you do not raise issues they will not be addressed.*

Overall, we have been extremely pleased with our decision to buy a house in Corfu. There were times during this process where we considered cutting our losses and pulling out, but having seen things through we now have a lovely home in a place that we love, so all of the trials, tribulations & worries have been worth the effort. This is an accurate record of our experience; you read articles in the papers about people who have nightmare experiences, so maybe we have been very lucky.

The experience has also enabled us to forge firm friendships with everybody involved in this project and we would particularly like to thank Harry, Perry, Joanne, Angela and everybody else involved for providing us with the realisation of a dream.

Another interesting element of this project is that quite a few of the local people of Arillas have been involved in the construction work. They are busy running bars and tavernas in the summer, but rely on construction work through the winter months to keep them busy. It is good to know that part of the building cost of the project goes back to the local community.

**Rule number 8** - *At the end of the day when everything is satisfactorily complete you can sit on your terrace, sipping an ouzo and enjoying the fact that you are in your own home, on your own terrace in your own paradise. Enjoy!*

**Steven & Karen Reid, Arillas, Corfu - 7th September 2007**

# Kassiopi - NE Coast Capital *by Hilary Paipeti*

What strikes the visitor first about Kassiopi is the profusion of shops and other businesses that border the streets of the village centre and embrace the harbour. Quality gifts and clothing, travel offices offering excursions to all far-flung points of the island, two big all-year-round supermarkets, bars and restaurants serving all kinds of food imaginable, and even a traditional coffee bar.

But scratch the surface and an older, more tranquil Kassiopi emerges. Down at the harbour, the bright boats bobbing and jostling at the quayside capture the eye; though many are specially built, or have been converted, to carry visitors on sea-bourne trips, a significant number still function as fishing boats, and sometimes you can watch the owners landing their catch. But look more carefully at the periphery, beyond the higgledy-piggledy buildings that enclose the harbour, where a section of old wall defines the skyline. It is part of the extensive remains of Kassiopi's Byzantine castle, probably built on Roman foundations. A signpost guides you from the north-west side of the harbour to its imposing gateway, and, leaving behind the bustle of the resort, you step back in time. Within, there is little to see, and the landscape slumbers under the drapes of history.

Kassiopi was probably settled around 2000 BC by seagoing Phoenicians. They brought with them the worship of Kassios Zeus, the 'defender of the borders', and the settlement took the name. The suffix 'opia' may relate to 'sight' (cf 'myopia'), suggesting that the name means 'look-out point defending the border', and indeed its location guarding the northern approaches to the Corfu Channel is a most strategic spot.

By Roman times it was a place of some importance, and probably in control of the northern section of the island. It was a natural stopping point on the sea routes leading from Rome to their Eastern provinces, and in consequence developed as a resort-style town. It was first mentioned in literature by Cicero, who spent a week in the town on his way home from the east. It is also mentioned by Strabo, Ptolemy, Suetonius and Pliny the Elder. Caesar may have passed this way, but the Emperor Nero certainly visited, and Tiberius is said to have had a summer villa nearby. During the first years of Byzantine rule, Kassiopi was more important than Corfu Town, and it suffered frequent raids. Eventually, the Emperor Manuel Comnenus strengthened the castle walls.

By the time the Venetians took over, the fortress was in the hands of the Angevins, who were using it as a base for resistance. Ousting their predecessors, the Venetians dismantled the construction for fear it should fall into the hands of their arch-rivals, the Genoese.

Under the Venetians, Corfu Town developed in importance, whilst Kassiopi declined. Only its church has managed to find a place in the history books. The present Church of the Virgin Mary Kassiopitras is built on the site of an early Christian basilica, which in turn had been built on the temple dedicated to Jupiter Kassios (the Roman rendering of Kassios Zeus). The

early church was destroyed by Turkish pirates, probably during the 1537 siege of Corfu. It was later rebuilt by the Venetians as a Roman Catholic Church, and returned to the Greek Orthodox religion probably in the early 1600s.

Sometime during the 16th century, a young man named Stefanos was wrongly accused of stealing flour, and was sentenced to have his eyes put out. Wandering blind around the island, he came to the Church of Kassiopi, where he spent the night. While he dozed, he felt hands pressing his eyes; coming fully awake, he saw a vision of the Virgin Mary, and found that his sight had been restored.

This miracle is commemorated with a fiesta held on 8 May, and both on that day and throughout the year, people with eye troubles visit the church. Located just behind the harbour, its courtyard and narthex are shaded and enveloped by luxuriant vegetation, creating a secluded sanctuary amongst the bustle of the surrounding tavernas and shops.

Lawrence Durrell, who lived in nearby Kalami just before the Second World War, discovered its peaceful atmosphere. 'Kassiopi... has a style entirely of its own,' he wrote in Prospero's Cell. 'In spring, meadows back it, starred with the foam of wild flowers. The village finds its axis in a giant tree whose shadow falls equally upon the tavern and the church. A good harbour, Kassiopi is the port of call for the carbide fishers, and under the ancient fortress the waves shatter themselves upon ledges of clean granite and arcs of dazzling pebbles. Empty beaches to the north and south stun you with their size and emptiness, and the egg-like perfection of the pebbles.'

The tree still stands (two of them, in fact), shading the forecourt of two tavernas and a supermarket.

But in summer the beaches are no longer empty, and it is in the hinterland that you find peace. Behind the coastline of rocky coves and pebble beaches washed by turquoise and azure water, a narrow strip of olive groves heralds the terrain's sudden rise into the barren land of the Pantokrator Massif, a region of knife-sharp rocks, spiky vegetation, deserted villages and precipitous forested gorges, laced with rough, sometimes cobbled, footpaths and blanketed with silence.

It is on the lower slopes of these hills that many foreigners have built holiday homes; mostly, when the owners are not in occupation, they are rented to tour operators. Some are constructed using the natural stone of the locality, so that they seem to grow out of the landscape. While these gorgeous villas enjoy spectacular views down over the coastline, the ones on the sea side of the main road are even more prestigious. A few are set directly on the sea, and these are the truly prime properties of the sought-after North East Coast of Corfu, of which Kassiopi forms the focal point.

With the development of the quality property market in this area, the latest page in Kassiopi's history is being written. Now, like in Roman times, the elite of society is favouring North East Corfu's favourite resort.

