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## **The Corfiot**

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## ear to the ground

THIS MONTH, THE CORFIOT CELEBRATES ITS 200TH EDITION. We started in Spring 1990 under the name of 'Epaphi' (Greek for 'contact') with the aim of producing a news sheet that would indeed keep local foreign residents in touch with one another and with what was happening on the island. Back then, with no computers available, I typed copy in galley-proof-style columns on an electric typewriter, which I then cut and glued onto a template! Haven't things changed...

Back then, *The Corfiot* (as it was shortly to become) had 12 pages and was distributed to around 200 subscribers by hand. Hasn't it grown...

Over the years, we've brought you history and travel and humour and gardening, we've run successful environmental campaigns, and we've sent the Corfu message out all over the world.

During more than 17 years, a huge number of people have been involved, and we'd like to name those who helped most consistently: Angela Papageorgiou, Stavros Karvounis, Spiros Asonitis, Costas Zorbas, Marjorie Holmes, Harry Tsoukalas, all the Anglican Church chaplains, Lionel Mann, our many occasional contributors and correspondents, Hellenic Distribution Agency, all our advertisers and of course every single one of our readers.

And there's still a lot to come.

IT SEEMS THAT THE MAIN THREAD THAT STITCHES THIS EDITION TOGETHER IS 'TRAVEL'. As is usual in August, we guide you away from the hordes to a lesser-known Corfu. Sarah Button continues her tour of the eastern Mediterranean. Chaplain Clifford Owen cycles from John O'Groats to Land's End. Donkeys take a walk. We visit a new museum in North Corfu. Old friends of Corfu return. And a reader tries out our new scheduled airline.

See you again in September.

OUR PARTNER LUVCORFU PROPERTIES WAS FEATURED RECENTLY IN THE SUNDAY TIMES. Luvcorfu was the sole local agent to be featured in the Sunday Times of 1 July, in an article about property in the Ionian. Under the title 'A Home from Homer', journalist Helen Davies told readers that 'beautiful beaches and good prices are luring the British to the Ionian islands.' Luvcorfu had three properties featured, one with a photograph - and which, at £37,000, was by far the cheapest house mentioned in the entire article.

Whilst talking on the phone with Luvcorfu co-Director Hilary Paipeti, writer Helen Davies said she had chosen to feature the company 'because of its excellent reputation in Corfu and in the UK.'

The article read: 'A lot of people want to buy near Kassiope, but don't realise how expensive it is,' says Hilary Paipeti, co-director of Luvcorfu, a local estate agent. She advises those on a more modest budget to look to the northwest of the island and the villages of Arillas and Afionas, where prices start at £84,000.

Some of the poky blocks of flats built in the heyday of the package holiday are undergoing a makeover. Luvcorfu has three maisonettes in just such a renovated block on its books; they are a few minutes' walk from the beach at Agnos, in the north. Prices start at £118,000, and owners with boats will be able to moor in the new Astrakeri marina at the end of the beach.

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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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## WE WANT YOUR STAMPS!

Boxes to collect stamps in aid of leukemia research at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital have been placed at Holy Trinity Church, English Imports and the British Corner Shop. If you would like to help, please request a box from Andy at [andrew@ajthompson.co.uk](mailto:andrew@ajthompson.co.uk). Locations in the north and south of the island are being sought. Please cut no less than 1 cm around. Don't waste your stamps!

## HELP THE CORFU DONKEY SANCTUARY

- ~ Make a cash donation
- ~ Sponsor an individual donkey
- ~ Donate tools, buckets and equipment
- ~ Volunteer to help with care or DIY

Call Judy Quinn on 6947 375992. You can visit the Sanctuary to see your money at work. Please call in advance.

To donate money, please use the charity account at Alpha Bank: 01308617 Corfu Donkey Rescue. Swift: CRBAGRAAXXX. Iban: GR88 0140 6800 6800 0210 1302 116. Sort Code: 30-90-99



## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

### New Award for George Psailas Cemetery caretaker honoured by Ambassador

Cemetery caretaker George Psailas was honoured by the British Ambassador to Greece, Simon Gass, during the latter's visit to Corfu for the official opening of the new British Consulate premises in Corfu Town. George, who has cared for the Cemetery for 60 years, was awarded the British Empire Medal in 1988.



During the event, the Ambassador thanked local services for the assistance they provide to the Consulate.

Present at the opening were Corfu's three parliamentary deputies, Nikos Georgiades, Nikos Dendias and Angela Gerekou, the Mayor of Corfu Town, Sotiris Michalef, and representatives of various local bodies.

See page 25 for an article by Simon Gass about the work of the Consular Service.

The photograph shows George Psailas (centre) with the Ambassador (right) and Corfu's British Vice-Consul Julia Tsiaka.

*Photograph courtesy of Thomas Katsaros, My Kerkyra Magazine.*



## EXHIBITION

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# A Notable Diamond Wedding!

Last month saw Corfu nuptial history being made, when an Englishman and a Corfiot woman celebrated 60 years of married life very quietly in Paleokastritsa.

It was in 1946 that John Forte, a major serving in the 9th Foot, which was based in Patras with a detachment located in Corfu's Royal Mon Repos Palace spotted Nadia Curcumelli swimming off the estate jetty. Later acquaintance led to romance.

On his last visit to the detachment, Nadia led John to quench his thirst at the nearby Kardaki Spring, whose legendary waters compel an imbibing stranger to return to the island. And so it came to pass that the following year John found himself posted as a British liaison officer to the Greek Army, then fighting a civil war. This enabled him to pop over to Corfu and get married, an event which took place on 28 June 1947 at Saint Antony's Church.

Nadia is the great-grandaughter of Sir Demetrius Curcumellis KCMG, who issued in exquisite English and Greek prose the historical documentary message to the British Garrison the day before it departed Corfu on 2 June 1864, when the Ionian Islands were unified with Greece. John's grandfather, Captain N. Forte, also of the 9th Foot, happened to be a member of the Garrison in receipt of a copy.

As many readers will be aware, John was British Vice Consul in Corfu from 1958 to 1971, and the island owes him an immense debt for his services, which include:

~ Reviving Corfu's renowned tradition of cricket on the Esplanade, until 'close of play' in this delightful setting, unique in the world of cricket [the game is mainly played on a new pitch in the Gouvia Marina, with only a few exhibition matches taking place in town - Ed].

~ Restoring the Anglican Church of Holy Trinity when it seemed doomed to closure.

~ Putting Corfu on the tourist map of Europe with his universally acclaimed guide book 'Venus of the Isles'.

~ Playing a leading role in prising Corfu from the grip of the Church of Scientology, as revealed in his thriller 'The Commodore and the Colonels' [You can read the full story on the Internet: [www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/forte/foreword.htm](http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~dst/Library/Shelf/forte/foreword.htm)].

John and Nadia are for health reasons now based in London, but return to Corfu for the summer season.

*The Corfiot* wishes them Many Happy Returns!

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

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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

### Volunteers return

After 45 years, 'United Nations Association' volunteers will return for a four-day reunion in Thesprotia, Epirus, starting 7 September. Thirty ex-volunteers and their partners are coming back to the areas where, in the early 60s, they were sent by the UHA to work on community projects such as building houses, initiating agricultural projects and introducing water supply schemes.

The United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland exists in many member states of the UN; they have grouped themselves together in their own Federation of UNAs, which has its headquarters in Geneva. They exist to support and work for the realization of the ideals of the United Nations.

