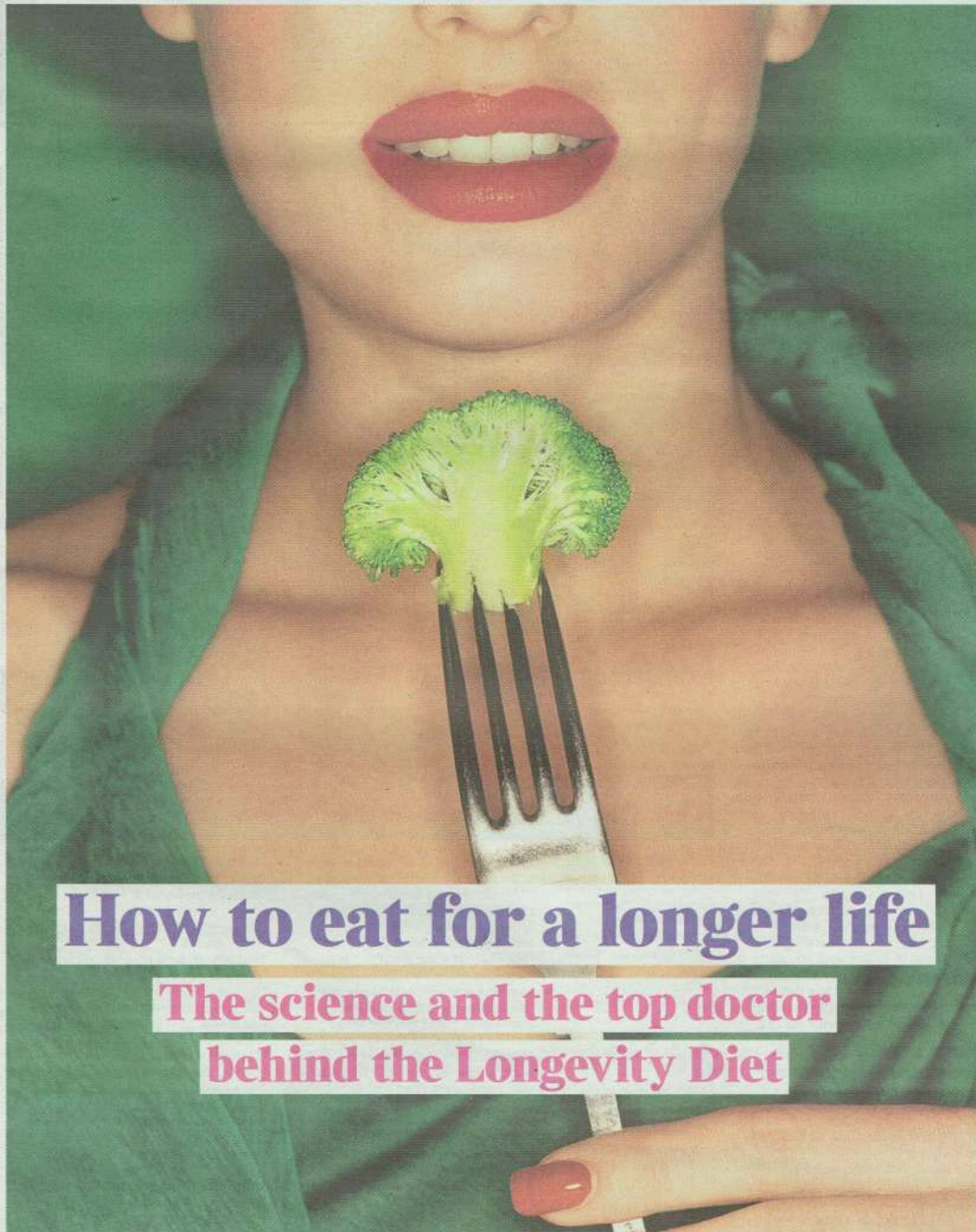




**Teens and dating** What parents should know  
**Plus** Get skipping — it's the new spinning

# Weekend

Travel  
Starts on  
page 25



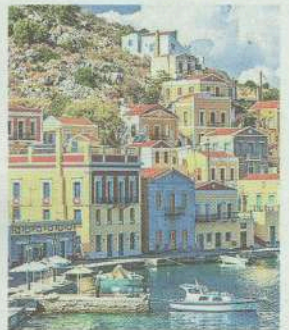
## How to eat for a longer life

The science and the top doctor  
behind the Longevity Diet

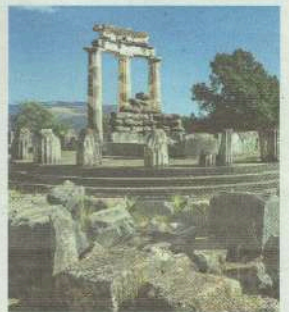
50 best holidays  
in Greece



Where to go  
island-hopping



Chic new hotels  
and luxury villas



Explore the sites  
of ancient Greece

# Travel

Page 32

'As dawn swallows the night, painting the sky pale orange, we head off to spot leopards'

Louise Roddon enjoys an adventure in Sri Lanka

GETTY IMAGES



2 A church in Oia, Santorini

## 50 best holidays in Greece

From chic hotels in Corfu to cycling breaks in Rhodes and ancient sites on the mainland, James Ellis knows where to go

### Best for families

#### 1 Family activities in the Peloponnese

Those with teenagers looking to let off steam should head to the Peloponnese for a family activity holiday, including white-water rafting on the Lousios River, sea kayaking around Kalamata and gorge walking through deep ravines. There's a free day to pack in a bit of history too, from the ancient stadiums at Olympia and Nemea, through learning about the fearsome warriors of Sparta. Accommodation is in three-star hotels in the towns of Tripoli and Nafplio.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £637pp (01273 823700, [responsibletravel.com](http://responsibletravel.com)), including activities. Flights to Kalamata cost from £74.98 return ([easyjet.com](http://easyjet.com))

#### 2 Island-hopping in the Cyclades

Give the children a first taste of Greek island-hopping with this superb nine-night family holiday covering Athens, Santorini and Mykonos. Accommodation is in typical whitewashed hotels on the two islands and four-star hotels in Athens, while additional activities can include trips on traditional fishing boats, with the chance to stop-off at remote, hidden coves and swims in hot springs.