# Museum Marathon

by Sarah Button, additional material by Hilary Paipeti

I confess to being a little bit of a culture vulture and enjoy museums and art galleries but when Hilary suggested we 'Do' Corfu Town's museums in a day I thought we might be selling this wonderful town short. So how did it go?

Parking on the promenade near the **Archaeological Museum** is free, and before 9 am there was plenty of space.

The museum, built in the 60s to house some of Corfu's most ancient relics, looks rather incongruous set amongst older Venetian buildings, but I was stunned by a collection that showed a side of pre-classical Greek archaeology I wouldn't have believed existed. This museum contains none of those giant-size marble gods typical of classical sites like Olympia. Exhibits are much more at the human level - you could imagine a real woman offering her votive statue of Artemis to the goddess. Even the largest of the free-standing statues - the Lion of Menecrates - is only life-size. Above all, the exhibits, mostly dating from the 5th and 6th centuries BC, are immensely OLD.

The pride of the collection, the Gorgon (Medusa) Pediment from the archaic Temple of Artemis, dates from 590-580 BC and is one of the largest and oldest sculptural groups in Greece. Those of you who have only seen it in a guidebook photograph, prepare to have your breath taken away! The pediment, and especially the representation of Medusa, is rich with symbolism which may relate to the ancient Saint Michael - Apollo Line, which has been traced from the west coast of Ireland through Greece (where it changes from the Christian figure to the pagan one) and into the Holy Land. Hilary tells me that the ley line and its associated energy lines, twisting like a serpent around the parent line, cross over in the centre of the Temple. The snakes which form the Medusa's knotted girdle may be a reference to this.

I left wanting to know more about Corfu's ancient past.

The museum is wheelchair accessible but the interpretation and presentation of information could be better. Much of the labelling is badly translated, and capital letters have been used in the mistaken belief that they will be easier to read. Some children may not be entertained, except possibly by the burials, which are a relatively new addition to the collection and in consequence better presented.

*Open 08.30 - 15.00, Sundays 09.30 - 14.30.  
Closed Mondays. Entry 3 euros.  
Concessions available.*

SARAH wanted to take home a bowl painted with swans and a little bronze dove.

HILARY wanted to take home a crouching bronze lion and a pottery hare.

A short stroll along the promenade with its views across to mainland Greece and we reached the **Old Fortress**. Here on the dramatic peninsula the entire population of Corfu Town once lived, protecting themselves from invading Goths, Vandals and

Turks. Today the Fort is a place to explore and relax.

Close to the main gate, a **Byzantine Art Museum** demonstrates how even a small collection can be presented as an educational experience (this museum is dedicated mainly to early - pre-Venetian - Byzantine art, while the better known museum we visit later contains mainly post-Byzantine works). Boards with historical explanations are well written and easy to read (the only exception being a map locating the island's Byzantine churches, which seems to have been designed to be viewed only by six footers and over). When the Archaeological Museum gets a makeover, this would be a good example to follow.

SARAH wanted to take home a mosaic depicting a mating cock and hen (a bizarre image to find in a regiously themed museum!).

HILARY wanted to take home a ram's head in marble.

The adjoining museum shop has for sale a lovely collection of official copies, many representing pieces from the Archaeological Museum. You can take home your very own Grecian Urn, the head of a handsome Greek God or a growling lion. Prices start at a very reasonable 18 euros. It is refreshing to see affordable and tasteful souvenirs.

Housed in an old chapel in the precinct of the Fort, '**Ex Votos and Miracles**' is an exhibition celebrating and explaining the Greek Orthodox tradition of asking for miracles by leaving a 'tama' ('tamata' in the plural) - an iconic symbol representing the miracle one is seeking. For example, if you had a bad foot your tama would show an image of a foot; and to ask for the return of a loved one from war, one might leave a picture of the man himself. The extremely well presented display takes you through the history of this fascinating custom, and some of the exhibits are bizarre and even creepy: wax dolls, human limbs and even a breast; presumably some poor woman praying for relief from cancer. Children have made dough representations of the things that scare them: a staircase and a spider.

Representative of all tastes and styles, and collected from all over Europe, this immensely imaginative exhibition certainly has the human touch.

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## FRONT PAGE FEATURE

SARAH wanted to take home a silver boat tama from Saint Spiridon Church and dating from 1911.

HILARY wanted to take home any one of the 'horse miracle' paintings.

(Note that this exhibition is temporary and runs only until the end of October.)

Time for coffee; we were parched. But after a steep climb up some very old and uneven steps we found the café closed. Surely by 10.30am someone could have served refreshment.

We chose not to climb the hill to the lighthouse with its commanding view of the town, but children and the very fit would love to, and there's lots to explore, including tunnels and bastions.

The old barracks have been converted into a public library, and here the town's archives are kept for folk to browse in on the past. Outside, the old accommodation looks just like a London street; a terrace of yellow brick with high windows, basements and old fashioned Victorian street lighting. I found myself looking for an English bobby and a red pillar box.

*The fortress and its museums and exhibitions are open from 09.00 - 21.00. The shop closes at 14.00. Entry 4 euros. Concessions available.*

*If you fancy taking in more you can buy a roaming ticket which gives entry to visit the Fort, the Palace of Saint Michael and Saint George, the Archaeological Museum and the Museum of Byzantine Art, all for only 8 euros.*

Our thirst was distracting us from our mission, but we found refreshment in the form of freshly squeezed orange juice and

coffee at the remarkably civilised **Art Café**. This attractive spot, in gardens alongside Corfu's Art Gallery, has sea views, and peace and quiet by the bucketload. It is the kind of place you might once have found Lawrence Durrell chewing the literary cud.

As Hilary paid for our drinks I admired the rather grand furniture in the café. Chic pieces that would look at home in an English palace, and yup! that's where they came from. In the early '90s the locals stormed Mon Repos, built initially as summer residence of the British Lord High Commissioner and later of the Greek Royal Family. The action was a protest by the islanders who felt they had a right to access to this grand manor; they got it, and the Art Café got furnished in the process. Now the furniture is on display for everyone to enjoy.

Refreshed, we climbed up the nearby steps and entered the **Municipal Art Gallery**.

Despite having attended art school, I knew nothing of Greek art and I was grateful to have Hilary along. This was a History of Art lesson I needed.