One of the projects the volunteers worked on in Epirus was construction of 16 new houses, built for Greek/Albanian refugees, which were started in 1961 and completed in 1964. At the same time another programme was set up in Igoumenitsa under the title 'Freedom from Hunger Campaign', and was mainly concerned with constructing a cheese factory, a poultry breeding centre and various water supply projects in outlying villages. Overall some 250 volunteers were involved, spending between two months and two years on their respective projects. The material cost of the programme, including maintenance and accommodation for the volunteers, was met by the UNA. All labour was provided free by the volunteers, mostly people with building and technical skills, architects, engineers, nurses, carpenters and plumbers. In return, apart from 'board and keep,' they received the equivalent of one pound a week, with the average number of hours worked per day varying between eight and twelve.

Towards the end of the programme, a group of volunteers wanted to give further help, so they set up an association called 'Friends of Filiates'. 'FOF' then raised money in England and Wales to build a Youth Community Centre in the town of Filiates, which is still functioning 33 years after its completion. The ex-volunteers will be visiting the Centre as part of the reunion..

Corfu was a popular destination for volunteers at weekends as it offered some respite from the rigours of life in the work camps. In memory of those times, a cricket match will be played between the Corfu Cricket Club and a team made up from the ex-volunteers. The CCC have kindly arranged for the match to take place on the historic Liston Cricket Pitch, starting at 16.00 on Monday, 10 September. It should be mentioned that all 16 of the former UNA volunteers are in their 60s and 70s! (one team member asked whether we should have an ambulance standing by!).

The re-union programme will also include visits to the refugee houses, to an old people's home, and to various projects in Igoumenitsa and surrounding villages.

The Normarch of Igoumenitsa has kindly provided, free of charge, a coach for the group's day trip to Saranda (a village near the Albanian border) as a gesture of support for the concept of voluntaryism, which he wishes to promote.

The UNA team would like to thank in advance Holy Trinity Anglican Church, the Revd. Clifford Owen, and volunteers from the Church, who will provide refreshments after the match at the Liston.

## The Travel Corner

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**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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## The two lives of Frida

Frida was about six months old when her owners realized that they could not cope with a growing dog, together with two cats, in a small apartment in Corfu Town. They had found her in the garbage as a tiny pup, and rescued her. In the beginning she was a lovely cuddly puppy. But then she started growing up and like all puppies began destroying things and barking, and the problems started. (Many of the locals do love sweet small puppies, but people should realize that they do grow up. They are not a 'toy to be thrown away' when they become inconvenient; unfortunately, that's why so many are found dumped in boxes and in plastic bags, or left outside a foreigner's house in the hope that they'll take them in.) But in this case, Marietta, Frida's owner, was much more responsible. She tried to find a home, asking all around. Then she phoned us at the Ark, and we promised to help.

Now Frida is in Holland, renamed Kyra! Her new family is very happy with her, although she can be naughty, but that's because she is still a youngster. Dutch people like to make bike trips, and Kyra's owners bought a little carrier with wheels so the dog can go along with her family in a 'private coach' (below).



We get regular emails and photos of the dog so we can follow her progress. Her owners are so happy with Kyra that they are even thinking of adopting another 'foreigner'. So another a happy ending for a local dog, in a new 'golden basket'; a life that nearly ended in a garbage container.

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)  
North: 26610 80129 & 26630 64439  
Central: 26610 43332  
South: 26610 80308 & 26610 75105

## Success for animal welfare party

The Ark Animal Welfare Charity would like to extend their sincere thanks and appreciation to all who attended the annual Summer Party on 21 July at the Chandris Hotel in Dassia. The party was very well attended, the food and liquid refreshment excellent, and a good time was had by all!

It was very encouraging to see so many concerned and caring friends willing to give their time (and donations) to such a good cause; every cent of the amount collected will be put to very good use in helping the stray and abandoned animals on Corfu.

## ...and for One Euro Day at the Ark Shop

The One Euro Day held on Friday 13 July at the Ark Shop in Agios Dimitriou Street (behind the Commercial Bank in Town), was very successful and many satisfied customers left the shop with some excellent bargains. We even had a visit from a black cat (which we took as a lucky sign). He came and sat at the door for more than an hour; he was fed and watered and eventually went on his way!

Thanks, once again for your support; it is much appreciated in our effort to help the stray and abandoned animals on Corfu.

We still have a varied selection of summer clothes, household items, children's clothes, games, videos, toys etc. The shop is open every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 10am - 1pm. *Lucy Steele*

*Beautiful dogs like this one are rehomed by the Ark*



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## ANIMAL WELFARE

---

# Walking with Donkeys

Have you always wanted to walk with a donkey? Now is your chance!

Donkeys Mykonos, Bob, Mouse, Midnight and Akis love to walk in the surroundings of their donkey shelter and invite you to come along.

Our volunteers await you with coffee, tea and cake and, after a small tour around the shelter, will take you through the beautiful Corfiot countryside, through thyme plants and amongst olive trees. You will see a fantastic view over the lake from the top of the hill.

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)

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

## ...for donkeys



*Right: Judy  
with one of  
her charges*

## First Choice

# The 'End to End'

## An August Journey remembered

 **Clifford Owen**

A journey from John O'Groats to Lands End had fascinated me from the time when I studied maps as a boy. My latent enthusiasm for such a trip never dimmed, and in August 1995, my friend David and I set off on the longest land journey in the British Isles on our bicycles. Just over a thousand miles, with an estimated time-scale of 17-18 days at around 60 miles per day; but we allowed a full three weeks in case of snags. Our early research suggested we needed a support vehicle with spares, to ferry us in emergencies, to sleep in etc. but when we costed it up and realised what we would be asking of such a person, we decided to say our prayers - and settled for going with panniers and spending each night at a suitable B&B. We ruled out tents because of the extra camping weight on the bikes; we couldn't be bothered setting up camp after a long day in the saddle... and neither did we fancy cooking. It turned out to be a good decision.

As we were both men of faith (!) (David was a Methodist Local Preacher), we decided not to book B&B in advance but to trust we would stumble on the right place. We didn't want to tie ourselves to a plan and fixed mileage in case of mishap, which happened on the very first day. A B&B was actually booked at Golspie on the Moray Coast, but it was about 15 miles too far. We rang the car which had brought us to John O'Groats, and we were collected and driven to the B&B, after having clearly marked the point on the road where we gave up! Next day we started again from that point; twenty miles later the support car waved goodbye and we were on our own.

By eight in the evening, we reached Invergordon where the first house we came to was a B&B with vacancies. Fifteen minutes later we were showered and gazing over the beautiful Cromarty Firth in the evening light, with oil rigs for company. Then followed a 'tuck-in' meal in town and soon fast asleep. Gradually we got fitter and 60 miles a day became easier. From then on, the beauty of Scotland opened up before us: down to Drumnadrochat on Loch Ness, down the Caledonian Canal to Fort William. Here, I opened the B&B bedroom window at four in the morning to gaze upon Ben Nevis in the dawn sunshine. On down Lochnagar, turning inland north of Oban, to Inverary. We had another large lunch there, but three hours later having travelled around the Loch we found ourselves opposite Inverary again, just three miles across the water. Eventually we made it to Hunter's Quay, at the height of the Bank Holiday weekend where we had difficulty getting B&B (I slept on a camp bed after an argument with the landlord). A ferry across the Firth of Clyde next morning, and down to Largs, where we turned inland to Kilmarnock and left 'holiday Scotland' behind. A night at New Cumnock in Ayrshire (I later discovered that my wife's Scottish in-laws originated there) and down the long miles of the A76 to Dumfries, past Eddie Stobart's main base to a 'knickerbocker glory' in a café.

