



Greece!

A Memory in Words, Photos and Videos of Our trip to Athens, Siros and Santorini

June 25 – July 5, 2010

Albert

by Albert Fried-Cassorla

Last updated 7-22-10. Your thoughts?




Send them to






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I am updating this web site as we move along! Hope you enjoy the journey and that these photos make you want to make the trip yourself!

Youtube.com Videos of our Trip to Greece

If you'd like to see some short and I hope interesting videos about our journey, then just click on the links!

A photo to pique your curiosity!	Number Title and Subject:	Length:
	<u>1. Greece 1 - Athens 1 Parthenon, Temple of Dionysus, and The Erechtheon</u> - This video introduces you to the Acropolis and the Parthenon, as we saw it and as perhaps you will - ascending and seeing various sites and temples along the way.	5:30
	<u>2. Greece - 2- Athens 2 - Greek Dancers in Athens, the National Archeology Museum and dinner at Strofi Restaurant</u> - Here you will see Greek traditional dancing in Athens on The Plaka (main tourist district), as well as many fascinating statues from the National Archeology Museum. Finally, here are some lovely rooftop views from the Strofi Restaurant, overlooking the Acropolis!	5:09
	<u>3. Greece 3 Athens - 3 Ferry Ride to Siros</u> - This an atmospheric video portrait o sights and sounds as we moved along the Aegean between Piraeus (the port of Athens) and the island of Siros.	3:22

	4. Greece - 4 - Siros - Here are views of the small but charming island of Siros (also spelled Syros).	2:31
	5. Greece - 5- Ferry from Siros to Islands - Moving from Siros to Santorini, we took a long ferry ride and saw many more sights and sounds. My favorite harbor view of an island was of Naxos. Enjoy!	4:12
	6. Greece- 6 - Santorini 1 - Kamari and the beautiful hilltop town of Oia - Here you will see the beach at Kamari but more importantly, the charming town of Oia. Oia is the gem of Santorini, the white village atop a beautiful volcanic mountainside and overlooking two great views of the Aegean.	3:29
	7. Greece - 7 - Santorini 2 - Our enchanting Sunset Cruise - This was a superb cruise! The sunset was glorious and extended, but made more so by the sheer volcanic painted cliffs, the cheerful Greek people aboard, the ships and boats passing, the magnificent rocks and more!	6:20
	8. Greece - 8 - Santorini - 3 Santos, Fira and farewell - Views of the mountaintop at Santos, then scenes of the capital of Santorini, Fira (also called Thira), and flight scenes of landing in Philadelphia. Farewell to a great journey!	3:01

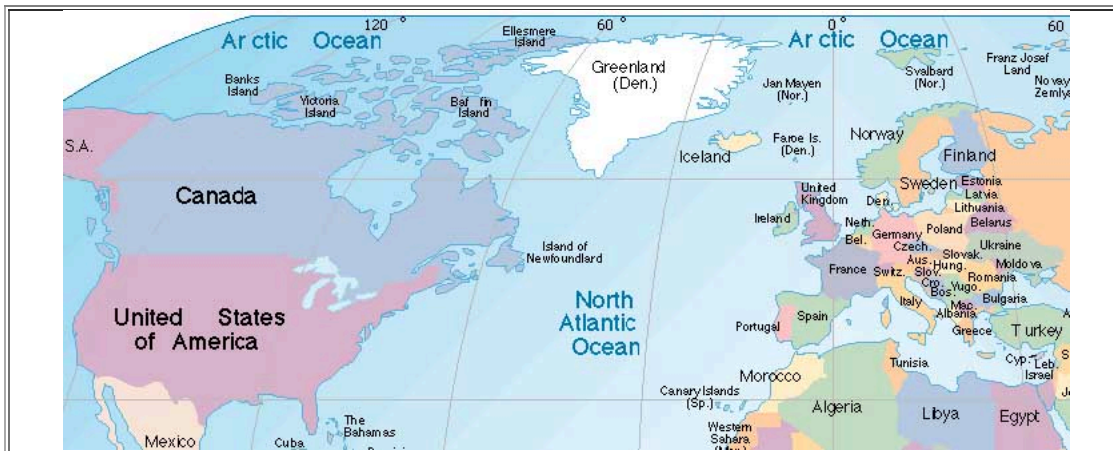
Greece Trip Diary

Hello, or as the Greeks say: Kali mera! This is an account of a marvelous journey we took to Greece. My hope is that you'll enjoy it and plan your own!

Some of our friends and acquaintances understandably say, "Greece? Isn't there great political turmoil there? How was it?"

In fact, we saw only one protest demonstration - that near at the port of Siros. One inconvenience we experienced was the cancellation of a ferry ride due to a strike. As a result, we shifted plans and spent a full day on a slow ferry from Siros to Santorini. Otherwise, no turmoil diminished our journey. The Greeks with whom I spoke feel convinced that they need to protest to ensure a future for their children. But I did not get into political discussions generally.

USA to Greece -- 5,000 miles in 12 hours!



The flight was easy - talk, eat, grab a book, watch a movie, snooze, and you're there!

Where we traveled in Greece



We landed in Athens and spent 3 days there. Then we went by ferry from the port of Athens, Piraeus (Le Pirée here) to Syros, shown southwest of Athens. Next we took a ferry to Santorini (north of Crete). This was followed by a flight from Santorini to Athens, and then from Athens directly back to Philly.

Planning the Trip

We had planned our journey to Greece with our friends Mike and Margie nearly 8 months before we actually went.

Our trip was worth the planning and care... we also had tremendous help from our friend and Greek teacher, Karen. We wanted to see Athens for sure, but kept it to two days there on account of the what we were told would be the fierce late June heat. Actually, it was more bearable in Athens than elsewhere. Next, we wanted to go to Santorini, because we'd heard how beautiful it was -- a true locale for the classic Greek island experience. Finally, we placed the island of Siros on our itinerary thanks to the suggestion of our friend Karen, who has lived there.

Because we wanted to see Athens and the islands, we eliminated some destinations that would have been great:

1. **Kastoria**, in northern Greece or Macedonia - This is where my mother's side of the family came from -- Camhi's and Eli's, Sephardic Jews of Kastoria. Most of the Jews who were my ancestors and who did not emigrate to the US were murdered by the Nazis at Treblinka. None of us survivors ever received a report or compensation from the German government... I would not know how to begin researching this. In any case, I do hear there are some remaining Jews up there. My Mom's maiden name was Rebecca Camhi, and curiously, there is a Rebecca Camhi Gallery in Athens, a modern art museum. We had hoped to meet the younger Rebecca Camhi, and our friend Karen actually had an overseas pre-trip conversation with her in which she'd expressed a desire to meet us. But once in Athens we could not reach her for some reason. Oh well, maybe next trip!
2. **Mt. Olympus** - home of the original Olympic Games
3. **Delphi** - home of the famous Oracle

As I write this, we are in the midst of the vacation, on an island called Siros. But back to the beginning!