For the 400 years of Venetian rule (1386 - 1797) Corfu was on the receiving end of Italianate cultural influence and it is the Venetians we have to thank for the town's beauty. The Byzantines - who got here first - had already made their mark on the Corfiot art scene but their culture didn't allow for three dimensional imaging, so their work, although highly professional and colourful, looks flat and graphic. The Art Gallery demonstrates the Venetian influence that was part of the Renaissance and we see the human figures metamorphosing from Middle Eastern to Latin. Every picture tells a story and

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# FRONT PAGE FEATURE

these beautiful paintings certainly had a tale to tell. John the Baptist gets a good look in. He seems to keep his head and lose it at the same time, since in all paintings telling his story his head remains glued to his shoulders while someone else runs around with it on a platter; maybe it was taboo for painters to depict him headless. The Art Gallery's version is by Michael Damaskinos, and both historically and location-wise kicks off the collection. In this painting of the Baptist's beheading, the saint is almost incidental; he is positioned darkly in the bottom left corner, while the light and focus of the work falls on the faces of his beheaders in the centre. Hilary thinks it is the single greatest piece of art on display in Corfu.

The adjoining rooms house some wonderful pieces by local artists living and dead. I fell in love with a painting of an olive grove by George Samartzis, painted around 1900 in the impressionist style; you can almost feel the warmth of the sun as it flickers through the boughs. But it was a painting by the wartime artist Stephanos Trivolis that really fired my imagination, 'Walking in Potamos Village' depicts young couples, the guys in uniform and the girls in brightly coloured dresses wandering though a lover's lane. Evocative images recreating the loss, loneliness and anticipation of the Second World War. Trivolis lost all his work when his house in Corfu Town was bombed, but he didn't give up, and today what remains of his work is pure joy to look at.

There is a well-stocked bookshop with glossy hard covers and soft backs, and a stunning book with prints of many of the works found here can be had for only 7.5 euros. There are framed prints from 10 euros; plenty of scope for prezzies.

To enter the second section of the Gallery one has to descend the same steps, walk round the building and go up more steps, but it was worth the palaver. Inside another surprise; a **temporary exhibition by modern artist Apostolos Zolotakis** that links perfectly with 'Ex Votos and Miracles'. His work, a contemporary take on tamatas, uses the little metal icons stuck to painted canvas and lots and lots of wax. The result is an exciting mixture that inspires emotions relating to health, wealth and happiness as well as doom and gloom.

Beautifully presented and well lit, it's certainly worth a snoop at.

Access is clearly a problem - if you are in a wheelchair or have bad knees forget it - and it wasn't obvious that you had to walk back and forth to find the galleries.

*The permanent section of the Gallery is open 09.00 - 21.00 except Tuesday when it is open 10.00 - 18.00. The section housing temporary exhibitions is open 10.00 - 18.00 daily. Entry 1.5 euros. Concessions available.*

SARAH wanted to take home George Samartzis' Olive Grove. HILARY wanted to take home Michael Damaskinos' John the Baptist.

The **Museum of Asian Art**, in the Palace of Saint Michael and Saint George, is the grandest of all, a neoclassical extravaganza of a palace now housing one of Corfu's finest collections. A recent makeover has added professionalism of world standard. Gone are the dusty old showcases and in are superb information boards. Simple and astonishingly well written explanations readable in both Greek and English lead us along the Silk Road via Tibet and Nepal to India with its erotic art and paintings on

silk, through China - inventors of porcelain, lovers of Tao and Buddha - to Japan with its fine black and white paintings. I found myself lusting after some of the objects d'art, and flirted with the idea of a shopping trip to Beijing.

A temporary exhibition gives you a taste of Korean philosophy, and explains why a depiction of natural form - landscape and wildlife - takes precedence over depictions of human forms which are considered inferior. Very simple scrolls portraying bamboo and flowers that look as though they were painted in five minutes demonstrated a restrained and ordered respect of nature. I wanted to stay and enjoy all day, but time was pressing.

This is one for the whole family, with plenty to entertain and fascinate the children (boys will love the Samurai stuff), and the museum is wheelchair accessible with a lift to the first floor.

*Open 08.30 - 15.00. Closed Mondays. Entry 4 euros. Concessions available.*

SARAH wanted to take home the God of Happiness and the parquet floor in the Rotonda Room.

HILARY wanted to take home a jade dog and a cloisonne panel depicting deer in a landscape.

Round the corner and along the sea wall, we managed the long flight of stone steps to the Church of the Virgin Antivouniotissa, a deconsecrated place of worship which now houses a **Museum of Byzantine Art**. We were instantly refreshed by 'the Priest's House'. This extraordinarily pretty little building has been restored with an almost intimate passion for preservation of the Corfiot style, and is set in a pretty, scented garden. The house contains a display that pays deep respect for the Greek Orthodox Church. Paraphernalia used and worn by the priests that presided over religious ceremonies include silver salvers, incense burners, and religious icons.

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## FRONT PAGE FEATURE

The church itself remains much as it did when worshippers thronged for prayer; the Museum is a good place to study religious art and architecture without disturbing those deep in prayer, but nevertheless in their proper context. But the stunning bit for me was the collection of religious paintings which adorn the walls of the narthex. What impressed me most were the vibrant colours and more stories, this time from Hilary. She asks me if I notice how differently Christ is portrayed in the early Byzantine paintings than in later ones with Venetian influence - apart from them being more three dimensional that is. Christ appears to have grown his hair and his beard. It has been speculated that this all down to that genius and possible fraud, Leonardo Da Vinci, who may have added to his artistic creations the Turin Shroud - from which artists from that time on based their image of Christ, beard and all. Now it seems they might have been replicating the old master himself. I wonder if went to his grave smirking.

Then there is Saint George and the Dragon, which brings me back to the ley lines suggested in the Medusa figure in the Archaeological Museum. Ley lines are also known as 'Paths of the Dragon'; Is George's dragon-slaying a metaphor dreamt up to destroy belief in these magical lines of energy?

*Open 08.30 - 15.00, Sundays 09.30 - 14.30. Closed Mondays.  
Entry 2 euros.*

SARAH wanted to take home a silver incense burner.

HILARY wanted to take home an icon of Saint Dimitrios on his red charger.

We pressed on through the heat of the day, via **Stablus** (Greek for Stables) with its well-ordered and rather trendy eatery. The walls here are adorned with the work of local photographers; they are for sale and reasonably priced - another way to take home a genuine Corfiot souvenir.