**Details** Nine nights' B&B costs from £2,095 an adult, with children under 18 paying half-price. The price includes three dinners, some sightseeing and flights (0800 5335619, [trafalgar.com](http://trafalgar.com))



3 Ekies All Senses Resort, Halkidiki

#### 3 Kid-friendly Halkidiki

Get a traditional hotel-resort holiday with a touch of barefoot boho-chic styling at the lush Ekies All Senses Resort on secluded Vourvourou Bay on the leafy Sithonia peninsula.

The family suites feature rainfall showers, Nespresso machines and iPod docks. Children's offerings include everything from English-speaking babysitters to a kids' club, playgrounds and treehouses. There are five restaurants and an expansive spa.

**Details** B&B family suites (sleeping four) cost from £322 a night; certain dates have 20 per cent off seven-night stays ([i-escape.com](http://i-escape.com)). Thessaloniki flights cost from £116 ([ryanair.com](http://ryanair.com)) ▶

## 26 Travel



6 On the beach at Sani Resort, Halkidiki

## 4 Young archaeologists in the Peloponnese

Set against the rugged mountains of the south Peloponnese, the Westin Costa Navarino is already one of Greece's most family-friendly hotels thanks to SandCastle, an activity hub for kids aged 4 to 12. Activities include wakeboarding, go-karting, diving, sailing and cycling. This year they have added a Young Archaeologists programme that offers children the opportunity to discover the region's ancient Greek history. Airy family suites can sleep up to six people. **Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £4,299 for a family of four, including flights (01306 747008, kuoni.co.uk)

## 5 All-inclusive on the Peloponnese

The family-friendly Greek chain Grecotel is refurbishing its Lakopetra Beach hotel on the Peloponnese for 2018. In April the hotel will reopen as Casa Marron, a new all-inclusive family resort with all-day restaurants, earth-toned suites and a range of sports facilities, set on a 20-acre beachfront property backed by pines and olive trees. **Details** All-inclusive doubles start at £150 a night (00 30 269 305 1713, grecotel.com)