Friday, June 25, 2010 – Pre-flight problems

Actually, our trip began inauspiciously with a 2 hour delay while we were on the plane at the airport. The plane was without electricity and A/C for that time. The pilot told us there was a problems with the airport's air, etc. Not to bore you further with such details, it's enough to say we did finally get off the ground and instead of spending 9 hours 40 minutes on the plane, we spent more like 11 or 12 hours on it due to our late start. We traveled 5001 miles - directly! By contrast, a flight from Philly to London is 3,548 miles for you distance connoisseurs. All else about the flight was fine, though! We saw the movie "Dear John," based on a Nicholas Sparks movie – just OK; and I enjoyed reading **Zorba the Greek** by Nikos Kazantzakis, a wonderful novel about an earthy, in-touch Greek soul, who strikes up a friendship and business relationship with the bookish narrator.

Saturday, June 26th – Aerotel Parthenon, and Visiting The Parthenon

That was our hotel in Athens, a comfortable place with great breakfast spreads right in the Plaka (commercial district) and Acropolis area. I spent more than half of my waking hours on Saturday sleeping, though. However, we did see the magnificent Parthenon and other sites on the hill on which it's situated, the Acropolis. The Aerotel Parthenon Hotel cost us just 75 Euros a night and was perfect for sight-seeing.

A friend of our friend Karen. Thasis, picked us up at the airport on schedule.

The heat was not as bad as we'd expected, though the sun light was intense and hard to take full-on. *The Parthenon itself was simply amazing and beautiful!* But I will delay telling you more until I cover the sites on the way up to it.



The Parthenon!

This is how you see it once you have ascended the hill called the Acropolis. This is a temple originally built to honor the Greek goddess Athena, for whom you cannot enter the interior area. The friezes and the pediment statues have been removed and are either in the New Acropolis Museum or in the British Museum.

About the Parthenon

The Parthenon is the main tourist attraction in Greece. It was built during the Classical period of Greek history, also known as the Age of Pericles. In about 490 BC, an earlier version of the Parthenon was under construction when it was sacked by Persian invaders. So even in its beginnings, it was under siege.

I have struggled to figure out what I love so much about this building.... It's not the religion it represents, though I find that very interesting. Nor is it "beautiful" in the sense that say, a marvelous statue is. It is beautiful in another sense, though - in impressiveness... in surviving so many varied depredations... in its high altitude... in what it represents about Athenian achievements and therefore mankind in so many fields. Even if I cannot figure out its allure, I know that it is great!

Here is some more background information about this building.... It was constructed between 447 and 432 BC. This was at the acme of Athenian civilization. Destructive later wars had not yet occurred, such as the Peloponnesian War. The architect responsible for most of the design was named Iktinos. Several sculptors were also involved. Pheidias designed the main interior sculpture of Athena, dedicated in 438 BC, which does not exist today. Some say he was also involved with other sculptures of this temple, though that is not certain.

The temple had to be pretty wide to house the enormous statue of Athena that would reside inside it. I have found learned discussions of the building of the Parthenon to be somewhat confusing in their detail, but I have been able to extract these ideas:

- The columns taper so as to seem more straight to the eye.
- The columns are also wider in the middle than at the bottom, to further induce an optical illusion (though I do not comprehend this)
- The columns are about 34' high

- The temple rises in the middle -- in other words, it does not lie flat but has a subtle curvature, adding to the height of its peak
- Multiple Interior sets of columns exist - some of these have been destroyed. Even in diagrams, it's a bit challenging to figure out the layout of the interior.



The Parthenon, East Pediment - farthest away when you enter the area.



Statue on the East Pediment - close-up. Sorry about the poor quality. No telephoto lens. This is a reclining god with horse-heads on the left.



Here is a statue of Athena that is a reconstruction of the original, which was at the center of the Parthenon. This one is in Tennessee. I believe this statue was reconstructed based on a description given by the ancient historian Pausanias.

Theater of Dionysus

On the way up we saw the Theater of Dionysus, the oldest theater in the world, I believe. I teach my students about it at the beginning of each year of my theater course. So it was a treat to see first-hand where it all began. The lower area of the theater showed the backdrop rocks, known as the *skene*. This is the origin of the words scene, by the way.



Theater of Dionysus - Orchestra section

This semicircular area of the theater is known as the Orchestra, and this is where our modern "orchestra seating" term comes from. It is where the actors and chi=orus performed. Sophocles, Aristophanes and other renowned ancient playwrights.





Molded seats with "comfy backs," if you like stone - yet truly first class seating from 2,500 years ago for high priests of the polytheistic Greek religion



At the Theater of Dionysus -- frieze at the skene or backdrop.



At the Theater of Dionysus -- CLOSE-UP of frieze at the skene or backdrop.

The Erechtheion - A temple on the Acropolis

This is, in my opinion, a fabulous monument or temple. Not everyone may think so... it features several versions, nearly identical, of a woman who looks out on Athens. So it is so timeless -- both enduring and endearing. I was surprised to find out I was looking at replicas placed in the monument. Also, the statues, called caryatids, or supporting figures, are much smaller than I thought they'd be. No problem with that either, just surprising. The "actuals" are in the New Museum of the Acropolis.

The nearby *Temple of Nike Athena* was obscured by scaffolding and basically not available or visible.

A *Temple of Asclepius*, was very interesting... though basically a pile of rubble and fragments. This was a cult and perhaps a religion unto itself and was abolished in 400. It was based on worship of a physician-god. The reason I find it interesting is that it is one more religion thrown by the wayside by an Emperor, like so much trash... basic moderns.



The Erechtheon-- This temple is to the north of the Parthenon, also on the Acropolis



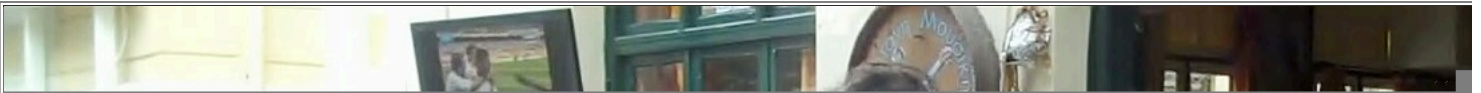
Another view of the Goddesses of the Erechtheon - I had thought they'd be about 780 feet tall. They're on 6' tall though these are replicas, they look eternal and impressive. The originals are in the New Acropolis Museum.



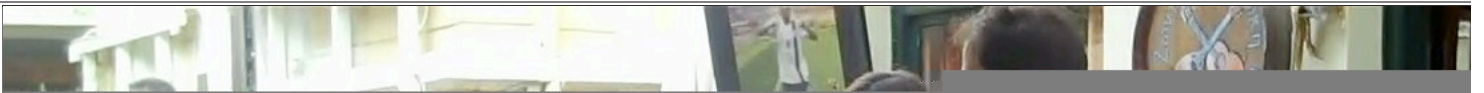
The Propylae -- This is a gateway to the temples of the Acropolis. Before you see the Parthenon, you pass must through this Acropolis. I love the way this gateway frames the sky, don't you? This building is not a temple in itself, but did house a picture gallery on its left side at or was once painted sky blue with golden stars. The columns you see here are the inner columns and are in Ionic style - being fluted (with ridges) and called volutes. These columns had an 8 to 12 proportion of height vs. width. They were believed by ancient architects to be more feminine than the Doric columns, which are stouter and have a simple rounded capital. I have much of this information from a wonderful book on tape series I am enjoying, presented by Prof. Jeremy McInerney of the University of Pennsylvania, from the Great Courses series produced by The Teaching Company. High

On the Plaka - a shopping and tourist area area close to the Parthenon





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On the Plaka here. Bougainvillea in bloom. To the right, off camera is the hill of the Acropolis and the Parthenon.

