



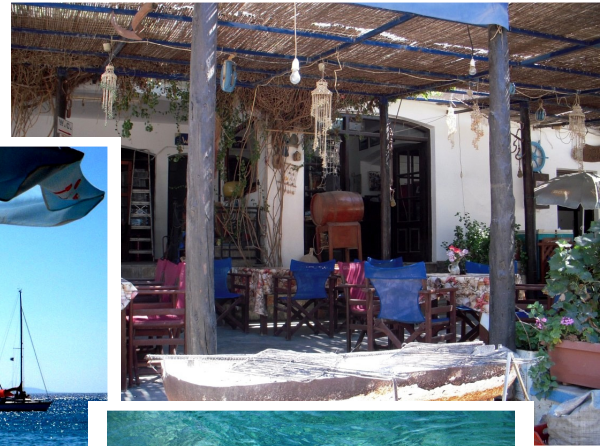
At Last ...Bound for.... Kalymnos, Pserimos, Tilos, & Rhodes!

A good trip back, a wonderful day in “La Serenissima” and another week putting the finishing touches to repairs. Finally 08 Sept...we are back in business again and bound for **Kalymnos** on wind-still waters you could walk on...100 years ago almost all the islanders were involved in the sponge-diving industry...risking their lives, away for 6 months at a time in open boats. I visit the crumbling mansion of Nikolas Vouvalis,,,(the “Onassis of sponges”) a man of great wealth and a huge benefactor to all of Greece, having the world monopoly on sponges . He built roads,schools,hospitals and gave away 600 free meals a day to the island’s poor. Each year he entertained the Queen of England at his summer mansion, one of 30 of his mansions on the island The 150 yr.old silverware still gleams as new- the quality such that it has never needed to be polished.



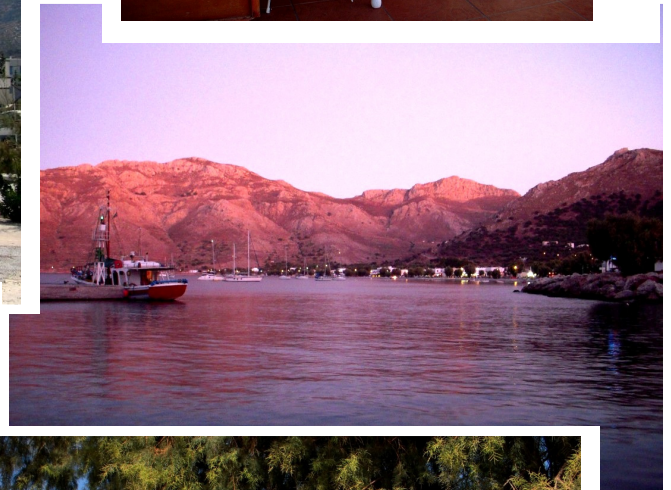
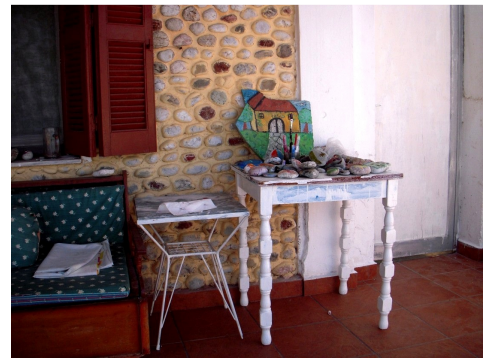
Crunchy feta with honey and sesame.

We are rocked by 5 dynamite explosions-Kalymnians favourite way to celebrate, usually outside a church.15 yrs. ago so fierce was the competition between two churches atop each end of the bay that 10 celebrants were blown to bits and half the hillside collapsed. They still enjoy a good explosion. Bought a beautiful little bronze sculpture of an old diver in the lovely gallery of the local sculptor whose graceful and moving statues adorn the waterfront and quiet squares. Today, once again some of the highest quality sponges in the world are found here in these islands.



Pserimos

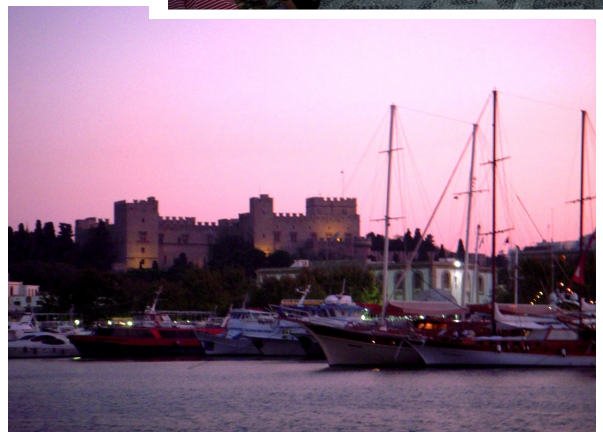
A tiny island with fabulous sand beach. 400 day trippers appear, swim, then disappear, peaceful again. We ride gently at anchor and swim from the boat in azure waters. To our surprise, a monk wades out fully-clothed in long, black garb and swims joyously for an hour. Heavenly day followed by hellish night of heavy swells..not so much a rocking to sleep, more a fling you out of the bunk type. Fend off an English boat anchored too close while the crew are ashore...scary .



Gorgeous **Tilos**- a total surprise-serene, spotless, blinding white streets, apricot and fuschia bourgainvillia, a lovely little harbour for just 10 boats.



A beautiful day out by scooter to the tiny capital, Mega Horio, nestled beneath the mountain, visit 2 artists's homes, admire the complex pebbled floor of the church courtyard and drive high along the cliff to the tiny monastery (crowded with Russians who stuff notes with their wishes under the icon), and buy their famous thyme honey from a patient, twinkley-eyed monk.



Finally to Rhodes and a rendez-vous (finally after 3 years) with Flemming & Lena (Lene's brother and wife) who enjoy Greece every bit as much as we do, and joined us for a good gyros dinner in the old bazaar! It was really super to see you at last!