## 6 Teenagers' club in Halkidiki

Sani Resort in Halkidiki, consisting of five hotels clustered around a marina, is a perennial family favourite. Much of this is down to its Mini Club and Babe Watch beach babysitting service that allows parents to take a refreshing

dip while the young ones are being looked after. The resort now also has a teenagers' club and activity centre and is working with Chelsea Football Club at its soccer school. Porto Sani is right by the marina in the centre of the resort.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £1,190pp, including flights (0161 492 1357, carrier.co.uk)

## 7 Stay at an aqua park

Grecotel's Riviera Olympia Resort on the Peloponnese has a new mythology-themed aqua park. The park will be one of the biggest in Greece when it fully opens (it partly opened last summer), with more than 20,000 sq m of adrenaline-pumping water slides, rides and aqua towers. The resort is home to three hotels, including the all-inclusive Olympia Oasis, which also offers football camps and 11 restaurants.

**Details** All-inclusive family bungalows start at £192 a night (00 30 269 305 1713, grecotel.com)

## 8 Top villas in Paxos

For a pair of families looking to go on holiday together Sea Breeze Villa, above the beach at Kioni Gouli on Paxos, is ideal. Featuring contemporary decor and a private pool, it is just steps from the beach and can sleep ten people in two interconnecting apartments, one with three bedrooms, the other with two. The beach has complimentary sunloungers and umbrellas, as well as a small café.

**Details** Seven nights' self-catering costs from £531pp, including flights and car hire (020 8459 0777, ionianislandholidays.com)

15 Shipwreck Beach, Zakynthos



## Best new hotels

## 9 Ikos Dassia, Corfu

Set over 89 acres of prime beachfront, Ikos Dassia will be the third property in the luxury brand Ikos's portfolio when it opens in May. The resort features contemporary rooms, suites and villas, and there are six restaurants, a private olive-fringed beach and dozens of activities, from cycling and yoga to Greek dancing. The innovative "Infinite Lifestyle" all-inclusive service includes a dine-out programme at local tavernas, as well as activities. And if you upgrade to the deluxe accommodation, you'll get free-flowing Taittinger champagne at no extra cost.

**Details** Seven nights' all-inclusive costs from £825pp, including flights (0161 492 1357, carrier.co.uk)

## 10 MarBella Nido Suite Hotel &amp; Villas, Corfu

Also opening in May, also on Corfu and also with a private beach, the MarBella Nido is a high-end, adults-only hotel in a pine forest outside the sleepy hamlet of Agios Ioannis Peristeron on the southeast coast. Communal areas have high ceilings, chequerboard floors and picture windows, and there are 70 chic rooms and suites with sea views. Suites also have private whirlpool tubs. **Details** B&B doubles from £135 a night (00 30 266 107 1123, marbellanido.gr)

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## 11 Canaves Oia Epitome, Santorini

The family-run Canaves group opened its first hotel in 1985, transforming a pair of caves into a luxury place to stay and simultaneously putting the sleepy fishing village of Oia on the path to becoming one of Greece's most prized destinations. In May Epitome will become the group's fourth hotel when it opens by the beach in the nearby village of Armeni.

Featuring 24 luxury villas with private plunge pools and butler service, it includes a bar/restaurant from which to enjoy Oia's famed sunsets. **Details** B&B doubles cost from £474.90 a night (00 30 228 607 1453, canaves.com)

## 12 Gennadi Grand Resort, Rhodes

Gennadi Beach on the southeast coast of Rhodes is one of the island's best stretches of sand and one of its least crowded. That may change when this new resort launches in May. To date there are only artists' impressions to go by, but the owner, Lindos Hotel Group, promises five-star hospitality with a minimal carbon footprint. This is thanks to innovations such as a water purifying

system and buildings with sloped green roofs that minimise reflection and are said to improve the surrounding microclimate. The hotel will offer 226 rooms, eight restaurants, three outdoor pools and a host of sports courts. **Details** B&B doubles from £223 a night (00 30 224 402 9200, gennadiresort.com)

## 13 Kensho Boutique Hotel, Mykonos

Opened last summer, Kensho's addition to the Mykonos hotel scene has been a huge success. Guests are lured by great views over Ormos Bay, a chic take on typical Cycladic architecture with 35 rooms, many with private pools or hot tubs. **Details** Three nights' B&B, including flights, costs from £1,278pp (expedia.com)