One of the delights of the trip was that we could eat masses and still lose weight! It was 'mega-full English breakfast', elevenses, lunchtime snack at a petrol filling station, quick drink at 15.00, afternoon tea, big meal in the evening. David had been told by his doctor that he would lose two stones! When we weighed him at Annan on some bathroom scales, he had lost half a stone. By Land's End he had lost a stone! I had lost just two pounds! So into England and after the Carlisle stop we began the ascent of Shap, where I made my first big mistake. We arrived for 'mega fish & chips' in Shap Village around six. I had told David that it was 'all down hill to Kendal', where I had fixed accommodation with friends. Actually Shap summit on the A6 was a further seven miles south of Shap Village; it was a different one from the M6 summit and the West Coast Railway mainline summit. So after photographs at eight on top of Shap, it really was a freewheel down to Kendal, but I had forgotten that it was another seven miles to my friends. David was not happy and I had to use all my 'flannel' to keep morale up! It was also dark!

After a welcome catch-up conversation with my friends and a lie-in next morning, we didn't set out until midday. We made it to Garstang, and finding a B&B was difficult. I remember that a young couple from the next room came down to breakfast next

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## CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

morning looking guilty. I didn't tell them that they had spent the night with only a wall between them and a vicar! It was Sunday so we went to a nearby Anglican church and then set off for Warrington and down through Cheshire. Cheshire may be the richest County in England but there aren't any B&Bs on the A49! We made it to Tarporley, where we stayed the night at a pub, and ended up in a quiz team! The Shropshire Hills beckoned us southwards and we spun our faithful spokes down past Church Stretton to reach Ludlow, where our families turned out for a reunion. On a journey like this one develops a respect for this machine called a bicycle. You look at it, glance at the road map, and think, 'what a marvellous invention'.

Next morning a press vehicle ran alongside and we did a photo shoot for the Hereford Times. But before we reached Hereford, I got David to promise me that I would allow him to say hello to his friends in the office of South Herefordshire District Council, but he must not go to his in-tray and start work! (David was Planning Appeals Officer for the said Council.) So when he walked into the offices his work colleagues exclaimed: 'David, my... you have lost weight!' That night we stayed with David's friend at Symonds Yat, where the conversation was devoted to planning applications in the Wye Valley. So we passed Monmouth and came to Chepstow racecourse, and over the (first) Severn Bridge to Clevedon where we stayed in the Vicarage and collected some generous sponsorship money from the parish of All Saints. Next day it was a reunion with old friends near Tiverton, in a glorious Devon village, before tackling what was the hardest section of the whole journey, from Bickleigh in the Exe Valley to Crediton (of St. Boniface fame). For the 'End to End' cyclist - and others have confirmed it - Devon is the sting in the tail. It's all God's fault really. When He made that beautiful county, He didn't give a thought to us cyclists... so, another mega-tea in Okehampton, before tasting the new smoothly tarmacadamed A30, a veritable billiard table of an artery for the cyclist. We did 17 miles in an hour, and reached another old friend at Launceston. 'We tried telephoning you from Scotland, but no reply,' we told her. 'Oh,' replied Betty, 'I hadn't moved in then!' We spent that night amidst her unopened packing cases.

Next day we reached Hayle, Cornwall, where we felt we were in yet another country. Our 'Wurzel lanlord' told us 'e be sorry not to welcome us in morn'n as he was 'havin' a trial drive to Exeter airport as they were goin' abroad for an 'oliday like...' an' they needed to fine' out what they had to do! We were welcomed at Hayle Methodist Church on that Sunday morning, where they told us that Land's End wasn't far. By 15.30 we were indeed looking at the Atlantic Ocean towards the Scillies, and signing in at the Land's End Hotel. I shook David's hand. We had made it in 17.5 days.

It seemed such an anti-climax, pedalling slowly back to Penzance, where we spent

another evening over yet more fish and chips, watching the fishing boats in Newlyn harbour. The next day we put ourselves and bikes aboard 'The Cornishman', which sped us back to Cheltenham. As the scenery raced past the train window, it was hard to believe that we had biked it all. There was a strange mixture of emotion: joy, relief, sadness that it was all over, definitely 'a buzz'. One gets a thrill and deep satisfaction that comes from travelling long distance by bike, that the motorist knows nothing of.

Three years later David and I set out to do the trip again, this time in the reverse direction, and joined by my brother-in-law Paul. It was equally satisfying; but that's another story for another day. Meanwhile David has retired, has had a hip operation, and the last I heard he was doing a sponsored ride down the Great Wall of China! And I thought I had no converts!

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# Welcome, GB Airways!

 **John Waller**

Because of the Glasgow Airport car bomb, the departure screens said it all: Cancelled or Delayed.

Instead of being dropped off at Gatwick by taxi after waiting ages on the M23, we had arrived by train four hours before the scheduled take-off. The money we had saved went on some smoked salmon and a glass of wine to cheer us up for the ordeal ahead. In the exit lounge, we met a sad couple from Dover; they had been waiting for their charter flight to Corfu since dawn. We left them, still waiting at five, to travel on the GB Airways flight which had been delayed just 15 minutes.

My cunning plan was to interview a few passengers on why they had chosen what is effectively an BA scheduled flight, and pass on a flyer about my first book 'Greek Walls - an Odyssey in Corfu'. The cabin crew were courteous as they read the email from the GB Airways press office. 'Of course you may when service has finished,' said the purser. I felt like a client on a cruise; so I took my seat in steerage. 'Seat' is unfair; it was more like a leather armchair. BA magazines to read, free drinks to be downed, and a scrumptious meal to follow with a bottle of Merlot - I refused the offer of a second as I had work to do.

At last I was told to report to the posh end - BA do business class. The young lady next to the aisle - we had a common interest in Thierry Henry as she was an Arsenal lady to boot - didn't move. Built like a mid-fielder, she could have caused a problem, but not on GB Airways. I slid my six-foot frame past her ample knees, and proved that the legroom was excellent.

I like to think of my interviewees as a focus group rather than a statistical sample since they were all in business class.

However, the conclusions of the survey would have not been enormously different if my fellow humble other-class flyers had been asked.

I explained that Corfu out-of-season is fantastic: In spring, the island is covered in flowers; in autumn, the sea is warm and the sky is clear; in winter, there is total peace. Everyone said they would like to go in spring, all but one liked the idea of autumn, and it was evens on winter until one passenger said she would only go if GB Airways was flying.

To me, Corfu is much more than sun, sand and sea. I was therefore interested in the activities that would attract the passengers to the island. The majority of the men played golf but were hesitant in suggesting they would like to come on a golfing holiday until I ask whether their partners liked riding. The majority suddenly became most excited - golf is played in the Ropa Valley, and there is a riding and trekking centre not far away near Korakiana. Aqualand, which is very close to the golf course, scored well - parent and grandparents obviously saw it as the clincher in the all-family holiday. A majority also fancied a walking holiday out of season.

There was unanimous support for a visit to Corfu Town. Had they heard it has become a UNESCO World Heritage Site? A majority said they would tour the island, but few would consider visiting the mainland. With Meteora and Zagoria not far away, they do not know what they are missing! A majority had either thought of buying a home on the island, or had already

done so. They were particularly interested in GB Airways Privilege with its deals for ex-pats and second home owners.

Details can be found on [www.gbairways.com/gbprivilege](http://www.gbairways.com/gbprivilege).

Now to the crunch question: why did they choose GB Airways? Here are their answers: Good price on the Internet; booked late (though the flight was actually full); it is a direct flight that flies frequently; it leaves at a reasonable time after the early morning rush; BA are reliable; the cabin crew are excellent; there is plenty of legroom. Their only complaint was that BA hadn't, as yet, decided on flying out of season.