A dachsund of Athens!

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Parthenon from Strofi restaurant-

Sunday, June 27th – The New Acropolis Museum

Today, we saw this magnificent new museum, which I believe opened in 2008. Within it are extant friezes and pediment fragments from the Parthenon, the Temple of Zeus Nike, and other Acropolis sites.

The Parthenon marbles themselves were magnificent in their scale and grandeur! I especially liked the gigantic figures of gods from the pediments, even though they are severely damaged. The two main subjects of those pediments are, as I recall: Poseidon and Athena; and Zeus and Hera. Poseidon and Hera were said to have fought for control of Athens.

I yearned for more background stories on these mythical characters, whom I find so entertaining. In fact I bought a magnificently illustrated book called *Greek Mythology - Gods & heroes - The Trojan War - the Odyssey* by Katerina Servi, published in Ekdotike Athenon S.A. publishers, based in Athens in 2008, available on Amazon.com for \$9. at http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Greek+mythology+by+Katerina+Servi

It has so much in terms of photography to show presentations of these gods and their stories that it's a big improvement over the Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* and Bullfinch's *Mythology* I'd read many years earlier. In fact, I am still reading this new sumptuous book, which is sort of like nibbling on a big baklavah!

A video on the third floor of the New Museum of the Acropolis showed animations of Venetians lobbing exploding cannonballs into the Pantheon, early Christians hacking away at the statues and Moslems building a mosque within and above it; and Lord Elgin slicing statues in half. Somehow, the fact that the Parthenon, this "grand old lady," has survived unto our current era – however damaged – adds to its luster and even its beauty.

The New Museum left us a bit confused. Tour guides and staff were hard to find. Books for sale were totally inadequate. We wondered:

1. *What parts of the friezes were missing?* Some missing pieces were left blank with a hole or white space. Others had new plaster finishing up part of a relief statue. What was the difference and what did they indicate? Some spaces seemed to be place-holders illustrating what the Greeks call the theft of the missing Parthenon marbles.
2. *Missing Athena statue* – At one time there was a great statue of the goddess Athena in the center of the Parthenon. Why was there no replica or model of it to view? There is a fantastic model of this statue in Nashville, TN of all places! Read about it at <http://www.roadsideamerica.com/tip/8771> and see the statue at <http://images.travelpod.com/users/bigrick/roadtrip-06.1152283980.athena.jpg>

Entrance to the New Museum of the Acropolis- Notice the glass floors leading in.

The New Museum of the Acropolis- Here the glass floor allows you to see ruins of early Christian buildings, which have been preserved beneath th

Sunday, June 27th continued – **The National Archeological Museum**

This museum was fabulous. I bet few visitors to Athens actually see it, due to its being away from the central Acropolis area. It took a subway and a long walk to get to it, but the effort was worthwhile. Then again, I am entranced by Classical Greek statuary, which this has in abundance. My favorite statues were Pan, Eros and Aphrodite, a statue from 300BC; Poseidon (in trident-hurling position), and others.

Also interesting and moving were grave stelae - relief sculptures placed on graves. These scenes are so compelling - grief about saying goodbye to relatives, wives, daughters, sons... unbelievably powerful reminders that people then lived and felt the same emotions we feel now.

Dinner at Strofi - This is a wonderful rooftop restaurant with a fine view of the Parthenon, which we saw illuminated at night. It's not expensive, and the view is a real treat!

I had wanted to buy a model sculpture of a Parthenon pediment but got back too late -- the store was closed. The one I did later purchase is a poor substitute, lacking in detail. So why did I buy it? Just the outline of these figures is fanciful in itself!

Poseidon posing with our friend and traveling companion, Mike. Poseidon was kind enough to hold still for this shot! (at the National Archeology Museum in Athens)

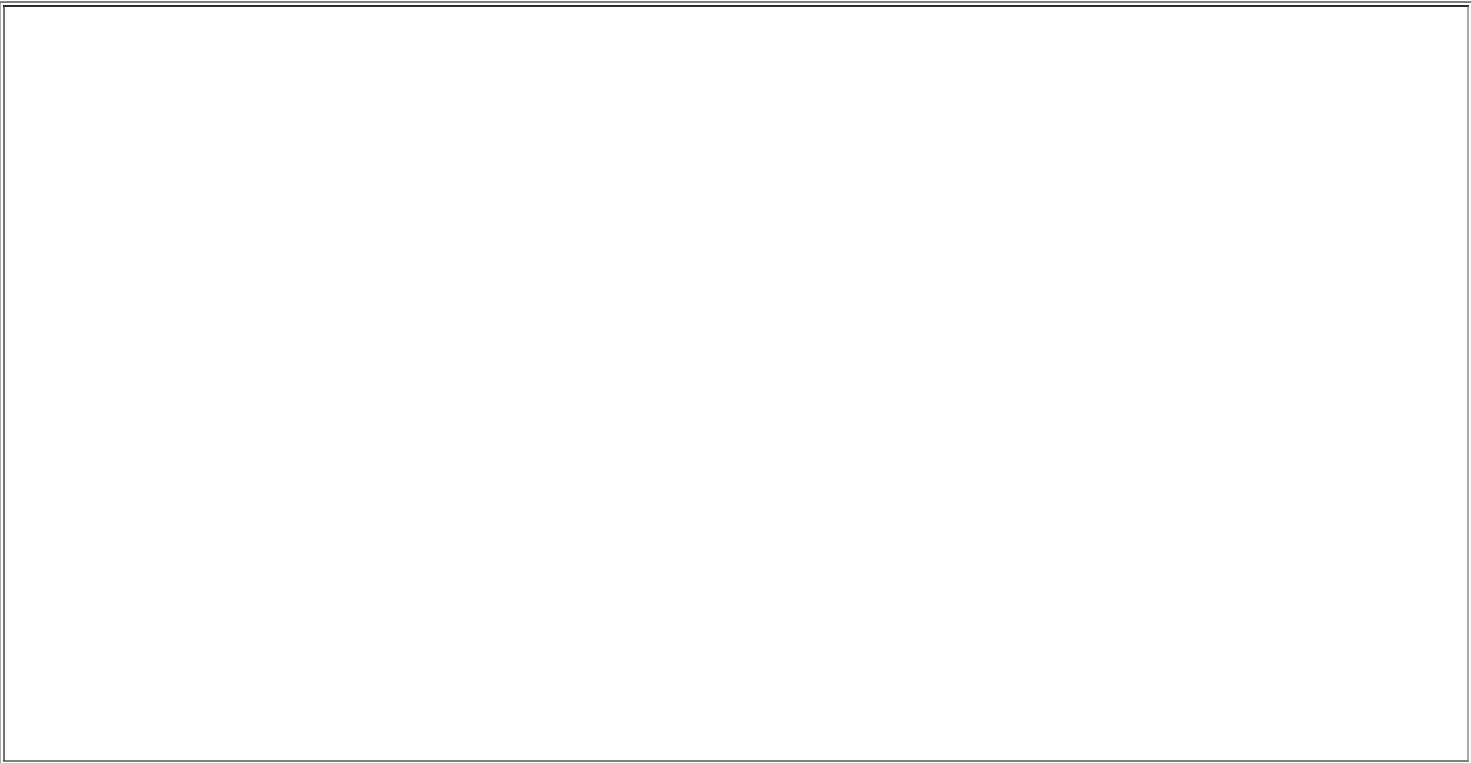


POSEIDON, the god of the seas, close-up. At the National Archeological Museum.