We were drooping rather by this time, and decided to leave the New Fortress with its **Ceramic Museum** for another day. The New Fort is anyway so extensive and interesting that it deserves a day by itself.

So it was time for lunch, and where better than **Rouvas** by the market. Rick Stein ate here and was impressed by the simplicity and genuineness of the food. We troughed on lemon chicken and rice, briam (soft sweet vegetables simmered in olive oil and tomato) and green beans cooked with spiced tomatoes, all washed down with a cold beer and followed by half a litre of wine. The cost? 20 euros. Not bad, eh, and it knocks the spots of the usual tourist menu. There's no art to look at here though, but you eat with the locals in non-pretentious surroundings.

Last stop was the **Museum of Modern Art**, close to the New Port. This new building houses a private and very eclectic collection of paintings, drawings and photographs by many artists; some it has to be said, more artistic than others, and I wonder how wall space was found for some of them. Having said that, many of the paintings are wonderful, but my favourite piece was a table, made by Marios who has a workshop near Kassiopi. That's what I like to see - something made in Corfu.

*Entry 5 euros.*

So, was it worth trying to cram all this into one day? Yes - and no. We proved it could be done and certainly if you've only time for a flying visit it's worth it. It's also interesting to see the same symbolism cropping up again and again in different ages

and cultures - something that perhaps you wouldn't notice when taking in the museums one by one. Otherwise I would pace myself and enjoy at a more leisurely pace, taking the time to read all the well laid out information. There is so much to discover in this town, now a World Heritage Site that it deserves more of anyone's time.

### HILARY RECOMMENDS

You can divide the various museums into blocks rather than attempting our marathon. Here are some ideas:

1) If you wish to spend a long morning dedicated to ancient remains, the Archaeological Museum would best be tackled together with the Mon Repos Museum (not part of the main article), which contains recent archaeological remains from the immediate vicinity. You can also take a stroll around the park to view some of the sites where the remains were found. Mon Repos is about 20 minutes very pleasant walk from the Archaeological Museum, mostly through the shady linear park which runs around Garitsa Bay. You are also conveniently close to the site of the Temple of Artemis (another 10 minutes on from Mon Repos). In itself the location is not particularly exciting, but it places the Gorgon Pediment in context - and also there is that extraordinary spot where the ley line crosses its own energy lines, surely the reason for building the temple here. Look for a small hollow in the centre of the temple. Other archaeological sites in the area are the Roman bathhouse and the Basilica of Agia Kyriaki, both close to the gate of Mon Repos Park.

2) Create a Byzantine Day by visiting the Old Fortress for its small Byzantine Museum (which is so instructive on the history and art of the early Byzantine period), and use this as a basis for exploring Byzantine elements in the Municipal Art Gallery. Move on to the Byzantine Art Gallery in the nearby Antivouniotissa Church, where the full glory of post-Byzantine iconography is on display. Of course, the current exhibition of votive offerings in the Fort is intrinsically tied in with the Orthodox religion, together with the modern 'take' on tamata in the Municipal Gallery, providing a thousand year exploration of this expression of art and faith.

3) Either of the Fortresses can easily take up a good long morning of exploration, and are a great (supervised) venue for kids to let off their energy and use their imagination.

4) The world-class Museum of Asian Art deserves a full morning to itself.

### SOME PRATICALITIES

1) Wear flat shoes!

2) Take a good supply of water in small bottles. We didn't, and got parched. It's expensive to keep stopping at cafes if you are a family.

3) Cafes along the route, as laid out in the article are the Old Fort Cafe (after 11.00!), the Art Cafe in the Palace of Saint Michael and Saint George, Tweeties and the Black Cat at the Old Port (which in hot weather direct sprays of misted water on customers!), and Stablus at the New Fortress gate.

4) Remember that museums do not allow you to use a flash to take photos.

# Israel to Egypt

by Sarah Button

*Pete and Sarah Button continue their exciting tour of the Middle East on the Yacht 'Shecat' a 35' catamaran belonging to friends Sheila and Patrick*

The radio was busy, mostly nousey UN Naval ships wanting to know who everyone was. The sea was rough and we didn't really get any kip. Happily there wasn't much action until after sunrise when Israeli gun boats suddenly appeared demanding identification. When satisfied they shouted 'Welcome to Israel' and were gone.

The police were the first to visit us at the marina; we were not allowed off the boat until we had been interrogated. 'Do you have any weapons? Are you a terrorist? But despite the third degree the local sailing club entertained us, giving us music, food and dancing.

The following day our tour of the Holy Land started.

'Where are we?' said Pete, 'Nazareth', I said. 'Where are the shepherds?' said Pete.

Pete had a picture of the Holy Land in his head that dated back to primary school days that had to be coloured in. I must admit I did too, where were the donkeys? We were disappointed to find a town that looked much like all the other Middle Eastern towns. Brand new with only a few original buildings. We wandered around the market and took in some of the flavour. Here Jews and Arabs appear to work in relative harmony though they live in separate settlements.

The landscape is lush, green and beautiful. The Sea of Galilee, 200 feet below sea level is surrounded, by wheat and vegetable fields. The Golan Heights that rise above it were not the awesome spiky topped mountains I had imagined but resembled the Dark Peak in Derbyshire.

We visited the banks of the River Jordan, where Jesus was baptised, and the church dedicated to the miracle of the loaves and fishes. I wandered off to the shop, intrigued by what souvenirs where on offer.

The junk displayed did its best not to be tacky but couldn't quite make the 'tasteful' category. How about your very own crown of thorns? This sparked off some crude jokes from fellow sailors. How about a box of crucifixion nails? said one. Pete offered a DIY crucifixion kit, suggesting that IKEA could market a flat-packed version. But, really, the rubbish in the shop deserved fun to be poked at it. The greedy commercialism just flew in the face of Judeo-Christian ethics. 'Though shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.'

That evening many of our group were entertained by Israeli families who kept boats at the marina. Pete and I opted out of this hospitality, afraid we might upset our hosts with our strong political beliefs. It turned out however that it was simply an evening where sailors talked about sailing to other sailors. Politics didn't come into it. We are first and foremost friends of the sea. I felt bad that I'd been so mercenary, taking their hospitality at the marina but not beyond it.

Back on passage, and used now to the rigmarole of sailing etiquette in a war zone, we set off for the 85 nautical mile trip to Ashkelon feeling relaxed. Our arrival gave us another friendly welcome and another coach tour.