*John Waller's books 'Greek Walls' and 'Corfu Sunset', plus Roy Hounsell's 'The Papas and the Englishman' are available at the Gastouri 'Made in Corfu' Shop and at Newstands across the island (price 12 euros), at Waterstones in the UK and on [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)*



## Epiplomania

# 'Made in Corfu' comes to the North

 Hilary Paipeti

The second in a chain of 'Made in Corfu' shop has just opened at Saint Spiridon, Perithia, on the main road between Kassiopi and Acharavi. The enterprise is part of a wider 'one-stop' complex which includes a North Corfu office for Luvcorfu Properties and Petra Traditional Constructions, a traditional coffee bar, a display of antique furniture for sale, a small museum of agricultural machines and tools and an olive wood shop. The first 'Made in Corfu' antique shop, also functioning as a Luvcorfu office, opened almost two months ago in Gastouri, and the estate agency also has an office in Barbati which has antique furniture and 'Made in Corfu' items on display. The main Petra office, also Luvcorfu's North West Corfu base, is on the Afionas road, just after Kavadades and above Arillas.

The 'Made in Corfu' concept was created in response to the huge influx of cheap goods - souvenirs among them - from China and other Asian countries, which has made it difficult for local craftspeople to compete. The underlying philosophy calls for souvenirs to have a 'sense of place', for them to derive from local resources and skills, rather than from an anonymous factory floor thousands of miles away. Such 'real souvenirs' are also ecologically sound; most are made from renewable materials, and do not produce a large carbon footprint in their manufacture and transportation.

While the enterprise is housed in a modern building, a great deal of care has been taken to 'antiquate' the interior and surroundings, in accordance with their function. At one side of the large space, the coffee bar features installations taken from an old village kafenion, which were going to be thrown on the tip. Much of the refurbishings constitute a display of construction techniques which are used by Petra in its building work; potential buyers can see various finishings in situ, for example floorboards (salvaged old ones, or new?) and veranda supports (olive wood boughs, rough cut timber, or dressed timber?), so that they can make an informed decision regarding their construction partnership with Petra.

The Museum is centered around an old olive crushing bed (right, with the shop behind), of which a slice has been cut away to reveal its internal form. Two of the original three wheels are intact; the three-wheel crusher was the most sophisticated - and last - development of the purely stone, horse-powered machines, before mechanical power took over. A display of presses maintains the theme of industrial progress. The first presses were all timber, and a rare one is enplaced beside the crushing bed. Such presses were in use in ancient times. Later,

metal parts were introduced, then all-metal presses were the norm. These were all operated by human power, using a lever; the last system used before the process was totally automated was hydraulic, powered first by steam and then by diesel, and run from a series of cogs and belts. All these manifestations are on display, along with a weighing implement for olive oil and oil storage vessels. Elsewhere on the site you can view old butter churns, an ox yoke, containers to transport milk, a loom, dowry chests, cannon balls, and lots of old tools and utensils.

Apart from the olive press structures, the most striking item is the prow end of an old wooden fishing caique. The cross-sectioned cut shows how these beautiful boats were built. Untold numbers of similar old caiques have been broken up as a result of an EU effort to reduce fishing in the Mediterranean. Fishermen were given large payments in return for handing in their licenses - and their boats. Since the directive did not provide for the caiques to be resold as leisure vessels, they were beached and cut into three. In this way, a tradition thousands of years old is being destroyed.

Inside, pride of place in the coffee bar area goes to an old gramophone, probably from the 1950s, with one-play needles. At the rear is a separate room which contains old furniture, which you can both admire and buy if you like.

And also part of the one-stop traditional products site is the adjoining Costas' Olive Wood Shop. Costas has his workshop in Kavadades in North West Corfu, but here you can see the full range of his work on display. Corfu's craft tradition is now assembled in North Corfu.



# Get away from the crowds...

## Take a trip to the *Wild West*

 **Hilary Paipeti**

August is the month of busy roads, packed beaches, jammed parking areas and, in the resorts, crowded streets and hassled waiters. But you can avoid August Fever by staying away from the most popular haunts, the ones Athenian visitors go to see and be seen, and Italian tourists to 'ciao' other Italians and admire each other's cars. If you're heading west, steer clear of Glyfada and Paleokastritsa, the worst of the August hotspots, and turn instead to the countryside, the villages and the lesser known beaches. Even in August, you can find peace.

This summer, we recommend an exploration of the central-west area of the island, avoiding of course the 'tourist traps'. We begin our tour from Corfu Town, but if you are not staying there, consult a map to get onto the main road which leads west towards Pelekas (the best map currently in print is the 'Road Map'). The first major junction comes six kilometres from Town, where a road heads off left to Pelekas, while the main way continues past Aqualand and into the Ropa Valley. (With traffic at its annual peak, and the presence on the road of the notorious Athenian and Italian drivers, it is worth considering that this highway is the least scary and least busy of the routes out of Corfu Town.)

Close to this junction, a couple of hundred metres along the road to Pelekas, is the turn-off for the Triklino Vineyard (see separate article), so if you're passing here after midday, or returning before seven in the evening, don't miss a visit.

But straight on, the traffic diminishes. The next landmark (after Aqualand) is the roundabout at Kefalovrisso, near Kokkini. (How to use a Corfu roundabout - give way to the traffic coming from your right, and always assume that the other guy won't stop.) Your way is ahead, and the vast Ropa Valley soon opens up. Incidentally, the road through the valley is a very good alternative route to Paleokastritsa if you want to follow the crowds.

But we are going to turn off a mile or so along, taking the road signposted Giannades, Marmaro and Kanakades. This cuts across the valley, running along a slight causeway bordered with poplar trees. Halfway across, a bridge carries you over the canalized Ropa River. If it is early and the sun's heat is still bearable, take the opportunity for a peaceful country stroll along the banks of the river, where you will only meet other walkers and the odd flock of sheep picking at the dry grasses. Park the car at the side of the road (don't worry about being completely off the road; it is little used and you won't interfere with traffic flow). Take the track along the west bank of the river (the course of the Corfu Trail, marked with yellow signs and paint markers), whose banks are lined with willows and other trees.

A couple of hundred metres along the track, the Corfu Trail leaves the riverbank over a concrete slab bridge across the ditch. This point appears to be the centre of some manipulation of the landscape on a grand scale. Standing here, the track southwards - the one you just came along - aligns with the summit of Agii Deka mountain. Turn exactly 180 degrees (I have

confirmed this with a compass), and a V frames the little chapel of Saint Simeon, perched on a pillar of stone on the distant 'red rock' cliffs that back Paleokastritsa. Also at this point (move just a few paces and it doesn't work due to parallax!), the  $\Lambda$  peak of Mount Pantokrator is exactly reflected by a V-shaped break in the ridge of hills to the east. Turn to look west and, just to the left of Giannades village. Here, the roof and campanile of a white-washed church form twin domes. These structures lie just below the skyline of black trees, whose shape exactly matches their curves. Move a couple of steps north or south, and, just as the  $\Lambda$  of Pantokrator and the V of the gap in the hills no longer align, so the white silhouette of the church against the black of the trees no longer correspond. These two points do not align in a 180 degree swing, but rather are visual geographical phenomena.

I have maybe identified a third alignment, this one also on a 180 degree line running through the point where you are standing. This comprises the summit of Vatos mountain, topped by the chapel dedicated to Saint George, and the Spanopoulos mansion on the line of inland hills, where there is also a chapel of Saint George.

In each case, the alignment at one end is defined by a distinct geographical feature (a mountaintop with an old church or monastery on it) and at the other end another chapel which is not located on a fixed geographical feature, but which could



have been placed in its position deliberately. It is also worth noting that a ford crosses the river at the point where you are standing - always the sign of a significant setting, and a regular component of ley-lines. Could this little point in the Ropa Valley be the hub of a ley-line system?

If you can drag yourselves away, continue along the riverbank for about a kilometre, where a stone bridge links the track you are on with the other bank, and you can stroll back to your starting point along the parallel track, which offers slightly different views to the east instead of in a westerly direction.