## 14 Abaton Island Resort & Spa, Crete

Overlooking Malia Bay, but far enough from the crowds that visit Crete's clubbing capital, this new resort is due to open in April. It takes its design influences from Greek antiquities and



9 Ikos Dassia hotel, Corfu

features 152 airy, contemporary suites alongside 71 private pools, five restaurants and a swathe of high-end amenities, including a helicopter landing pad, yacht hire and an ELEMIS spa. **Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £674pp, including flights (travelocity.com)

## 15 Lesante Blu, Zakynthos

Zakynthos — or Zante — has long had a reputation as a party island, but those preconceptions are changing thanks to a slew of chic, new hotels, including this offering outside the resort of Tragaki. Opened last year, it's an adults-only, all-suite affair offering contemporary rooms, restaurants and a spa. Make time to explore the island, including a trip to the marvellous Shipwreck Beach. **Details** Seven nights' half-board costs from £1,096pp, including flights (01293 832459, sovereign.com)

## 16 Euphoria Retreat, the Peloponnese

Mystras is a 13th-century Byzantine town and Unesco world heritage site in the Peloponnese. Set against a backdrop of mountains, citrus groves and a private forest is the new Euphoria Retreat — a destination spa that opens in May and blends ancient Greek and Chinese philosophies and treatments. The resort consists of 45 contemporary rooms, some with hot tubs or hammams, as well as a four-level spa with a 25m well at its heart. **Details** Seven nights' full board costs from £2,950pp, with flights and spa programme (020 8968 0501, thehealthyholidaycompany.co.uk)

## 17 Bella Mare Hotel, Corfu

Avlaki Beach, to the northeast of Corfu, is an almost perfect crescent-shaped stretch of sand backed by lush forests. Nestled along its shoreline is the Bella Mare Hotel, new to Simpson Travel for 2018. Set in tranquil gardens, it consists of rooms and suites set over three pastel-coloured houses. Each room

has simple, classic decor, as well as a kitchenette. There's also a pool and a restaurant, plus two good independent tavernas near by. **Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £982pp, including flights and car hire (020 8003 6557, simpsontravel.com)

## Best on a budget

### 18 Cephalonia for less

The Karteri Apartments, overlooking the pretty Venetian harbour of Fiskardo, are a great way to take in the island that was made famous in *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* without paying a fortune. The small complex has seven apartments with a colourful rustic vibe, as well as a small shared plunge pool and great views. The village beach is just two minutes away, as are shops and tavernas. **Details** Seven nights' room-only costs from £512pp, including flights (020 8459 0777, ionianislandholidays.com)

### 19 Symi on a shoestring

Tiny Symi is home to Greece's prettiest port. Lined with pastel-coloured neoclassical mansions built from the wealth of sponge and spice merchants in the 19th century, it is considered a national monument and is a favourite stopping place for Italian and French yacht owners. Bask in that laid-back charm for just over £400 for a week with a stay at the Opera House, a fine hotel in a traditional house on a slope that accentuates the views. **Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £433pp, including flights (020 8492 6868, olympicholidays.com)

### 20 Athens short break

A new direct service from Bristol to Athens opened in November thanks to Easyjet. Stay at the Divani Caravel Hotel, one of the city's best-known hotels, with grand views over the Acropolis or Lycabettus hill. Rooms have classic styling, there is a rooftop pool. **Details** Three nights' room-only costs from £269pp, including return flights (020 3499 5232, easyjet.com/holidays)

Continued next page



19 Symi, Greece

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## 28 Travel

### 21 Lovely Lefkada

Lefkada, an island on the northwest coast and connected to the mainland by a causeway, is often called the Caribbean of Greece owing to its white-sand beaches. The Porto Galini Seaside Resort & Spa is a four-star hotel backed by lush forest. It sits on its private stretch of beach with a sports centre offering tennis and sailing. Rooms have a simple elegance, with typically Ionian colour schemes, marble floors and balconies. **Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £493pp, including flights, private transfers and UK airport lounge access (020 8492 6868, olympicholidays.com)