The scenery was jaw dropping - literally. I suddenly realised I was gawping open-mouthed at a landscape which belonged to another world. We had travelled through the lush coastal plane with its fields of sunflowers, vines and olive trees up into steep dry and barren mountains. Here Bedouin live their basic and simple lives dependent on their camels and goats - this was real desert and scarily beautiful. The road had been used for centuries by spice traders, Hannibal, the Romans, including Hadrian, and the Crusaders. Lately it had been widened to cope with the heavy war machines of the Israeli army.

The remains of King Herod's castle at Masada are set on a high plateau that rises 400 meters above the Dead Sea which is 200 metres below sea level. This ancient place seemed like a scene on another planet and simply oozed with spirits of dead centuries,

We ate chicken with couscous followed by fresh dates grown at a kibbutz, then we swam - or tried to swim - in the Dead Sea; it was very weird, with a soupy mix of salt crystals clinging to pebbles on the shore.

One drop of the noxious fluid in your lungs could see you pushing up the daisies. But the salty water is said to be good for skin conditions; a cut on my toe smarted like hell, but two days later was fully healed.

The Dead Sea is retreating rapidly - evaporating, and eventually it will disappear.

The journey back took us through occupied Palestinian territory; there were fences, razor wire and tanks everywhere.

If the Women's Institute had seen Jerusalem from our view they would want to change their theme song. From the outside it was hideous concrete, but a visit there would have to wait as it would have been awkward for our Jewish guide.

A party had been organised for the evening but I couldn't face it. News was coming in from Gaza, just five miles away, of fighting, and we could hear mortar fire and see black smoke rising in the distance. This wasn't the right place to be whooping it up; people were blowing each other's brains out on our doorstep. It was time to leave.

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We motored out at 4.00 am on route for Port Said. Our passports had been returned to us by officious officials, complicated by the fact that we had asked them not to stamp them; an Israeli stamp would bar us entry into many other countries.

Motor-sailing into a lumpy sea, I was sick for the first time which made me miserable.

At 7am the following morning we motored into the Suez Canal which had been closed especially to receive us. It was thrilling and romantic to arrive at the gateway to the Indian Ocean; here was Africa and immediately everything looked different. Sandy coloured buildings blended into the sandy desert beyond. We received the kind of welcome reserved for VIPs, and were presented with flowers and cheers.

Built in the mid 1800s to service the canal, only a few of the original buildings remain - notably a 'Woolworths'. The town is now a mass of concrete high rises. It is also filthy, smelly and riddled with feral cats, but lively and colourful. 85% of the population are Muslim and the call to prayer echoes from loud-speakers mounted on the mosques.

Our hosts laid on a show for us in town and we boarded buses for the town centre. In the marina compound a motorcade was formed; three coaches, six armed police motorcyclists, three army trucks containing guys with flack jackets helmets and machine guns, and four police cars. Bloody hell, what was all this about? We left the compound to the sound of sirens. Traffic had been stopped to make way for us and there were road blocks at every junction. At a park less than a kilometre away the buses disgorged the incredulous yachties, escorted by very large men in suits and sunglasses boasting enormous bulges in their pockets. We sat in a modern amphitheatre as the heavies looked up at the blocks of flats surrounding the park. Snipers?

We soon forgot the over zealous security as we watched Whirling Dervishes doing their stuff to song and music played on instruments we'd never seen before. It was delightful.

A six o'clock start the following morning was too much for most of us. Eyes red-rimmed, and barely conscious, we slumped into our seats. At least our armed escort was awake. As Cairo approached, the dust rose into the atmosphere and blended with the blue sky above, creating a sulphurous vignette. The sounds of the city were a cacophonous mix of the call to prayer, ancient exhaustless trucks, the shouting of traders and the bay-ing of tired, ill-treated donkeys. It was a heady experience, awful and stimulating at the same time.

The world famous Egyptian Museum contains relics rifled from the pyramids and other sacred sites, and it's bizarre. In the Mummies Room, in a clinically controlled environment cool and dark like a mortuary, the mummified remains of Egyptian kings and queens are laid out. 4000 years old, these weirdly clad bodies exposed shrivelled heads, hands and toes; finger and toenails intact. A small typewritten card identified the body and told us what they'd died of: arthritis, tooth decay and poisoning. This was macabre and I felt like some kind of perverse voyeur. What right do we have to desecrate their graves? This was the Museum of the Dead.

Later we braved the Souk. As we swam through shark-like street hustlers shouting, 'Very nice T-shirts, you like Liverpool don't you?' and 'Luverly jubbly, buy something nice for the lady', we closed our eyes, put our heads down and marched till



*Sarah takes a camel ride to the Pyramids*

we came out the other end. Here we found the souk of the locals and a brightly colourful and aromatic apothecary. Sacks of herbs spilled onto the pavements, jars of all sorts of pickled things that looked as though they had been stolen from hospital laboratories, zebra skins and dried turtles. The desiccated body of a shark hung limply from the ceiling.

That night, snuggled up in our air conditioned hotel, the bliss was broken by world news of an inevitable crisis in the Middle East. Even the Turks were squaring up for a fight.

The great pyramids at Giza fried our brains, ; we just couldn't believe we were there. Millions of huge bricks painstakingly piled on top of one another in the heat of the desert, sitting moodily under a hazy sky and gently cooking under the searing heat.

Built to protect the bodies of kings and queens of an ancient civilization, they were plundered by raiders looking for lost arks. Now their bodies lie in glass cases. A freak show. All the treasures buried with them to protect their souls as they entered the afterlife had been separated from them and displayed in more glass cases. We entered the Great Pyramid down a narrow claustrophobic path. We had to stoop, there was little air and it was extremely hot. There was nothing left to look at in the burial chamber but I saw the desiccated eyes of its evicted inhabitant follow me from the Mummies Room in the Egyptian Museum.

Before we left a camel ride had to be done. Unfortunately mine had the hump; this disgruntled ruminant had the attitude of a grounded teenager and I was sure it was going to throw me, but it didn't. The only thing that had was the sheer wonder of Egypt.

*Next month Pete and Sarah return to Israel and tour Jordan, visiting the ancient city of Petra and the Wadi Rum, and get ship wrecked on a tourist boat on the Red Sea.*

## The Blue House Afionas

In the extreme north-west corner of Corfu, on a promontory which thrusts into the sea above Saint George Bay, stands the ancient village of Afionas. Its roots go back to Bronze Age times, and it seems to remain in the Age of the Donkey, with its narrow lanes that no car can enter. The rough stone walls enclosing small yards are pristinely whitewashed, and many of the old doors and windows are painted bright Hellenic blue.