Back in the car, continue along the road until you reach a cross-roads, where a road bears off right to Marmaro. If you are in an ordinary car, go right here and wend your way through the villages of Marmaro and Kanakades to rejoin the main Ropa Valley road. Here you turn left and continue along the valley until the turning for Liapades. Take this road, go right at a T-junction, and head down to the sea, where the road stops.

If you have a 4x4 and a sense of adventure, keep going to Giannades. Immediately before the square (stop for a coffee if you like - but we will be back later) take a lane to the left, which carries you to the top of the village and down into a shallow valley at the rear. The road, shortly turning into gravel, swings to the right around the valley and runs along the side of the ridge, with glorious views back to Giannades and over the Ropa Valley. Ignore tracks going uphill to the left, and deviations to the right. The main track is clear - and it is the course of the Corfu Trail, marked throughout with splashes of yellow paint. After a sharp climb up a valley, turn left at a T-junction and climb to the top of the ridge. Over the top, you plunge into

olive trees. At the first junction, bear left, then at the second right (following still the Corfu Trail). Then you chug along on the rough road, with sudden vignettes of the sea below from time to time, until you reach asphalt at a junction with a little shrine. Straight on here, and follow the asphalt down into Liapades (the Corfu Trail leaves the road just before the village - don't be tempted to follow it at this point, as it enters the village by way of a path!). The road into the village is steep and very narrow - rather scary in fact - but persevere and you join the main Liapades village road. Go left to the square for well-deserved refreshment (parking in the square is strictly speaking not allowed, but providing you are prepared to move your vehicle in a hurry, you can stop there for a short while).

Or go right to exit the village. At the foot of the settlement take a road straight on and head downhill to the beach, where you rejoin the tour taken by the less adventurous.

Liapades Beach does not rival the extensive strands of the central west coast, such as Glyfada and Agios Gordis, neither is its sand so fine and golden as theirs. But it does have a much finer outlook. Since it is located in a deep-cut bay, its view out to sea is fringed with forested hillsides, which focus the gaze along the Paleokastritsa coastline. Few buildings are in sight, so that you can hardly tell which century you are in.

The big fun of Liapades is hiring an outboard motor boat. The coast to the south, as far as Ermones, is sheer and precipitous, with few beaches accessible even on foot. Which makes a sea-borne exploration a must. It is advisable to keep close in to shore, and head for land if a strong wind gets up. 24 >

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> 23 The first beach you pass is Rovinia, made famous by Emma Tennant's book 'A House in Corfu'. But this beach has got itself a road now, and is much busier than in the past. So head on to Limni, a spectacular double-sided beach which links a small promontory with the coast. The strand is pebble, but the sea is crystal-clear. Further along the coastline, beaches of beautiful golden sand, interspersed by sheer hillsides blanketed in a patchwork of green and by twisted rock formations and sea-caves, are tucked under high cliffs. Take some snacks and plenty to drink, and bask in a reasonable degree of solitude...

If you like, end your day by heading back to Giannades, this time along the valley road. The village has been greatly upgraded in recent years, with paved lanes and alleys and a remodelled square with bird's eye view over the Ropa Valley. Park in the designated area below the square and take a stroll around the village before sitting down to your supper. Walk through the main square and along the lane to where it opens out a little. Take an alley left, down to a delightful spot, accessing an old mansion (pictured on page 22) and its lovely courtyard. Two

ancient and beautiful stone archways adorn the wall on the right. Return to the main lane. You can either go back to the square or, if you want to work up an appetite, make a circuit of the settlement. To do this, you turn left at the main lane and keep going. The lane runs along a shelf, open on the left. Ignore smaller lanes leading up to the right. At the rear of the village, pass a road coming in from the left, then go straight on. After climbing slightly, you re-enter the village on the other side, and the narrow road drops to the square again.

You can now enjoy your meal. In the corner of the square, next to the original coffee bar, a new grill room - 'Oi Kaloi Gnomoi' - has a wooden deck outdoor seating area with the best view of the valley, and you can watch as the sunlight gradually diminishes and the lights come on over the plain and on the hills beyond. The eatery serves nice nibbles to start, and excellent grills accompanied by real chips. The lamb is from their own herds, which graze on the rich valley below. A plate of tender 'paidakia' (lamb chops) makes a perfect end to a day spent away from the crowds.

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## The Triklino Vineyard

There used to be over a thousand olive trees on the Vlachos Estate, as well as a huge press hundreds of years old. Then in a day it was gone.

In September 2000 the worst forest fire in living memory broke out just half a kilometre from the site, the result of a local man burning garden waste on a roasting afternoon only made bearable by a stiff breeze (outdoor fires are illegal between the start of May and the end of October). The Vlachos family's olive estate was just one of the early victims of the blaze, which went on to destroy a third of the beautiful Kombitsi pine and chestnut forest, as well as a Venetian mansion with a precious library of contemporary books.

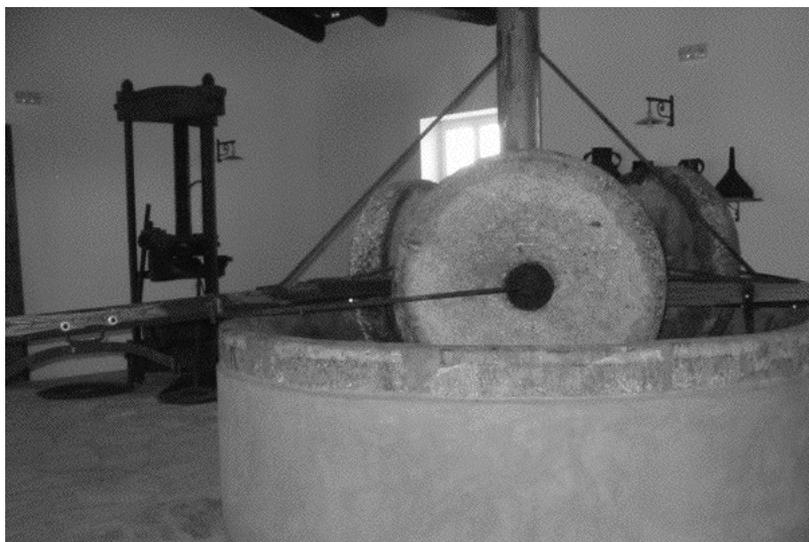
By morning, 800 of the ancient olive trees were charred stumps, and the stones of the press building were shattered into pieces by the heat.

But, like a phoenix, a new enterprise has risen out of the ashes. The Vlachos family took the decision not to replant olives, but instead to replace them with vines, and to rebuild the press to function as a Visitor Centre and Museum of Oil and Wine.

The Triklino Vineyard is located six kilometres from Corfu Town, just off the road to Pelekas near Karoubatika. The press building and outbuildings sit on the top of a hill with panoramic views over the surrounding countryside. An area of 17,000 square metres of the larger estate of 72,000 square metres has been planted with grapes of the local kakotrigis and skopelitiko varieties, now three years old and about to produce their first harvest. Once full production has been achieved, 10 tonnes of grapes are expected annually, providing around 15,000 bottles of wine. The attached Museum of Oil and Wine is housed in the largest building, and is a reconstruction of the destroyed press (none of the original stones could be salvaged). Inside, traditional olive oil and wine-making equipment is on display, among them a three-stone horse-driven crushing bed, vats, barrels and smaller pieces of equipment such as xestas (measuring containers). A short and excellently produced video, presented on a projector screen, shows the whole process of olive oil and wine making.

Once the guided tour is over, visitors enjoy a generous tasting of the estate wine, accompanied by a snack of local mezzes, all home-made on the premises. There are two menus - a basic one of taramosalata, tzatziki and a couple of other nibbles, and a richer one which includes meatballs and giant beans in sauce. A display of local products and books lends additional interest; Katina Vlachou, who runs the Museum, intends to create a network of similar establishments and enterprises which manufacture and promote local products.