Boy on a horse sculpture from 400 BC, previously undersea in a wreck.

Boy on a horse sculpture from 400 BC, previously undersea in a wreck.

Right side - Boy on a horse sculpture from 400 BC, previously undersea in a wreck.

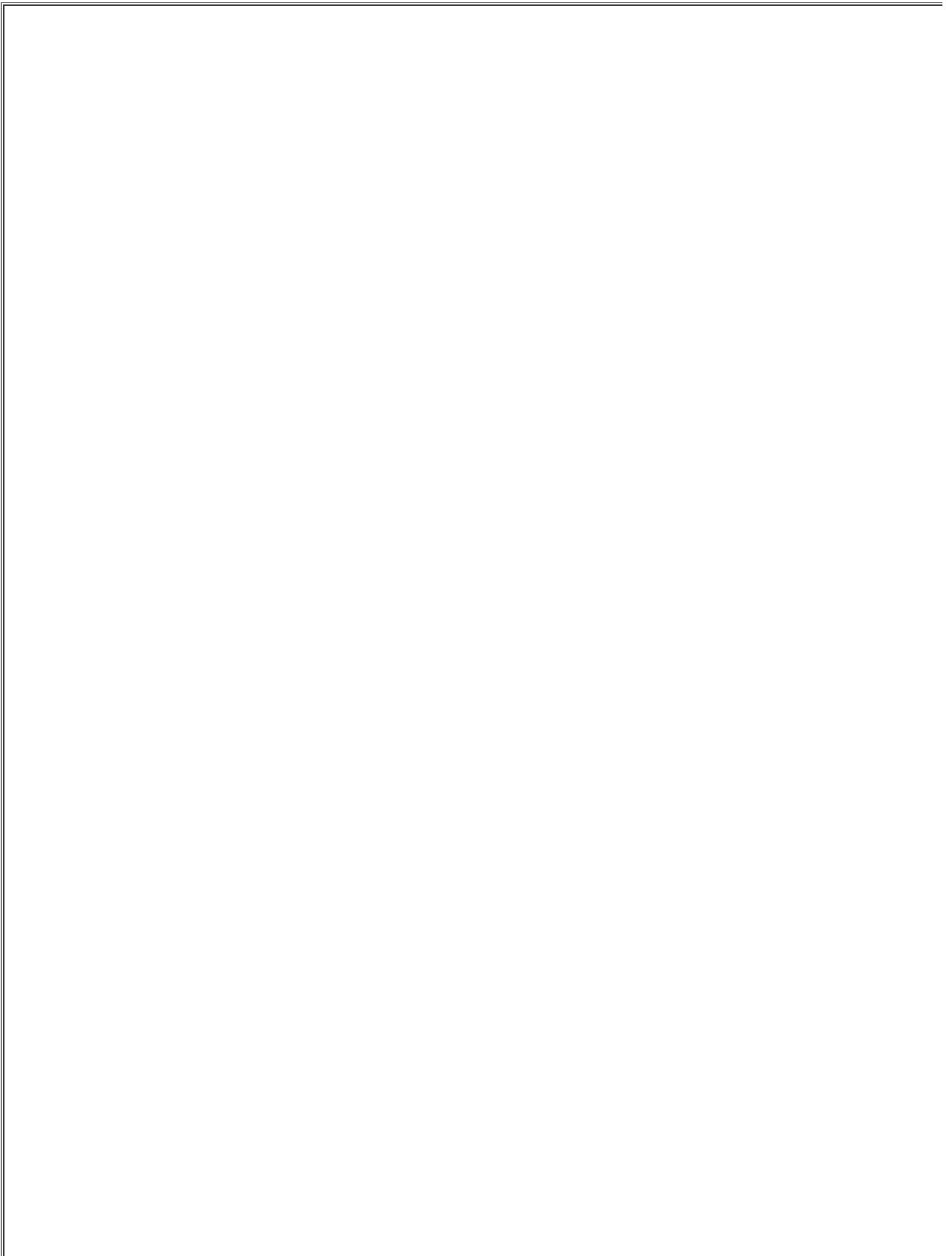


Close-up of above.

Theater mask wall hangings.

A funny fellow!

Smiling boy pressing a duck with his hand.





What an expression on this mischievous kid! Still a wise-guy after 2,

Monday, June 28th – Ferry to Siros, Beach at Galissas

Arriving at Hotel Benois, Galissas. This hotel on the western side of the island was beautiful, and the staff was very helpful. The beach was pretty and the sunset gorgeous. (I can see I will soon be over-using my superlative adjectives, so I'd better husband them!)

The pool and bougainvillea were beautiful at Hotel Benois. Sunset at the beach at Galissas was splendid. However, rentable beach umbrellas (6E per day) there were not large enough, and chaises were expensive (\$5E per day). So chilling by the pretty pool was a better idea.

At night, we had dinner at the Sunset Restaurant on the main road near our hotel. I had something called a scorpion-fish which was actually rather bland despite its name. One of us loved a flavored raki, a potent drink. Mike and I went for a jog, which was a bit risky in the evening, given all the foot and car traffic. But it felt great to get some exercise in!

We found out that because of a strike, our ferry planned for Thursday to take us to Siros was not happening. So we made calls and arranged for a "slow boat" to Santorini. (See Long Ferry below.)

Ferry ramp moving up, on the way to Siros from Piraeus.

Cruise ships as we left Piraeus.