A blue-and-white theme dominates at the Blue House (Das Blaue Haus) Restaurant, located about 500 metres before the road gives out in the main square of Afionas. The blue shades of the walls are reflected by the turquoise and aquamarine of the sea far below, and in the distance the Diapontian islands seems to float between water and sky. As the sun drops behind the islands, beautiful sunsets are a nightly event.

Opened nine years ago by a German lady, Katharina Wahl, the restaurant offers a most interesting menu of freshly-prepared dishes, often refined with unusual ingredients, as we were to find. First, we shared a plate of the already famous chicken liver pate, which was garnished with red peppercorns and herbs. Our accompanying Blue House Salad was a deliciously fresh melange of all sorts of raw vegetables, dotted with tiny cubes of feta and sprinkled with fresh bean sprouts. It came with a dressing mixed with wild herbs which Katharina picks herself.

Second courses were an excellent vegetarian lasagne packed full of different vegetables, and splendid Indonesian chicken with peanut sauce. The third member of the party chose one of the day's specials, a luscious dish of chicken in white wine and herbs. Both chicken dishes were accompanied by a dome of Basmati rice. Special touches are the elegant cruet sets and carafes and the lovely flower garnishes on the plates.

Mouthwatering experiences continued into the dessert course, with homemade apple and chocolate cakes - much praised by my sweet-toothed companions - and gratineed pear and blue cheese, a perfect choice for a diner who likes something to round off a meal but doesn't eat sugar.

Open daily from 18.00 until 20 October. Tel: 26630 52046. To reach Afionas, cross the Troumpetta Pass, keep going straight on for Agros. Then follow the signs for Arillas and then for Afionas.

For more information, see [www.das-blaue-haus.com](http://www.das-blaue-haus.com)

## Galini Restaurant Agios Stefanos

The picturesque fishing village of Agios Stefanos is located in the heart of 'Kensington-on-Sea', that area of Corfu which is characterized by its exclusive villas, and even more exclusive clientele. Galini Restaurant, on the harbour front, is one of their favourite haunts.

Galini means tranquility, and many seek out the region, and the restaurant, to escape from pressures of work and fame. And while you are relaxing you can enjoy no less than 32 starters which include not only local favourites (village sausages and cheese pies), but dishes which are harder to find (hummous and floyeres - filo rolls filled with ham and cheese), dishes straight from mother's kitchen (courgette salad), and sophisticated ones (prosciutto and melon, smoked trout and pan-fried mushrooms in garlic-cream sauce). Fish starters include prawns and mussels cooked by the favourite saganaki method, bubbling in tomato sauce. The taramosalata is outstanding, made with top quality pale fish roe and lots of garlic. We also judged the octopus in vinegar one of the best we'd ever had - firm in texture but not rubbery, and marinated in olive oil, garlic and parsley. Try also the crispy-fried anchovies, fresh from the sea.

Main course range from Swordfish Kebab, to the vegetarian bliss of Briam, while Chicken Curry, Pastitsada and pasta dishes and crepes add to the variety, Chateaubriand and fillet steak with mushrooms and cream are a welcome diversion.

Galini excels itself in desserts, with lots of sinful goodies. Lemon Pie, Chocolate Pie, sweet crepes with nuts and honey or with chocolate ice cream and chocolate sauce or with lemon and sugar make it a pudding-lover's paradise.

Seated at Galini's harbour-side tables watching the far mainland shore descend into night as your savour your meal, you too will find the meaning of galini, and peace will slip into your soul.

Call on 26630 81492 or 26630 81523 to book. Email: [ngalini@otenet.gr](mailto:ngalini@otenet.gr)

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## FOOD

# The Great Autumn Bean Feast

One of the great features of life on Corfu is its seasonality. The vast contrasts in climate between winter and summer necessitate a different lifestyle according to the season, and nowhere is this more marked than in the food that we eat. Summer means salads based around the ubiquitous tomato, and outdoor grills in the company of friends, whereas cooler days require rib-sticking stews of root vegetables and pulses.

As summer tails off, locals eagerly await the first nippy night, when bean soup (fassoulada) will make its first appearance on the family table. Most households will serve it at least once a week throughout the winter and, until summer salad days come round again, it remains the nation's favourite.

There's only one fassoulada (though every housewife has her own recipe); but why not, this winter, ring the changes with some different varieties of bean soup.

### BEAN AND PASTA SOUP

*2 tablespoons chopped onion, 4 tablespoons olive oil, 1 chopped carrot, 1 chopped celery stick, 4 pork ribs or 2 small pork chops, 150 gr chopped tinned Italian tomatoes with their juice, 180 gr dried beans, 700 gr water, 1 beef stock cube, salt and pepper, 175 gr small-cut tubular pasta, 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan*

Soak the beans overnight in water to cover well. Drain and put in fresh water. Bring to the boil and cook for 10-15 minutes. Drain and discard the water. Cover with fresh water, bring to the boil and simmer until tender but not mushy. Keep in the liquid until ready to use.

Saute the onion with the oil until pale gold. Add the carrot, celery and pork and saute for about 10 minutes, stirring from time to time and turning the pork over once or twice. Add the chopped tomatoes, turn the heat down and cook for 20 minutes. Add the cooked beans, drained of their liquid. Let them cook in the tomatoes for 5 minutes, then add the water and the stock cube. Bring to a moderate boil and simmer a minute or two.

Scoop up about 8 tablespoons of beans and mash them through a mouli legume back into the pan (or otherwise process them to a puree). Add salt and pepper to taste (Corfiots like their soups quite peppery). Add the pasta and cook until al dente.

Take the pan off the heat and allow to stand for 10 minutes before serving. Stir in the cheese at the table. Serves 4.

### RIBOLLITA

*100 gr dried white beans, 1 large onion, 2 large carrots, 3 stalks celery, 1 head fennel, 225 gr courgettes, 225 gr tomatoes, 4 tablespoons olive oil, 2 cloves garlic, 1.2 litres water, 1 chicken stock cube, salt and pepper, 6-8 slices dry white village bread, 450 gr chard (seskoula), olive oil*

Start a day in advance. Put the dried beans in a pot, cover well with cold water and bring to the boil. Turn off the heat when they reach boiling point, cover the pan and leave for an hour.