Entry price is five euros, including the basic mezza, and 10 euros for the more extensive one. The establishment is open from 12 noon to 7 in the evening except Sundays. A visit is recommended as part of a larger tour of the central west of the island - see main article.



# Beirut, Books & Bacchus

## A Lebanese Odyssey

 **Sarah Button**

Sarah and Pete Button continue their adventurous voyage in the Middle East along with 76 yachts from 15 different countries on a rally that takes them from Turkey to Egypt. In the second part of three instalments, they and friends Sheila and Patrick sail from Syria into Lebanese waters aboard 'Shecat', a 35 foot catamaran, and explore Beirut and Hezbollah country.

Kebabbed out, Pete wanted shepherd's pie for supper on our night passage from Lattakia in Syria to Jounieh in Lebanon, so Patrick and I set off to the market to acquire the necessaries. I was not prepared for the stench - my guts had been playing up for a few days and the stink made me retch. What could loosely be described as meat stalls were in fact abattoirs, mini slaughterhouses. Live pale white chickens crammed in crates met a grizzly end right in front of our eyes before being chopped up into kebabs. The remains of sheep, their skeletons picked of meat, hung from rusty hooks, the only fleshy bits remaining were their testicles, flies buzzing greedily around. The air was heavy with the smell of excreta and urine. It was revolting. Meat was off the menu, I was going veggie.

Laden with bags full of unidentifiable but delicious looking fruit and vegetables I rehearsed my explanation to Pete, and we made our way back to the marina. It was going to be shepherd's pie without the shepherds.

The town had shocked me. It was poor, dishevelled, filthy and seedy, but despite the poverty there was no edge and no hassle; folk were obliging, affable and genuinely pleased to see us.

News from Lebanon was putting some folk off and two yachts decided to stay put, but we were assured of our safety and, with the promise of a watchful lookout from UN warships, prepared for an eventful passage. We must stay at least six miles from shore and listen to the VHF radio at ALL TIMES.

Patrick and I took our watch at 2am. Pete and Sheila's had been uneventful apart from the continuous radio chatter of American war ships. Some of our fleet were told off for going inside Syrian or Lebanese waters. We drank tea and noshed egg butties as we motored on a flat sea. Then the UN ordered ALL the boats to hang a right and go 12 miles off shore. There were protests as we explained we were not terrorists in gun boats, just little sailing boats off on a merry holiday. They relented - no doubt worried about their PR - and we were allowed back on course. Once in Lebanese waters, a huge patrol boat with a nasty looking gun mounted on its bows came steaming up to us. As it slowed we waved, the crew of four waved too, then started to cheer, giving us the 'thumbs up'; it was a friendly but alarming welcome.

Dolphins surfed our bows as we arrived at Jounieh. The great metropolis of Beirut with its skyscrapers lurked menacingly only a few miles away, a halo of black pollution hovered over the city like a widow's veil.

I was beginning to get used to culture shock, but this was shock without the culture. A bus dropped us off at the edge of the old town of Beirut. It was Sunday and the place was practically deserted. Those who were in town were soldiers, leaning against walls and sentry boxes weighted down with machine guns. Most of the streets were cordoned off with huge rolls of razor wire, it was creepy; a sinister place with an atmosphere of impending doom. I gingerly approached a soldier and said, 'I am a tourist, where can I go?' The tough guy immediately softened, his face relaxing into a beaming grin, 'Welcome to my country,' he said, and he meant it. He directed us to the 'Down Town' area, where we could wander and find shops and street cafes. It was all too clear; our international fleet of yachts had provided the city with its only tourists.

Walking through the city centre, we passed a park that had been taken over by camping protesters. Far from democratic, the Lebanese constitution demands its president to be Christian - this dates back to when Christians were the majority of the population. Now, because of different religions attitude to birth control, there are more Muslims and fewer Christians. The balance has changed and the result is protest.

Beirut, described as the 'Paris' of the Eastern Mediterranean, is a wealthy place, said to make its money from banking; banking of the dubious sort - money laundering. The riches are visible too; the clock tower in the centre of town is sponsored by

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Rolex, there are posh cars, outrageously expensive jewellery shops and designer boutiques. The 'must have' for women is a black nanny to manage a brood of spoilt and precocious kids. The men sport gold neck chains, cigars and Porsches; it's all rather bling. We cashed in on packaged affluence, finding a supermarket where we bought meat in nice polystyrene trays covered in cling film instead of flies; Pete could have his shepherd's pie at last.

Lebanese countryside is stunning; very green and fertile with steep wooded slopes and deep gorges gushing with clear fresh white water. Our tour was showing us the greenest of all the Arab countries. Deep in the hillside we visited some show caves. Tolkien and Disney would have fought over the spectacular formations in the huge caverns; ribbons of stalactites curling and flowing like silk curtains; a subterranean fantasy world in which we were the only visitors.

We toured Biblos, the birth place of books. Here, thousands of years ago, papyrus manuscripts were collated, bound and then distributed. This was picture postcard land. Roman columns set amongst ancient cedar trees with the teasingly bright blue Mediterranean beyond; a scene that could cheerfully adorn chocolate boxes and calendars. There were the customary tourist shops to plunder for presents and souvenirs. I asked one shopkeeper how business was. 'Running a business here is like playing poker,' he said. The government told him nothing, they were very bad people, he continued.

We found a restaurant in the harbour. On the wall were press clippings and portraits of 'The Pirate', a local hero, once deep-sea fisherman, war veteran and all round good guy; he ran 'The Most Famous Restaurant in Lebanon'. A wall of fame boasted pictures of him raising glasses with the likes of Marlon Brando, David Niven, Bridget Bardot, a host of famous politicians and the odd head of state. Biblos must one time have been the Monaco of the East Mediterranean.

The next tour was pronounced 'unadvisable', but there were protests; we yachties are used to assessing risk and should be allowed to make the decision ourselves. The organisers happily relented and we braved our trip into Hezbollah country to visit some more ruins. Yes, I know I'm sounding a bit negative but I wanted to talk to people and get a feel of the place without the tourist spin. However our tour guide was quite candid, she sympathised with the Palestinians. There are many refugees here, living a miserable existence; ignored by the government, many would relent to the pressures of poverty and become mercenaries, hired guns fighting the terrorists' cause.

The bus took us up and over the mountains, where ski resorts proliferated next to Bedouin camps with their skinny flocks of

sheep and goats. Then down to the lush vineyards of the Baalbeck valley and home of the much sought after 'Lebanese Gold', the hash many remember coveting in their student days. We encountered lots of road blocks where gunmen sat on top of tanks menacingly pointing rifles at us, but once they knew we were tourists we were warmly welcomed. I didn't feel any edge here at all.

The ancient city of Baalbek boasts some mightily impressive ancient Greek and Roman ruins. We all paid homage to Bacchus, the god of wine, women and song, in the temple dedicated to the old man's life of carousing. On our way back to the bus we were hassled by traders selling Hezbollah T-shirts, post cards and tacky trinkets.

It was exceptionally hot, around 40 degrees, when I attended the briefing on the morning of our departure to Israel. 'Stay sixty-six miles off shore. Don't enter the marina before allotted time. Radio your position every four hours...' Then, alarmingly: 'If you are boarded by terrorists you must...' We were given a coded message to broadcast on channel 16; I cannot say I'd remember it if a gun were poked at my head. We were warned too that Israeli gun boats don't show up on radar. They just creep up behind, then suddenly shine their lights on you. It sounded like a very scary game of 'Boo!'

We prepared for a busy and nerve-racking passage.