Tuesday, June 29th – Ermopouli & Anos Siros

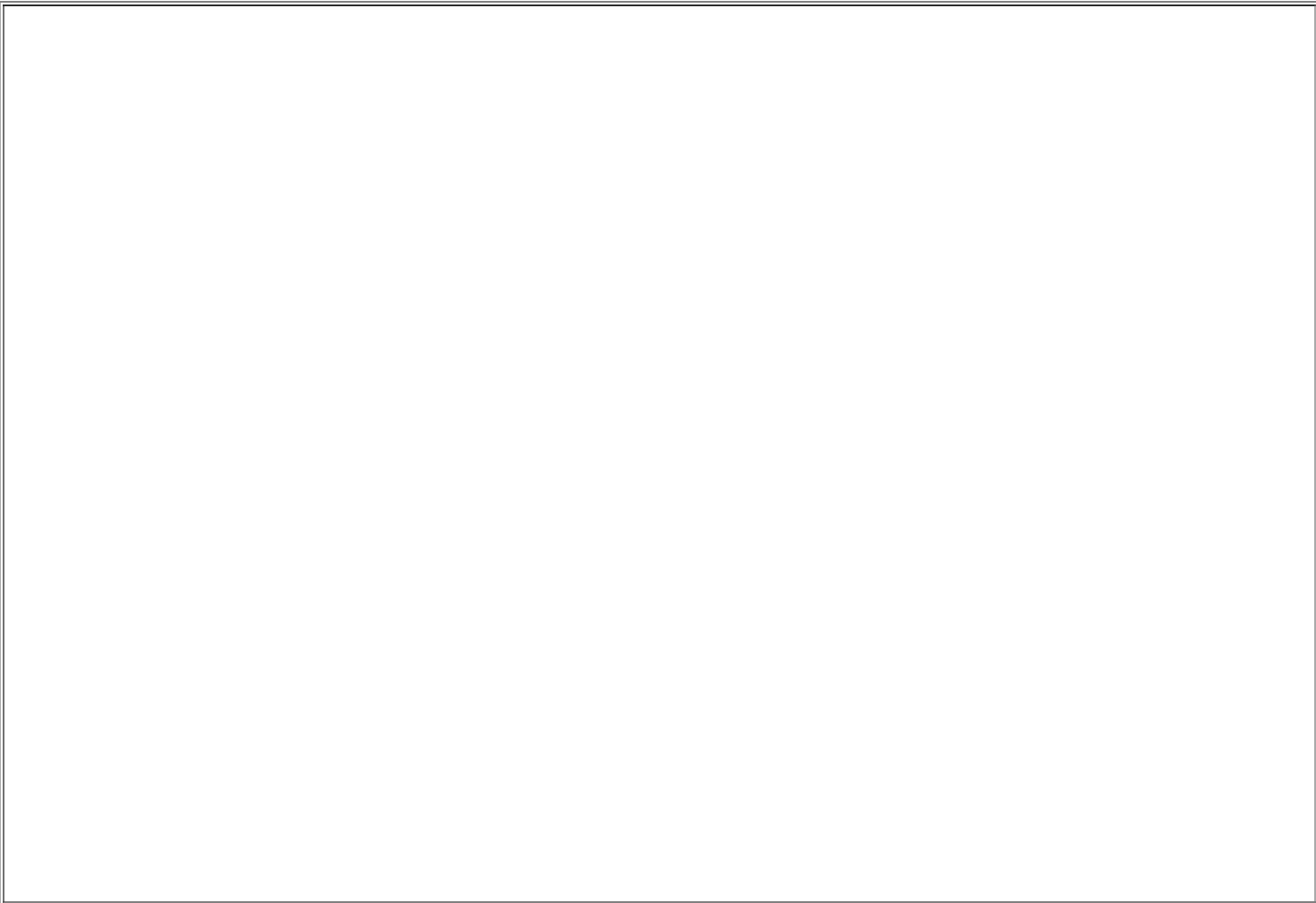
We spent the morning of this day Visiting Ermepouli, the capital of Siros and of the Cyclades. This is a large, spacious town on a hillside and beside a harbor. Lunch on the Maijlis (?) Square gave us a break from the blistering heat. We also took care of laundry at a commercial laudromat. Other sights included the Apollo Theater (James Brown was not there), and Town Hall.

We also visited Nancy Lefebvre, Karen's mom, who operates a Bed and Breakfast up the hill from the center of town.

Tuesday, June 29th – Visiting Agnos Siros

In our rented car, we ascended the precipitous road to Agnos Siros, with Martha at the wheel. It was plenty steep and winding! The landscape was hard and dry, with stone fences demarking borders between farms. This was an old fortified town that had defended itself against pirates with its high position, winding inner roads and stone walls. The road had switchbacks galore.

Dinner at **Lily’s Restaurant** was worth the climb. Finding it was tough too. The pathways are serpentine and tiny, though lovely and picturesque at every turn. The main open air window was spectacular! What a great view of the hillside, Ermoupoli and the harbor! And the food was good too. We wanted to make it back to our hotel before dark, though, and so we had to scurry a bit.



View from Lily's Restaurant, in the hilltop town of Anos Siros on Siros island.

A wall mask at Lily's Restaurant, in the hilltop town of Anos Siros on Siros island.

Portrait on the wall at Lily's.

Wednesday, June 30th – Long Ferry to Santorini

We left Siros one day early due to the Thursday ferry being cancelled. This was due to the one-day general strike called by Greek labor unions to protest austerity measures. This meant we had a 9 hour ferry ride ahead of us!

Well, we sucked it up – and after all were on vacation, so who had a right to complain? Instead we got a tour of 5 islands in addition to our destination, Santorini.

These are my brief thoughts on the islands we passed:

- **Paros** – nice;
- **Naxos** – impressively charming, small and colorful. The picture frame style 3,000 year old temple at the harbor was very impressive.
- **Folegrandos** was a small village with great harbor rocks and a weird cement settlement. We were too busy watching a movie to note
- **Sikinos** and
- **Ios**, which we stopped at.

We arrived at Athinios port on Santorini at about 10 pm, tired, and with our driver nowhere in sight. Our special Europe-ready cell phone did not work. But a wonderful *taverna* owner saw our predicament and made a call to our hotel, **Atholos Villas** in Kamari, on his land line. Our driver, Iannis, got the message and was in fact just 5 minutes away. Our ride included a precipitous ascent of a 900 foot tall cliff to get to the other side of the island.

At each island on the way to Santorini, a ship mate tossed a thin rope to shore.

This was used to pull a larger rope ,called a hauser cable, which anchored the ship.

Thursday, July 1 – Santorini – Seeing Oia!

Oia is the jewel of Santorini, and Santorini is the jewel of the Cyclades. The praise we had heard for this unusual village on a high volcanic rock was extreme. Photos of Oia stand (synechdoche-fashion for you English majors) for all of Greece.

It certainly lived up to expectations and was beautiful and gorgeous! The blue domed churches were amazingly lovely, along with the cliffs, precipitous drop-offs, volcano remains in the forms of islands Nea and Palei Kaleimi. (?) There was allegedly a main shopping street called Marmora, but the Oia tourist office vociferously denied there was anything like a main street or a street map. *Just go anywhere!* she urged.

And we did!

Lunch at the rooftop restaurant called **Strogilli** was fabulous, mainly because of the views – 360 degrees when you're at the unshielded and ultra-sunny very tip-top. But we actually dined a bit lower in the main area, still with a wonderful view but with an awning. My Arabian sausage repast was predictably hot and spicy but delicious.