### Best for activities

#### 22 Walk Aristotle's Trail

Combine history with walking and get a real feel for Olympiada, the birthplace of the philosopher Aristotle. The northern region of Macedonia offers quiet coastal towns, uncrowded beaches and beautiful walking on the Aristotle Trail through pine, fir and chestnut woodlands, as well as panoramic coastal paths. Stops can include Aristotle's birthplace at Stagira, as well as Ouranopoli, the area's capital

that offers (prearranged, men-only) access to the world heritage site of Mount Athos. Stays are in the family-owned Hotel Liotopi, a boutique hotel with great home-cooked food. **Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £945pp, including flights (01707 331133, www.ramblersholidays.co.uk)

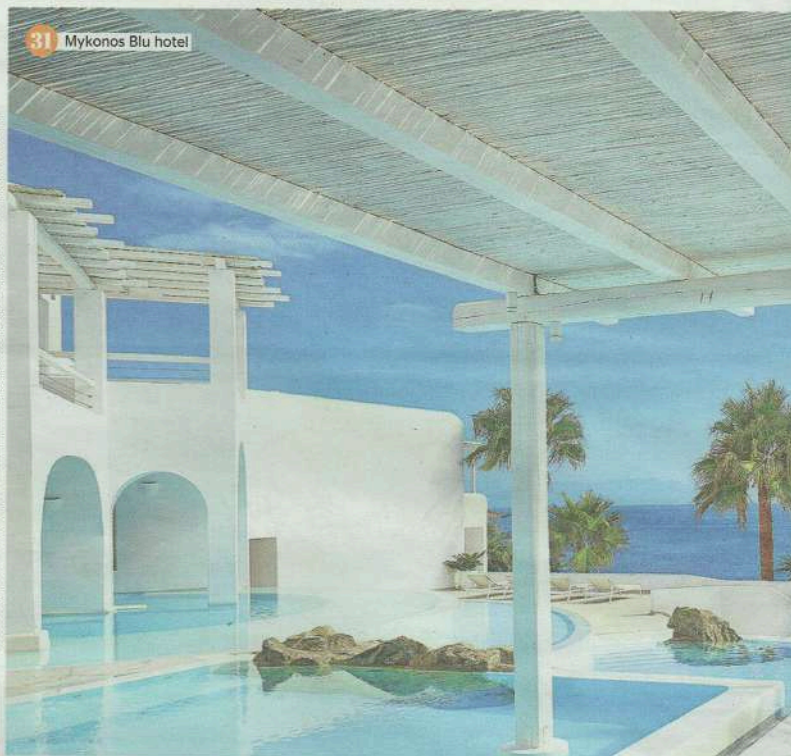
#### 23 Train for a triathlon in Sivota

Triathlon is said to be one of the fastest-growing sports in the world, and for those taking the plunge or looking to better themselves in the sport, the activity specialist Neilson is offering a training camp at its Retreat Beachclub in Sivota. The week-long September camp, in partnership with the triathlon specialist RnR, will feature tips from pros and coaches, as well as open-water swimming, cycling and running.

**Details** Seven nights' full board costs from £615pp, including flights (0330 0574699, neilson.co.uk)

#### 24 Undiscovered Andros

Andros, the northernmost of the Cyclades islands, is little visited by



31 Mykonos Blu hotel

tourists, despite being close to the Athens' port of Rafina. It's the kind of place where slow travel is the norm: life is uncomplicated and unspoilt, and there are fabulous walking trails. New for 2018 from Intravel is this six-night trip along restored *kalderimi* (cobble mule trails), past old olive presses and windmills.

**Details** Six nights' B&B costs from £720pp (01653 617000, intravel.co.uk)

#### 25 Walk Corfu

The Corfu Trail is a 200km (125-mile) waymarked north-to-south walking path that takes people away from the tourist hubs into the lesser-visited hinterlands of one of Greece's best-known islands. Along the way it passes through more than 100 traditional villages, ancient manor houses and Byzantine monasteries.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £550, including flights (01962 302085, walksworldwide.com)

#### 26 Swim Milos

Milos in the Cyclades is a stunning island with craggy landscapes. See it by swimming around the coast to discover caves, tunnels and arches, with more challenging swims to other islands. A SwimTrek yacht follows guests so there is somewhere to rest. Stay at Soutlana Rooms, which has a pool.

