



The Sporades Revisited- Skiathos & Skopelos- July 2009.



Jan & Lene joined us again for a 3 week cruise to some of our favourite spots- a mixture of tiny ports and upmarket resorts. On the tiny island of Palio Trikeri, we tied up with our nose right up to the taverna where the owner and waitress treated us as long-lost family with starters and desserts on the house.



Across the water, in the tiny port, we stayed for several days, swimming, relaxing and drinking ouzo with the locals. Again they recognised us and we feasted on the specialty- of- the- house, a freshly- caught monster lobster with spaghetti. In the evenings, we strolled through the village in darkness, to be greeted by soft “kalispera,s” (good evening) from the locals sitting out in the soft night air. These are among the most charming places we have visited- a few foreign yachts stop in but mainly Greeks in-the-know.

In total contrast, Skiathos is a bustling tourist-mecca with mega-yachts, charter flotillas and techno disco till 0500 every night (we were anchored outside it!). But fun, good restaurants, swimming of the rocks right in town, and “power shopping” for jewellery , summer fashions and their unique paintings on wood. Here it’s all business. Here, too, Lene & Jan got a taste of the working side of yachting. Ordered off the quay by bossy flotilla managers, we were forced to anchor out, then to be woken at 0300 a.m. in strong gusts which had moved us dangerously near to a large, empty fishing boat which we tied on to to avoid being smashed into it. In the morning, the owners rowed out, threatened to call the police, and rowed in again, leaving us caught on their chain, oblivious to our safety issues. Jan got a lot of exercise rowing us all back & forth and got to know the local Johnson dealer well until we finally got our outboard back from repair. In general though, we have found them helpful, generous and humourous. We saw the movie again (Mamma Mia filmed here), took the boat to the dazzling Lalaria Beach, and ate long lunches of fried zucchini with tadziki and garlic dip, crispy small fried fish and, of course, grandma’s meatballs! On to Skopelos in Part 2!