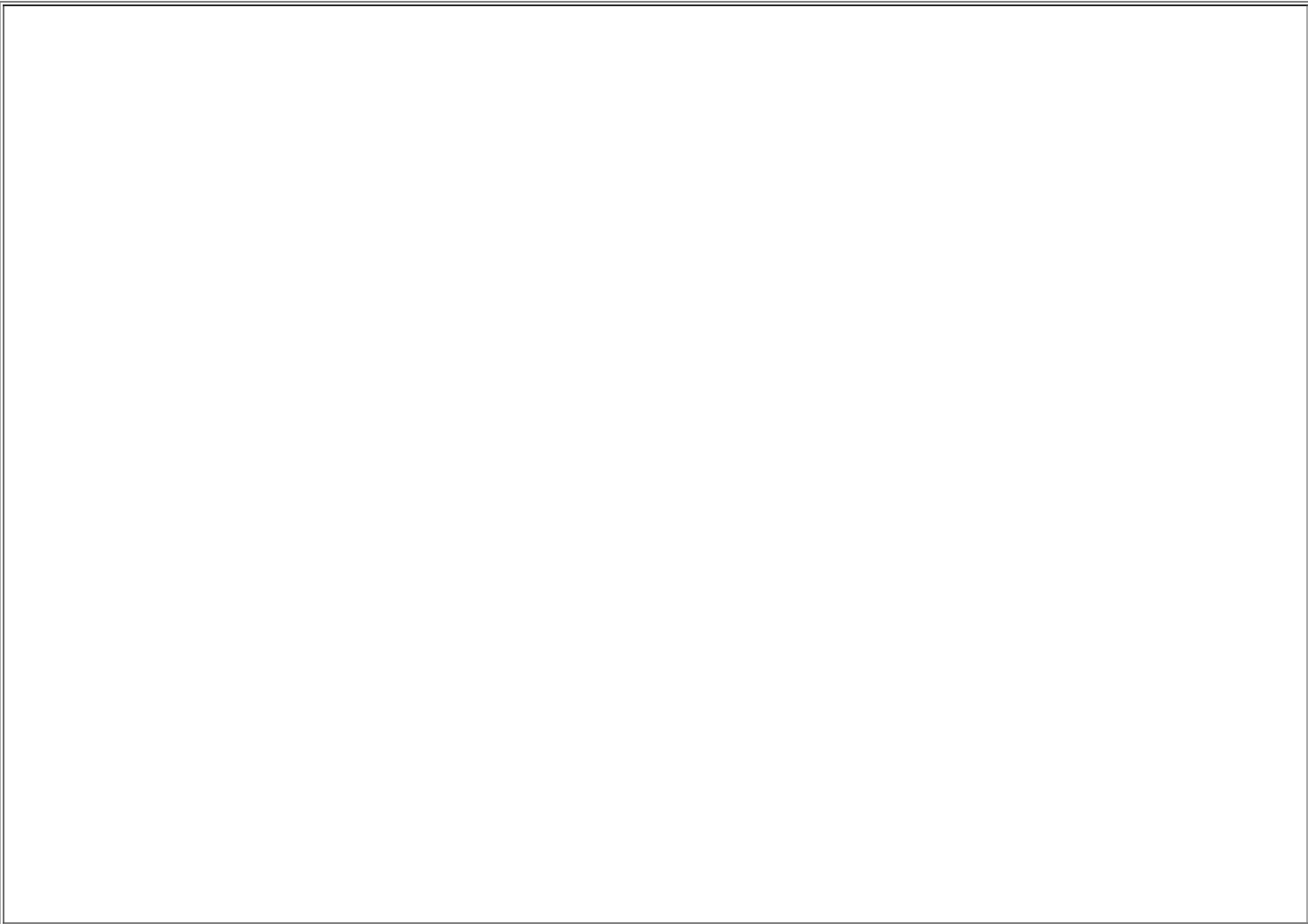
The heat ultimately was too much for us, and we cut short our trip to Oia to get out of the sun. That was our fault for daring, foolishly to try venturing forth in the noontday heat. Santorni is best before noon and after 6 pm. But hey, we were foolish tourists!

To get to Oia, on the far northwest, we had taken a 15 minute air conditioned comfortable bus from Kamari to Thira, the capital; then we took another similar bus north to Oia. These frequently-running busses were a very easy, reliable and economical way to get around this island!

Mike and I enjoyed a cool jog at the shore, dodging diners and walkers. Then Martha, our friend Mike, and I had nice dinner at Splash, one of about 100 restaurants along the Kamari beach strip.

An Oia hillside, Santorini.

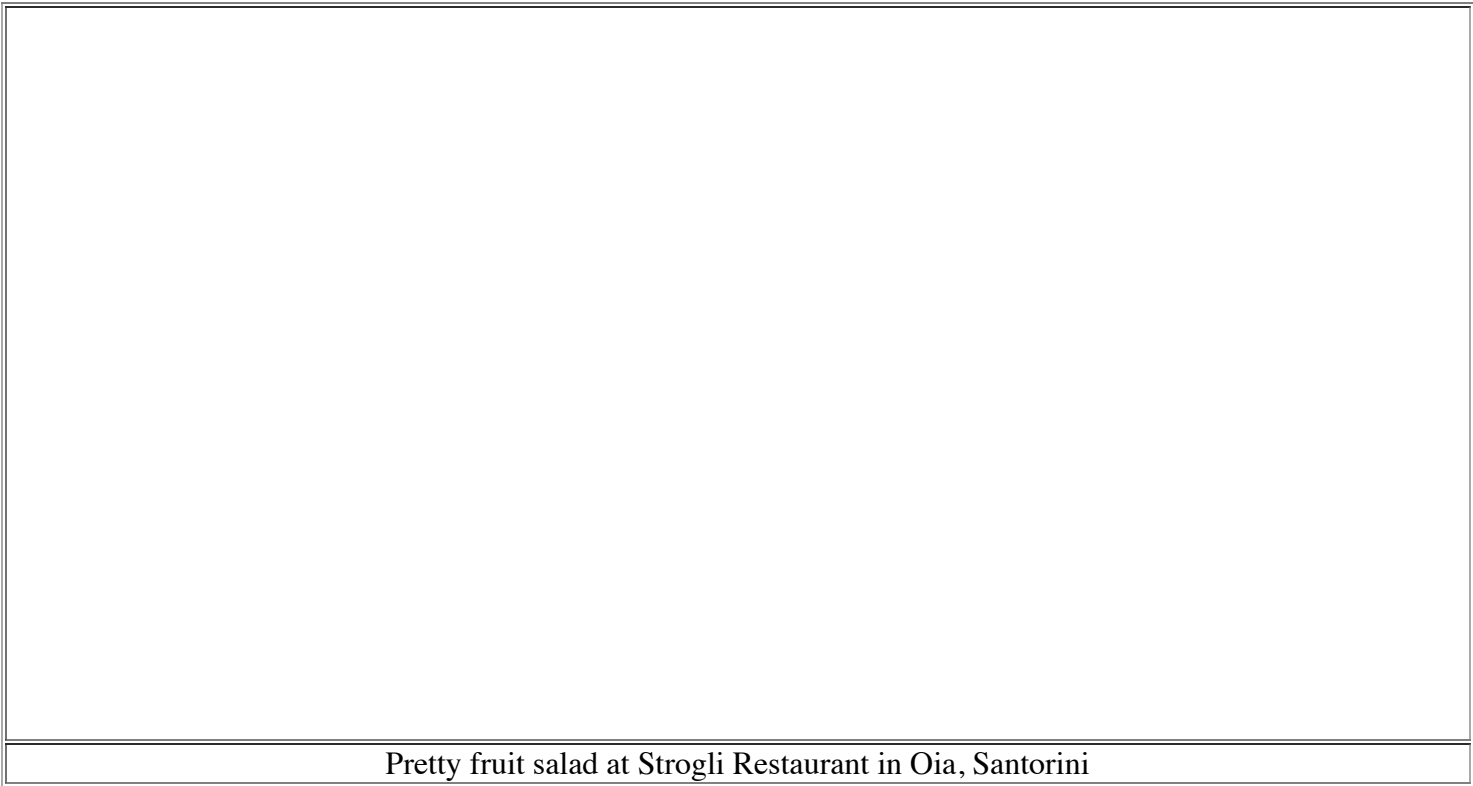
Church bells on Oia, Santorini



Stroglii Restaurant on Oia, Santorini -- . Second caption here.