Chop the onion, carrots, fennel, unpeeled courgettes and skinned tomatoes. Heat the oil and stew the vegetables gently together for 10 minutes, adding the chopped garlic at the end.

Add the water to the pan, along with the drained beans. Simmer gently for an hour, or until the beans are tender. Add the chicken stock cube and salt and pepper to taste. Leave overnight.

Next day, have some deep soup places heated, with a thick slice of dry bread in each (dry them out in a low oven without browning). Cook the chard in boiling water, drain and chop coarsely. Pile on top of the bread in the plates. Have the soup heated up and spoon over the bread and chard. Diners can add a little extra olive oil by themselves if they like. Serves 6-8.

### TUSCAN BEAN SOUP

*350 gr dried white beans, 1.2 litres water, salt and pepper, 2 cloves garlic, 3 tablespoons olive oil, 4 tablespoons chopped parsley*

Soak the beans overnight in water to cover well. Drain and put in fresh water. Bring to the boil and cook for 10-15 minutes. Drain and discard the water. Cover with fresh water, bring to the boil and simmer until tender but not mushy.

When cooked, remove half the beans with a slotted spoon and reserve. Puree the rest with their liquid in a processor.

Return the puree to the pan and reheat, adding lots of sea salt and black pepper. Put the reserved beans back in the pan and mix gently.

Chop the garlic and fry gently in the oil until it starts to change colour to pale golden. At this point, stir in the parsley and remove from the heat. Stir into the soup and allow to stand for 5 minutes before serving. Serves 4.

### BEAN AND CHARD SOUP

*250 gr chard (seskoulo), salt, 2 flat anchovy fillets, sprig of rosemary, 6 tablespoons olive oil, 2 peeled garlic cloves, 350 gr tinned white kidney beans, black pepper, 90 gr short-cut tubular pasta, 30 gr grated Parmesan cheese*

Trim and wash the chard well. Put the leaves in a very little water and 1 teaspoon salt. Cover and bring to the boil, and cook until tender. Drain the chard over a bowl, reserving the liquid.

Chop the chard coarsely.

Chop the anchovy fillets very finely.

Put the oil and garlic in a pan and cook over a lively heat, stirring constantly, until the garlic is pale gold. Add the anchovy and sprig of rosemary, stirring for a few seconds. Remove the rosemary sprig. Add the chard and stir until it is well coated with the oil, 2-3 minutes. Add the beans, drained of their liquid, plus salt and lots of black pepper. Cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring well, then add the reserved chard cooking liquid, plus additional water to cover by about an inch. Bring to the boil and add the pasta, cooking until it is al dente. Turn off the heat and allow to rest for 5 minutes. Stir in the cheese and serve, with a trickle of fresh oil on the top.

# TRUE STORY IGLOOS!

by *Lionel Mann*

One morning in an English lesson with a class of eight- and nine-year-olds we were studying the use of prefixes to form antonyms, such as 'possible' and 'impossible'. In due course we encountered the wildly irregular 'noble' and 'ignoble'.

The class wit raised his hand. "Please, sir, does that mean that Eskimos' houses don't have loos?"

When the laughter had subsided I suggested, to further merriment, that the boy's reasoning might conceivably have had some foundation. We pondered upon hacking holes in the ice.

The school choir, all boys aged from seven or eight upwards, was often invited to sing for festivals in churches around the county. Some of those buildings, especially the ancient ones, lacked toilet facilities. At such locations little boys answering the call of nature retired behind a convenient bush or tombstone. Predictably the boys quickly coined 'loo' or 'igloo' to classify the venue for a performance.

One Christmas we were asked to sing a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in the quaint little Saxon church of a remote village. Between afternoon rehearsal and evening performance we were entertained at the nearby stately home to a sumptuous meal washed down with copious draughts of orangeade or lemonade.

Of course a church more than a thousand years old was an 'igloo'. Many parents often attended performances given by their sons and not long after that service commenced one observant mother in the congregation noticed that her offspring was showing signs of discomfort. During the singing of a hymn she marched down the aisle, beckoned the youngster from the stalls and led him outside. The boy returned and slipped back into his place before the hymn had finished.

Emboldened by that example, every boy in turn took advantage of the singing of hymns, as opposed to carols sung only by the choir, to make a short absence from his place, run the gauntlet of the crowded congregation down the single aisle and struggle from the heavy west door to return presently in a much happier condition, every boy, that is, except the eleven-year-old Head Chorister, whom wild horses would never have dragged from his most responsible position. Afterwards, however, when checking the choirstalls for anything left behind, I noticed a substantial puddle on the floor in his position! Of course I never mentioned it

except when his chuckling mother referred to the mishap.

Some years later, in Corfu, the proprietor of the supermarket opposite my apartment came across one morning. "There's a young man in my place asking for you. He says you once taught him. Do you want to see him?"

It was that erstwhile Head Chorister, now student at a very famous university, travelling with three friends across Europe to Athens. He had left the group to explore Corfu for three days while he visited me. We had a great time touring the island while recalling with great hilarity former days, including the Carol Festival at that ancient 'igloo'.

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## Spear Travels

## PLACES TO VISIT - THINGS TO DO

**Achillion Palace** Corfu's most famous building contains a museum displaying memorabilia relating to its previous owners, Empress Sissi of Austria and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, plus lovely gardens. *Gastouri Village. Open daily 08.00 - 19.00*

**Folk Museum of Central Corfu** Step into a time capsule, into a village house that has been left intact with its original decorations, furniture and fittings, a glimpse into a vanished way of life. *Sinarades Village. Open every day except Sunday 09.30 - 14.30. Tel. 26610 35673 / 44530*

**Paleokastritsa Monastery** Contains a small museum with icons and other relics, as well as some curiosities. *Paleokastritsa, at the end of the road*

**Mon Repos** On the outskirts of Corfu Town, on the road running to Kanoni, this restored villa was the birthplace of the Duke of Edinburgh. Standing in extensive grounds, the villa contains a museum of archaeology, with items dug up in the vicinity. A walking trail takes you around some in situ remains, such as an ancient temple. *Grounds open daily 09.00 - 21.00*

**British Cemetery** Lovely garden containing graves from the British Protectorate to the present. Interesting plants and trees, and fine cemetery architecture. Entry is free - please leave a generous contribution to its upkeep. *Kolokotroni Street. Open all day*

**Corfu Shell Museum** One of Europe's best museums dedicated to the treasures of the sea. Thousands of exhibits, scientifically labelled. Unusual shells for collectors and exotic souvenirs on sale. *Benitses Harbour Square, north end. Open every day 10.00 - 21.00*

### Walking With Donkeys - For Donkeys

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When you get back a glass of wine or beer and some savouries await you, and you'll feel completely relaxed!