**Details** Six nights' half-board costs from £995pp (01273 739713, swimtrek.com). Fly to Athens, then take the ferry from Piraeus, which costs from €114pp (tickets.seajets.gr)

#### 27 Train in Crete

Crete's interior is a rugged paradise of towering mountains and deep, leafy ravines — an amazing natural place to train. Head to the hills to find the Milia Mountain Retreat, which has 13 restored rooms and cottages in a 17th-century village, all with a rustic vibe. The Wildfitness programme includes four outdoor bootcamps, as well as kettlebell

sessions, boxing, yoga, swims to offshore islands, treks, cooking classes and more.

**Details** Seven nights' full board costs from £3,540pp, including flights (020 3397 8891, healthandfitnesstravel.com)

#### 28 Nordic in Halkidiki

Combine luxury accommodation with a high-end spa and a bunch of soft activity options and you get the Miraggio Thermal Spa Resort on the very tip of Halkidiki's Kassandra peninsula. Home to a thalassotherapy centre with a thermal spa, Miraggio is introducing a Nordic walking programme this year. It will take in a six-hour walk of Enepeas canyon or Mavrolongos gorge in the foothills of Greece's highest mountain, Mount Olympus.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £1,226pp, including flights (01204 824516, destinology.co.uk)

#### 29 Hang gliding in northern Greece

Aristi Mountain Resort & Villas is a luxury lodge set in northern Greece's Vikos-Aoos national park, home to the dramatic Vikos Gorge. New for 2018 is the Adventure/Zagori package, with kayaking in the Voidomatis River, canyoning, hang gliding and trips to Gamila mountain and Drakolimni lake.

**Details** Three nights' full board costs from £609pp, including activities (00 30 265 304 1330, aristi.eu/en)

#### 30 Cycling in Rhodes

Discover a different side to the largest of the Dodecanese islands with a seven-night cycling holiday from Macs Adventure. Starting from Rhodes airport and staying in two-star guesthouses in Rhodes Town and the quaint village of Kalavarda, the self-guided trip takes in fishing villages, pine forests and sights such as the Crusader fortress in Rhodes Town and the Valley of the Butterflies. Guests can take their own bikes or hire

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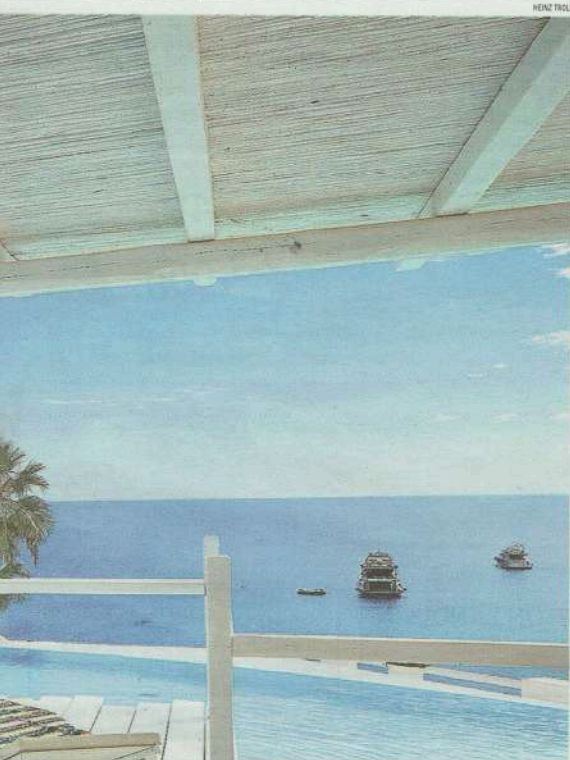
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**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £625pp (0141 5303466, macsadventure.com)

**31 Hiking in Mykonos**

Stay at Mykonos Blu, a cool hotel on the popular party island of Mykonos and you can go on some very pleasant, gentle walks along the coast, with an excellent base to return to at the end of each day's exploration. The 97 bungalows are all whitewashed walls, floor to ceiling windows and smart furnishings. There are also eight suites and six villas.  
**Details** A week's B&B stay for two in May is from £2,520 (mykonosblu.com)

**Best villas**

**32 Corfu for couples**

It's not often that you find self-catering properties for two, so the superb Rou Villa in Corfu, nestled in a forest just inland and with elevated sea views, is a great find. It marries contemporary style with original features such as wooden ceilings. The bedroom has an en suite wet room and three sets of French windows that open on to a private terrace. Outside is a spacious garden and dining area, including a pool. Agni and Aviatiki beaches are 15 minutes away.  
**Details** Seven nights' self-catering costs from £3,500 for two (020 3859 7763, avenueproperty.com)