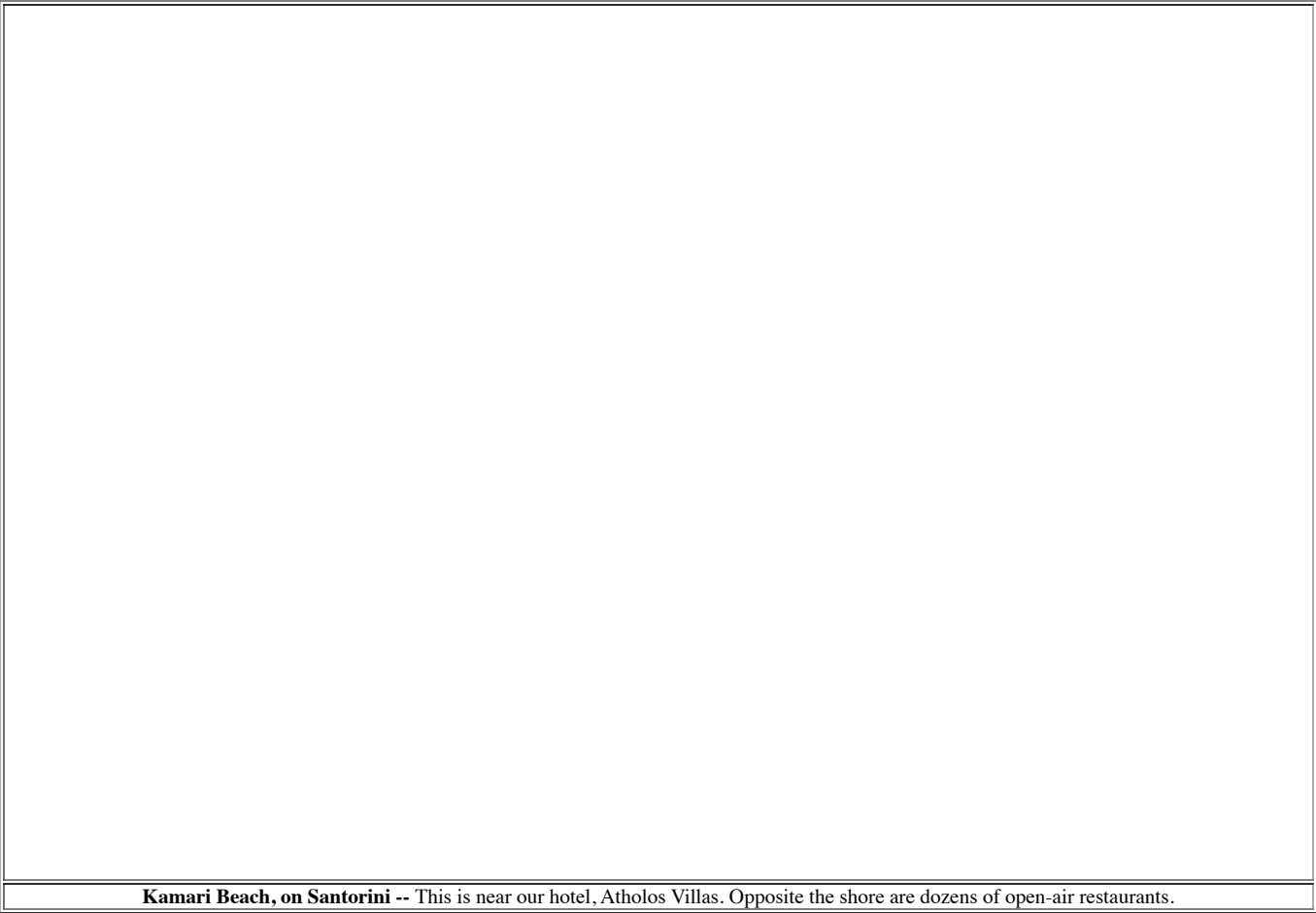
"Arabic Sausage" at Strogli Restaurant in Oia, Santorini

"Tiziki" (I thnk), a dip, at Strogli Restaurant in Oia, Santorini.



Pretty fruit salad at Strogli Restaurant in Oia, Santorini

Our hotel, Atholos Villas, was about a 300 feet yards from this shore, Kamari Beach. The surf was pretty to look at, but the beach consisted of black pebbles. On the whole, the Jersey Shore and Jones Beach both offer better sand. The water was cool but not cold. Still, it was nice to wade in. My co-traveler, Mike, and I enjoyed jogging on the adjacent boardwalk-road.



Kamari Beach, on Santorini -- This is near our hotel, Atholos Villas. Opposite the shore are dozens of open-air restaurants.