*Next month: Touring the West Bank, swimming in the Dead Sea and visiting the Pyramids*

# Spear Travels

# FOOD SUPPLEMENT

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## 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)

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## 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 SUPPLEMENT

# Making a Meal of Mezes

August is a time for relaxed outdoor eating, time spent over drinks, while lamb roasts on a spit or steaks grill on a charcoal fire. It is the time that friends and relatives, not seen for a year, might drop in unexpectedly. It is the time for mezes.

These various recipes can make a meal in themselves, or can provide a buffet-style course to precede a barbecue. Mix and match them according to how many guests you expect. And enjoy summer eating.

### Rocket & Beetroot Salad

Scrub two or three medium beetroots and boil in their skins until tender but not mushy. Peel while still warm and cube or slice thinly.

Wash and dry well a few leaves of cos lettuce and a handful of rocket leaves. Tear the leaves into smallish pieces and place in a bowl. Just before serving, put the beetroot on top. Dress with olive oil beaten with a little wine vinegar with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

### Potatoes in Basil Sauce

*1 kilo small potatoes, 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil leaves, 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh mint leaves, 2 anchovy fillets, 1 tablespoon capers, 4 tablespoon olive oil, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper*

Boil the potatoes in abundant salted water until done. Drain, cut in half or quarters (depending on size) and reserve.

Put the olive oil, washed anchovy fillets, basil, mint, pepper and lemon juice in the blender. Process at medium speed for a minute or two until you get a thick smooth sauce. Add the whole capers and mix well. Place the potatoes on a platter or in a shallow bowl and pour the sauce over. Serve warmish or at room temperature.

### Borage & Cucumber Cheesy Salad

*1/4 cup unsalted myzithra cheese, 6 tablespoons plain strained yoghurt, 2 tablespoons blanched almonds (finely chopped), 1 tablespoon cucumber (finely chopped), 1 cup fresh borage leaves (finely chopped), 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 2 tablespoon olive oil, salt, borage flowers to garnish (if available)*

Spoon the myzithra, yoghurt, olive oil and lemon juice in a blender and process for three minutes. Add the cucumber, almonds, borage and salt and stir gently to mix. Test and add more salt and lemon juice if necessary.

Spoon into a bowl and chill. Garnish with borage flowers just before serving.

### Mushroom Salad

*250 gr very fresh oyster mushrooms, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, basil, salt and black pepper*

Wash the mushrooms but do not peel. Cut in thin slices, together with the stalks. Place in a bowl, squeeze over a good quantity of lemon juice, stir in a little chopped garlic, season with pepper and pour over lots of olive oil. Set aside in a cool place.

Just before serving, add salt and more olive oil (they will have absorbed the first lot) and finally sprinkle with chopped basil.

### Aubergine Chilli Dip

*2 aubergines, 1 clove garlic, 1 small onion, 1 green chilli pepper or more, grated root ginger, salt, pepper, lemon juice*

Boil the aubergines in their skins until tender and leave aside to get cold. Peel them and mash or process until a puree. Stir in the garlic reduced to a pulp, the onion very finely chopped, and finely chopped green chilli and grated green ginger to taste. Season with salt, pepper and lemon juice.

### Lentil Salad

Wash 250 gr small brown lentils and place in cold water. Bring to the boil and simmer until tender but still firm. Add salt when nearly cooked. Drain well and while still warm dress with olive oil, finely chopped onion and black pepper. Check the seasoning and stir in some thinly sliced raw onion. Serve at room temperature, garnished if you like by a couple of quartered hard boiled eggs.

### Feta Sausages

*130 gr very finely crumbled feta cheese, 100 gr fresh white breadcrumbs, 2 tablespoons finely grated onion, 3 egg yolks, 1 heaped tablespoon chopped parsley, 1/2 teaspoon thyme or oregano, 1 level teaspoon mustard powder, salt and black pepper, 1 egg white, breadcrumbs, olive oil*

Mix the cheese, breadcrumbs and onion. Whisk together the yolks, herbs, mustard and seasonings and add to the breadcrumbs (be careful with the salt if the feta is in the least salty). Knead gently to make a coherent mixture. Divide into 12 and form each piece into a little sausage about five centimetres long. Dip in egg white, roll in breadcrumbs and shallow-fry in hot olive oil, turning until brown all over. Serve at once.

### Roasted Peppers with Tuna

*3 large red peppers and 3 large yellow ones, small tin of tuna, olive oil, lemon juice, parsley*

Put the peppers under the grill and roast them, turning every now and then, until they are black all over, about 15-20 minutes. As soon as they are cool enough to handle, rub off all the blackened skin, removing every speck. Remove the core and cut into 3 or 4 lengthwise strips. Wash well in cold water to get out all the seeds. Dry well and put to marinate for 15 minutes in olive oil and a tiny squeeze of lemon juice.

Mash the tuna a little, put a small spoonful on each strip and roll it up. Arrange the rolls on a flat serving dish, pour over the oil marinade and garnish with parsley.

You can cheat by using preserved Florina peppers, but you lose the beautiful visual combination of the red and yellow peppers.



# British Consuls

## When the phone rings at night... Simon Gass

For British Consular staff in Greece, it is never good news when the phone rings at night. Particularly during the tourist season, it usually means that a British national has found themselves in trouble and needs help. Maybe the police have arrested a British citizen for a serious offence. A tourist may have been mugged or raped. Or perhaps there has been a sudden death. During the summer, problems like these are the day-to-day business of British Consular staff.

The need for good consular support for British nationals overseas is greater every year. British people make over sixty five million overseas visits a year. Over thirteen million British nationals live abroad. Happily, the vast majority meet no special difficulties and therefore have no need for consular assistance. But it is our job to give support to the small minority who face serious problems. In Greece we have consular offices in Athens, Thessaloniki, Rhodes, Kos, Crete, Corfu and Zakynthos. We have about twenty full-time staff working on consular assistance.

Helping British nationals in Greece when problems happen can be difficult and stressful. Some people will be bewildered and angry about the situation they find themselves in. Occasionally they may even be drunk or abusive. And in some cases there may be no simple answer to the problem that they face. We can help people deal with difficulties - rarely can we make the problem go away. In all cases we recognise that British people have the right to expect a friendly and professional service.

There are many ways in which a British Consul can help if you find yourself in trouble. For example, they can issue replacement passports. They can help if you are a victim of a serious crime or are in hospital. They can contact family or friends if you are unable to do so. And they will make contact wherever possible within 24 hours of being told that a British citizen has been detained by the police.

There are other things which the Consul cannot do. They can't get a British national out of prison or interfere with court proceedings. They can't give legal advice or investigate crimes. And they can't give you money or pay bills.

A fuller account of a Consul's role appears on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website ([www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk))

There are also ways in which British visitors to Greece can help themselves. Some of the saddest cases we see are where visitors don't have health insurance and are faced with large hospital bills if they have an accident. We also see a crop of accidents every year - some very serious - involving rented quad bikes. These accidents can be even worse if it turns out that neither the rental outlet nor the tourist has adequate insurance cover. Lastly, an obvious point: customs and habits in Greece are different from those in the UK. Behaviour which in the UK may be seen as high spirits can seem threatening and hostile to Greek people.

We offer the same services to British residents in Greece as we do to British visitors. We will do all we can to help you if you face serious problems. But it is not a Consul's job to sort out the day-to-day challenges which someone may face in adapting to life in Greece, such as struggling with Greek bureaucracy. If they did so there wouldn't be time for dealing with the real problem cases. This means that we are not able to advise on legal matters. Nor will we intervene with the Greek authorities on issues like tax or health insurance.

That said, we try to make sure that our Consulates have information which helps people find help themselves. For example, our Consuls keep a list of local English-speaking lawyers. And they can often pass on details of a local citizens' advice bureau (which often have an English-speaking member of staff). There is also a lot of useful information about living in Greece on our Embassy website ([www.british-embassy.gr](http://www.british-embassy.gr)).