**33 Luxury Mykonos**

Mykonos can be ridiculously expensive at the best of times. Bagging a top-class villa such as Villa Cyclos, with its own pool and private beach, helps to mitigate that cost. Sleeping up to ten people in six bedrooms, it has an airy feel with a modern take on traditional decor. With the money saved, the owners can organise extra-luxury touches such as catamaran cruises to the islands of Rhenea and Delos.  
**Details** One night's self-catering costs from £1,024 for ten people (lecollectionist.com)

**34 Stay in Skiathos**

Aside from being the filming location for *Mamma Mia!*, Skiathos is renowned for its nightlife and fabulous beaches. Families can bag their own stretch of sand by booking Villa Aphroditi, a three-bedroom property with an outdoor hot tub overlooking a private beach. Interiors offer a beguiling mix of contemporary and traditional decor.  
**Details** Seven nights' self-catering costs from £626pp, based on six sharing, including flights and car hire (020 8459 0777, lonianislandholidays.com)

**35 House in Pelion**

Pelion in central Greece is where the wooded slopes of the region's eponymous mountain reach pebble and golden sandy beaches. Right where the foothills meet the sea is the village of Kato Gatztea, home to Gatztea Villas, two fabulously stylish seafront holiday homes. One offers sea views, the other mountain vistas; both have three bedrooms and an outdoor pool.  
**Details** Seven nights' self-catering costs from £1,000pp, based on four sharing, including flights and car hire (020 3875 0351, fairlightjones.com)

**36 Super Skopelos**

Designed by the famed French architect Marc Held, the seven-bedroom Maistros outside the village of Glossa is the kind of holiday home that's hard to drag yourself away from, thanks to stunning interiors, sea views, private beach access and a heated pool. Breakfast is included.  
**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £5,263 for 14 people (020 7377 8518, thethinkingtraveller.com). Return flights to neighbouring Skiathos cost from £130 (thomascookairlines.com)

**37 Explore Paros**

Le Collectionist is a French start-up company that offers luxury villas, concierge service and the chance to take part in unique local experiences. On the island of Paros is Villa Aela, a seven-

bedroom property with stunning views over the surrounding hills, minimalist design and a private pool. The concierge can organise trips to see Paros's famed underground marble quarries.

**Details** Seven nights' self-catering costs from £11,693 for 14 people (00 33 1 73 03 02 02, lecollectionist.com)

**Best for culture**

**38 Ancient Greece**

This escorted tour from Cosmos is a perfect introduction to Greece's history. Starting in Athens, it takes in the Acropolis, the theatre of Epidaurus and the famed warrior history of Sparta, as well as the Byzantine citadel at Mystra and the rock monasteries of Meteora.

**Details** Nine nights' B&B costs from £1,186pp, including three evening meals, return flights and a VIP home pick-up service (0800 6681365, cosmos.co.uk)

**39 Fly-drive Thessaloniki**

New for 2018 with Real Holidays is the



Simonopetra Monastery, Mount Athos

chance to fly-drive from Thessaloniki to Athens. Stops along the way include Vergina, home to the undisturbed tomb of Philip of Macedon and known as the Greek Tutankhamun, the monasteries of Meteora and the ruins of Delphi. Stays are in mid-range hotels on the way, such as the Chandris in Thessaloniki and Dellas Boutique Hotel in Meteora.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £875pp, including flights and car hire (020 7359 3938, realholidays.co.uk)

**40 Paint in Crete**

Crete and Santorini have great natural beauty. Capture some of that on canvas with this new holiday featuring expert tuition from the artist Susanna Bailey. Spending four nights on Crete and two on Santorini, the trip combines age-old trails with time at the easel at locations such as the Samaria Gorge, the Palace of Knossos and Santorini's iconic caldera.  
**Details** Five nights' full board costs from

**Continued next page**

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41 Kalamaki Beach, Corfu

£2,195pp, including return flights and tuition (01453 823328, authenticadventures.co.uk)

**41 Historic Greece**

Follow the sandal-clad footsteps of the ancients with this relaxed seven-day, small-group holiday from Responsible Travel. Starting in Athens, it takes in key sights, including the Acropolis, Delphi and Olympia, as well as Epidaurus and ancient Tegea. Accommodation is in three-star hotels or apartments.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £1,018pp, not including flights to Athens (01273 823700, responsibletravel.com)

**42 The ruins of Sparta**

The Peloponnese is home to some of Greece's best ancient history, from tales of Sparta warriors to the birthplace of the Olympics to the fortified citadel of Mycenae. This ten-night itinerary from Scott Dunn starts and ends in Athens and includes trips to the Acropolis, the medieval town of Monemvasia and the ruins of ancient Sparta. Stay in Villa Vager and the Kinsterna Hotel.