All proceeds will go to Corfu Donkey Rescue; a shelter for abandoned, abused and retired donkeys.

#### PROGRAMME:

July until October - Monday to Friday

5.30 pm: coffee/tea, cake and tour of the shelter

6.00 pm to 7.00 pm: Walk with the donkeys

7.00 pm to 7.45 pm: Wine/beer and savouries

Price: 15 euro pp, children under twelve free

There is a maximum of 10 people per walk.

To book call Judy Quinn on 0030 6947 375992. Or email [judyquin@otenet.gr](mailto:judyquin@otenet.gr) The shelter is near Poulades - follow the signs.

Of course you are very welcome to come along to the shelter at any time, just for a visit!

**Triklino Vineyard** 18 acre estate which combines wine-making with display of agricultural tradition. Video showing olive and wine production. Local products on display. Local wine tasting, traditional snacks and music. Walk through vineyards with panoramic views. *Karoubatika, on Pelekas Road, 6 km from Town. Open from 12.00*

**Kassiopi Castle** Ruins of a medieval castle stand on the headland above the harbour of Kassiopi. Access is indicated from near the Harbour Square. Currently under reconstruction.

**Angelokastro** Dramatic ruins of a Byzantine castle, capping a rocky peak. Currently being reconstructed. *Near Krini*

**Gardiki Fortress** Extensive ruins of a Byzantine fort, located near the village of Agios Mattheos in the south. Reach it by taking the road to Lake Korission.

**Gardiki Cave** Occupied by humans around 20,000 BC, this cave lies on the flanks of Agios Mattheos Mountain near Gardiki Fortress. Reached by a short path from the road between Agios Mattheos and Paramonas.

**Vidos Island** Off Corfu Town, an extensive, traffic-free islet with lots of walks and beaches, plus the Serbian Mausoleum and fortresses built by British and Russians. Good restaurant. *Caique service every half-hour from the Old Port until late.*

**Patounis Soap Factory** A Patounis has been making olive oil soap by the traditional stamped method for over 100 years, and is one of the very few factories left in the world. Visit and see the process, also buy products. *Ioanni Theotoki Street, just off San Rocco Square on the way to the Green Bus Station. Open shop hours. Tel. 26610 39806*

### Perithia Agricultural Museum

Small museum with olive press, agricultural and other tools, and old furniture. Local products, including fruit and vegetables, on sale. Reconstructed traditional kafenion for drinks and snacks. Also olive wood shop. On main road between Kassiopi and Acharavi, near Perithia and Saint Spiridon Beach. Look for the 'Made in Corfu' sign. Tel. 26630 98002



## INFORMATION

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### 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 10.30 & 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

### SPORTS

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## BOOKS

# Prospero's Kitchen : Corfu Sunset

Mediterranean Cooking of the Ionian Islands

*Diana Farr Louis & June Marinos*

The fashion for Mediterranean cooking has inspired a whole library of cookbooks, from Elizabeth David's classics, through Claudia Roden's eastern viewpoint, to the interpretations of celebrity chefs. This book returns the tradition to where it belongs, in the regional recipes.

Here, the focus is on Corfu and the Ionian Islands, a region with a distinct style defined by its geographical location. Greek in conception, local food is distinguished by the richness of ingredients, and by the many cultural influences which have implanted unique ideas and preferences into the cuisine.

Farr Louis and Marinos have tracked down rare recipes from local kitchens, giving also many anecdotal insights into the local way of life. Available in 'Made in Corfu' shops.

• **Avrio Never Comes**

• *John Waller*

• In the 1970s, the author and his wife built a house above the then-remote Agios Gordis Bay, and *Greek Walls* tells of these early years. Thirty years on, *Corfu Sunset* takes an often hilarious look at their attempts to renovate the house - under a tight time deadline.  
• Available at 'Made in Corfu' shops.

• **Review**

• *Delightful episodes and characters emerge from the pages of Corfu Sunset. A highly amusing account of the highs and lows of property ownership abroad with attention to detail that puts most travel authors in the shade.*

• *Tom Teodorczuk, Evening Standard*

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## PERSONAL

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**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.

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*Small ads (for sale and offers categories) are only accepted if paid for in advance. You can leave your copy and payment (5 euro up to 50 words) 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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Left to right: Tasha, Bramble, Bruni, Bella, Paddy.



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Offices at: Arillas, on the Afionas road    Barbati, on the main road  
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**Agios Mattheos** (South Central) Pretty terraced cottage, for sale newly renovated. One large bedroom, balcony, very peaceful. 65,000 euro



**Agios Mattheos** (South Central) Old house, recently renovated in excellent taste. Two bedrooms in main house, plus separate studio/guest annexe. Two patios for outside dining. Getaway-from-it-all yet close to all village facilities. 59,900 euro.



**Kalami** (North East) Four new villas in traditional architectural style, to be built in divine location at the heart of North East Coast. Fabulous sea view, unblockable. Only a couple of minutes drive to the beach and Kalami. Very desirable as buy-to-let. Stage payments available. 250,000 euro



**Aspiotades** (North West) Beautiful large stone olive press, part renovated. Edge-of-village, small garden, fantastic mountain view, road access and parking! Ten minutes drive to best beach. 80,000 euro as is



**Gardelades** (West) Outrageously pretty small house, for sale renovated with respect for tradition. One bedroom, study area, huge lounge / kitchen, covered veranda, spacious yard. And parking outside! 80,000 euro

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

**Varee Houses** (Arillas) SEA VIEW! 120,000 euro

**Parikia Houses** (Karousades) SEA VIEW! 125,000 euro

**Olive Press Houses** (Aspiotades) From 120,000 euro  
Brand new houses, to be constructed in village style, using traditional materials. Lovely rural locations with great views. Fitted kitchens with appliances included. Stage payments available. Examples, like the one pictured here, can be viewed.

**More locations coming up soon!!!**