I take pride in our consular services in Greece. I admire the professionalism of our staff when they give support to grieving relatives, when they try to help British tourists who are suffering from mental illnesses, or when they have to liaise with the worried parents of a young visitor who has been arrested.

I hope that British people reading this article will never need our help. But in case you do, the contact details for our Consulates are:

<b>Athens</b>	1 Ploutarchou St: Tel: 210 7272 600
<b>Crete</b>	Papa-Alexandrou 16, Tel: 2810 224012/244366
<b>Kos</b>	Navarinou 55, Tel: 22420 21549/26203
<b>Rhodes</b>	Gr. Lambraki 29, Tel: 22410 22005
<b>Thessaloniki</b>	21 Aristotelous St, Tel: 2310 278006
<b>Zakynthos</b>	5 Foskolos St, Tel: 26950 22906/48030
<b>Corfu</b>	1 Menekratous St: Tel: 26610 30055/23457

*Simon Gass is Britain's Ambassador to Greece.*

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# Bravo, Ratzinger! Bravo, bravo Benedict XVI!!

 *Lionel Mann*

In 1962 I was Organist and Director of Music at Hampton Parish Church. We sang cathedral-style Matins and Evensong every Sunday and Evensong on Saints' Days to standing-room only congregations in a church that seated 650. The local police turned out to control car-parking, keeping the main roads clear. Every August I toured Britain or Europe as far as Sweden with the sixteen boys, altos and trebles, joined by the eight men, tenors and basses, when they could get away.

Then the elderly saintly vicar, crippled in WW1 but a learned alumnus of The House, retired because he needed further surgery and he would not leave his parish for even a single hour without its spiritual leader. His successor, a young bishop-or-bust type, called me to his study the day after his induction. "This church is known as the place where Lionel Mann is organist and I don't like it." He did not have to like it. We had already arranged a tour of Scandinavia. We completed that and then I told the young upstart what he could do with his parish. All the choirboys and most of the men migrated to a nearby church to which my brilliant young assistant removed. Six years later the stupid cleric was clerk in an estate agent's office and the average congregation of the church had shrunk to less than a hundred.

In the meantime I reverted to full-time teaching at a nearby private boys' primary school where I had been teaching English and Mathematics part-time - and incidentally pushed up their eleven-plus success rate from fifty per cent to one hundred per cent. (The county average was twelve-and-a-half!) The elderly headmaster made me his deputy with responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school although I was the youngest member of staff. As a twelve-year-old choirmaster, I had learnt to lead by example and not by wielding authority.

A former organ pupil of mine introduced me to the Director of Music at St. George's College, Weybridge, a Roman Catholic public school of some five hundred boys and fifty Salesian Fathers staff. While I was enjoying sampling the organ in their exquisitely beautiful chapel my friend and the Fr. Francis were plotting!

The result was that every Saturday afternoon a car would come to collect me from the school, into which I had needed to move. I would spend some time practising on the organ at St. George's before the choir arrived for practice. After an ample delicious buffet supper, the evening would be spent in Fr. Francis's spacious comfortable 'cell' with some of his colleagues listening to records of anything from Renaissance polyphony to Wagner opera before I was driven back to Hampton.

Every Sunday I would be collected at nine o'clock and would arrive at St. George's in time to warm up on the organ before Mass. Those Sundays were sheer delight. Fr. Francis had admitted that he was a pianist rather than an organist, but he was a very good choir-trainer. The choir numbered some fifty boys aged from eleven to eighteen, all boarders, covering the full range of a four-part choir. I had previously known of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert as the highest peaks of the Viennese School, but now I came to realize how many lesser but still quite high peaks had also existed as weekly we performed their Masses, eminently suited to this choir of wildly enthusiastic young singers. Amazingly, our hymns were chosen from Hymns Ancient and Modern, Revised. "Why should only

the Anglicans have the best hymns?" Fr. Francis had chuckled upon seeing my astonishment. "We learnt our Latin hymns from the cradle and can sing those from memory."

To be playing and all the time thinking, "For the past twelve hours or so in Catholic churches around the world an identical noble liturgy has been performed and it will continue for another twelve hours," was tremendously stimulating. And all was immensely enhanced by the exquisite ceremony being performed in the ornate chancel by a numerous team of priests and acolytes in their picturesque robes. Up in the west-end gallery, facing that young cheerful group of singers, revelling in their music, and blazing away on a beautiful instrument, accompanying hymns fairly roared by a congregation of boys, parents, other visitors and the the rest of the staff, was every time a delightfully inspiring experience.

Then came lunch. At first I, a lone 'schismatic' among fifty Catholic priests, crept cautiously into the refectory where we all sat at a very long table, but everyone from Father Superior down made me heartily welcome, saving a space for me, and they soon became my friends. The afternoon was spent in more organ practice and I became used to having an audience below in the nave as well as a cluster of boys around the console; I never lacked a competent page-turner! Next I would go to the pavilion to watch rugby or cricket and to partake of the accompanying afternoon tea. In the summer I stayed to the end of the cricket, but in the winter returned to the chapel for some more organ-playing. I had only a grand piano at the school. Next came a sumptuous dinner and then Benediction, a truly impressive observance accompanied by beautiful music. Then followed a light supper and being taken home.

For the better part of two years I thoroughly enjoyed that weekend routine until one Saturday Fr. Francis said, "Lionel, I'm sorry but you won't be able to stay after supper tonight. We all need to do our homework. From tomorrow Mass will be in English. You'll see the awful music that they have forced upon us."

What I always referred to as the Second Vandalism Council had perpetrated one of the greatest errors of the century. The Catholic Church, with its Latin liturgy standard across the entire world, was one of the greatest unifying factors in an otherwise splintering society. Centuries of glorious music was thrown away to be replaced by utter trash.

"Lionel we don't want to get rid of you; you're very welcome to stay as long as you like, and we're not trying to convert you. But you're wasting your time here now, aren't you? Why don't you go back to your own church? There must be somewhere where the rot hasn't set in." Fr. Francis had become a really good friend. Some months later, following a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, which I had introduced to St. George's, I left there as well as from the school, to go to New Zealand, where I enjoyed seven more years of good church music before the rot reached there and the church was polluted with banal liturgy and musical rubbish. I became a concert organist with N.Z.B.C.

It has always seemed to me that it is utterly profane, and the depth of sloth, to reduce the worship of Almighty God to trivial text with contemptible music in a shabby environment. Now, thanks to an enlightened leader, it seems as though the Catholic Church may well set an example and lead the way to restoring some dignity and reverence to worship. When I saw on television Cardinal Ratzinger presiding so reverently at the funeral of Pope John Paul I hoped that he would bring some intelligence into the Church. Now it has happened. Bravo, bravo, bravo Benedict XVI!!!

## INFORMATION

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### CONSULATES

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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 8.30, 10.00 & 19.00  
**Evangelical** Church of Greece: 3 Iakovou Polila St. Tel.: 26610 37304. Sunday Morning Service 11.00. Evening Service 7.30. email: EV-CH-OF-CO@ker.forthnet.gr

### 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*

**www.corfuhome.tv**

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## PERSONAL

**ANY FELLOW AMERICANS OUT THERE?** I am looking for other Americans on the island who would like to meet up and get together. Send email to [elisacostas@hotmail.com](mailto:elisacostas@hotmail.com) or phone 6979 762442 **HOMOSEXUAL HELP LINE CLUG** (Corfu Lesbians and Gays). Information line: 6934 903726 or email us at [corfulg@yahoo.gr](mailto: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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Left to right: Tasha, Bramble, Bruni, Bella, Paddy.



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