**Details** Ten nights' B&B costs from £2,995pp, including flights, car hire and excursions (020 3811 5654, scottdunn.com)

**43 Athens and the beach**

Lagonissi, a short hop from Athens airport and still only 45 minutes from sights such as the Acropolis, is a great place to stay — with its fabulous beaches — once you've taken in the sights in the capital. Grand Resort Lagonissi, set on a 72-acre peninsula offers luxurious accommodation and a high-end spa.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from £260 a night (lagonissiresort.gr)

**44 Explore Pieria**

Combine a visit to Greece's hip second capital, Thessaloniki, with a trip to the relatively unknown region of Pieria. Based in the polished Cavo Olympo Luxury Hotel right on the Aegean and with a backdrop of Mount Olympus, explore this fascinating region by car, from the peaks of the 2,918m mountain to ancient archaeological sites.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £832pp, including flights and car hire (020 8758 4758, sunvil.co.uk); Sunvil also offers trips to see the many cultural sights in Corfu



48 A lammergeier, or bearded vulture, in Crete

**45 Culture in Evia**

Greece's second largest island, Evia, feels wonderfully remote. Staying at the Karystion, a traditional hotel on the beach at Karistos, this break from Adagio Holidays includes a Greek cookery lesson, a visit to a honey producer and a trip to a winery tour. Culture vultures will enjoy visits to the village of Old Styra, home to the "dragon's house" (megalithic buildings from the 7th century BC) and a Roman aqueduct.

**Details** Seven nights' half-board costs from £980pp, including flights and excursions (01707 386700, adagio.co.uk)

**46 Athens toy museum**

The brilliant new Benaki toy museum opened in late October in the beachside suburb of Paleo Falirro and includes toys, books and clothing from around the world. A short bus ride away in the city centre's main entertainment hub, Plaka, is the Hermes Hotel, with 45 rooms with

Acropolis-view terraces.

**Details** B&B doubles cost from £85 a night (i-escape.com). Flights start at £138 return (easyjet.com)

**Best of the rest**

**47 Foodie Zakynthos**

Head to the Ionian island of Zakynthos on this foodie holiday from GoLearnTo that includes an olive oil factory tour, a visit to a farm, wine-tasting and a visit to a traditional confectionery maker.

**Details** Seven nights' half-board costs from £1,323pp (0845 6250445, golearnto.com). Flights to Zante start at £83 return (easyjet.com)

**48 Wildlife in Crete**

Crete has some of Greece's most spectacular wildlife and flora (there are 180 endemic plants and large raptors such as the lammergeier are common in the mountains). This expert-led trip beginning in Chania attempts to take in the best of it.

**Details** Seven nights' full-board costs from £1,395pp, including flights (01305 267994, naturalist.co.uk)

**49 Go island-hopping**

This nine-night cruise on a luxurious yacht, the Harmony G, visits serene Kea, mystical Delos, Mykonos, Santorini, Crete, mountainous Kythira and Hydra.

**Details** Nine nights' B&B costs from £2,640pp, including three lunches, four dinners and activities, but not flights to Athens (01670 785085, artisantravel.co.uk)

**50 Get a Cretan upgrade**

Daios Cove is one of Crete's most elegant hotels, with a hillside setting by a tranquil bay. It offers super-chic rooms, suites and villas as well as a water sports/dive centre. New for 2018 are complimentary upgrades to the Residents Club for bookings outside of the period from July 8 to August 28, with benefits including all meals in all restaurants and selected drinks.

**Details** Seven nights' all-inclusive in a sea-view suite with a private pool costs from £2,355pp, including flights (01244 355527, inspiringtravelcompany.co.uk)

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