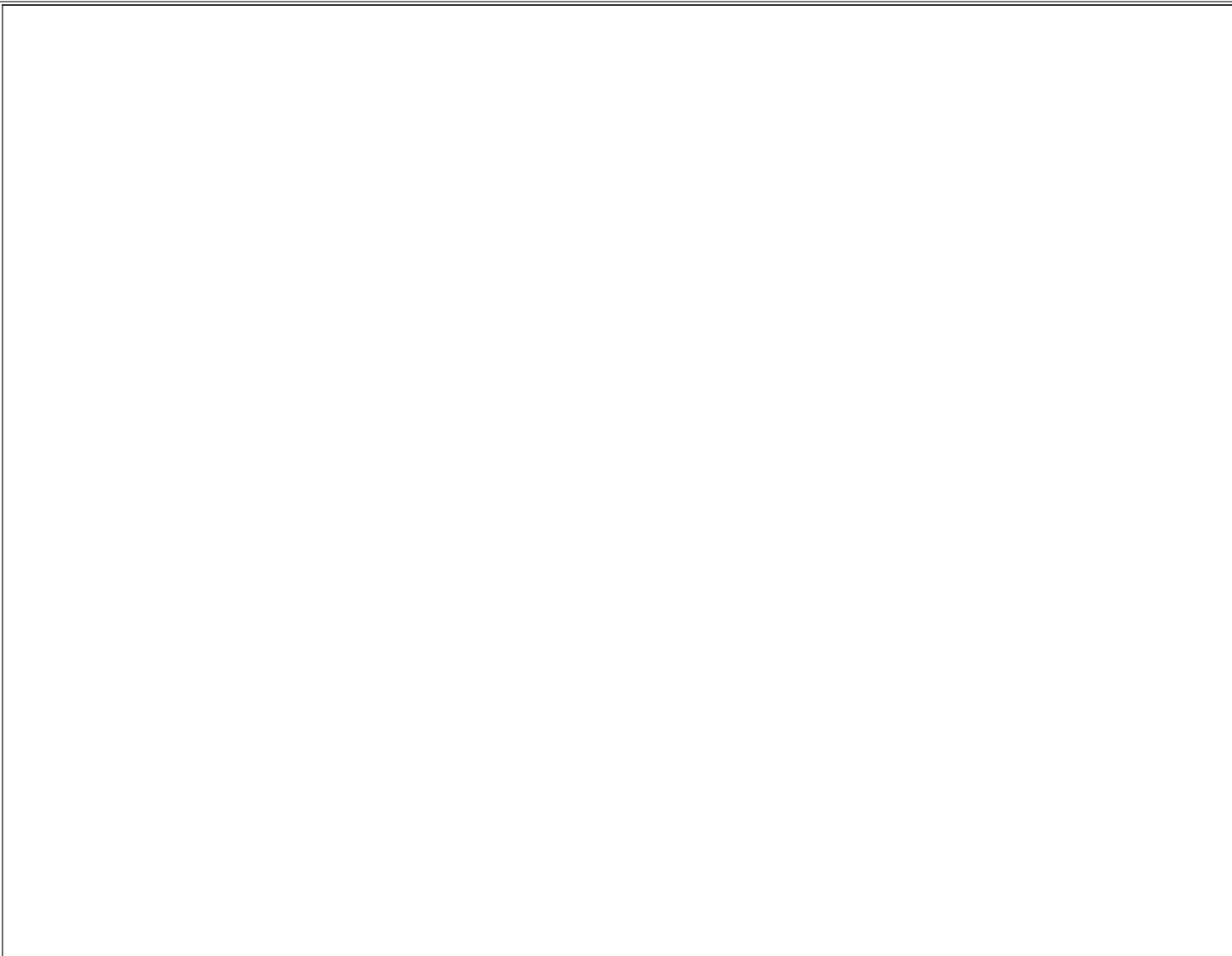
Friday, July 2, 2010 - **Sunset Cruise off Santorini**

We lounged at the hotel's poolside during the intense heat of the day, reading and chatting. Then at about 4 pm we prepared for the walk to the bus to the Sunset Cruise.

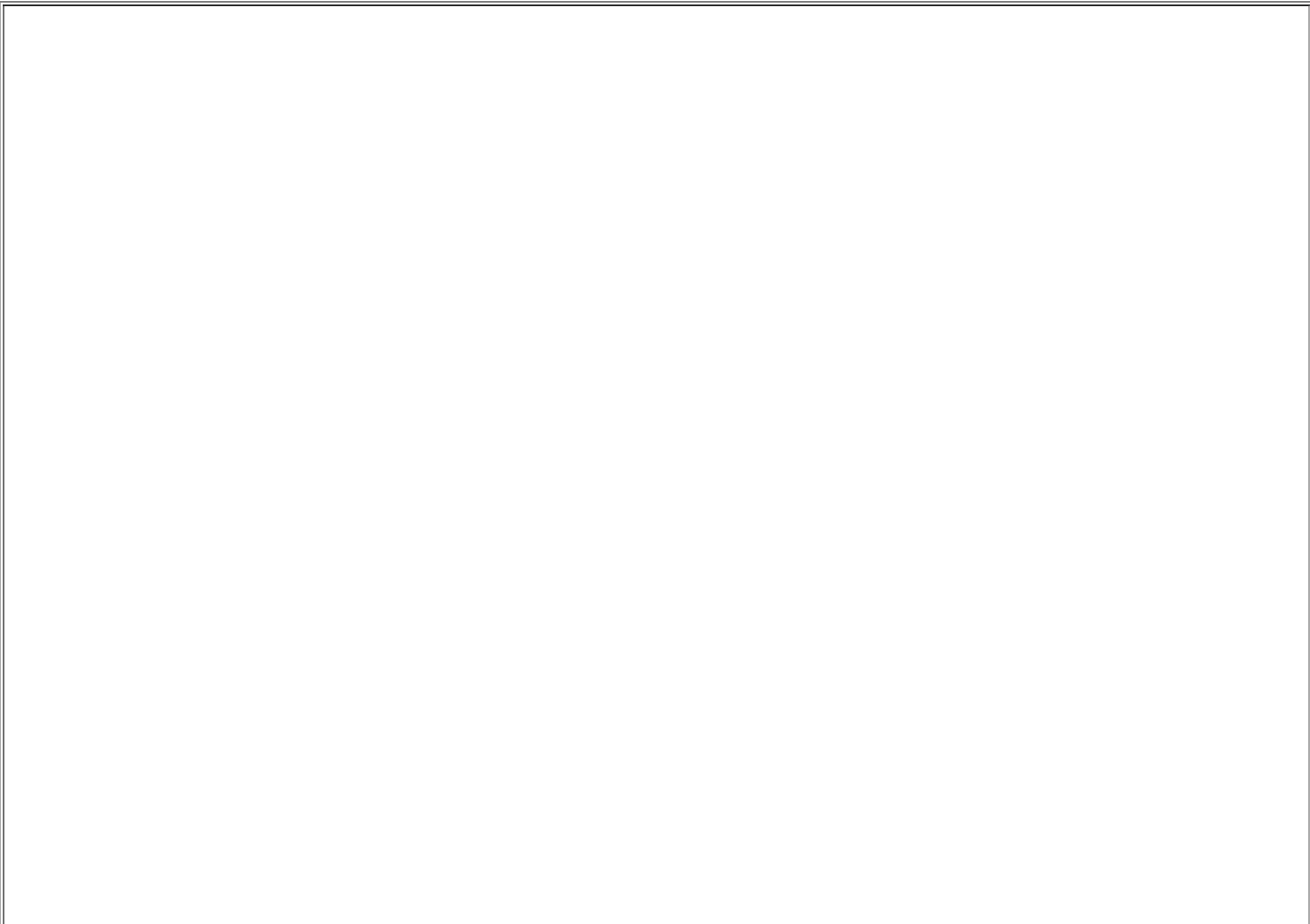
For 35 Euro's each person, we had a fabulous 3-hour cruise on a triple-masted schooner around the caldera, which is the western part of the island off the coast. The views were amazing. The sun did not exactly set in the water due to clouds on the horizon.... and the colors were not quite as amazing as we'd led to believe they would be.

Greek teens aboard had a ball singing, dancing a bit, eating, teasing each other, and posing for glamour shots. We hugged the coast of the island, enjoying the unusual rock formations and the beautiful surf. A third of the way into the trip, the staff unleashed a great hot buffet, including fish with tomatoes, chicken, slaws, Greek salad, *dolmades* (stuffed grape leaves), and more. All riders received a glass of ouzo upon getting aboard.

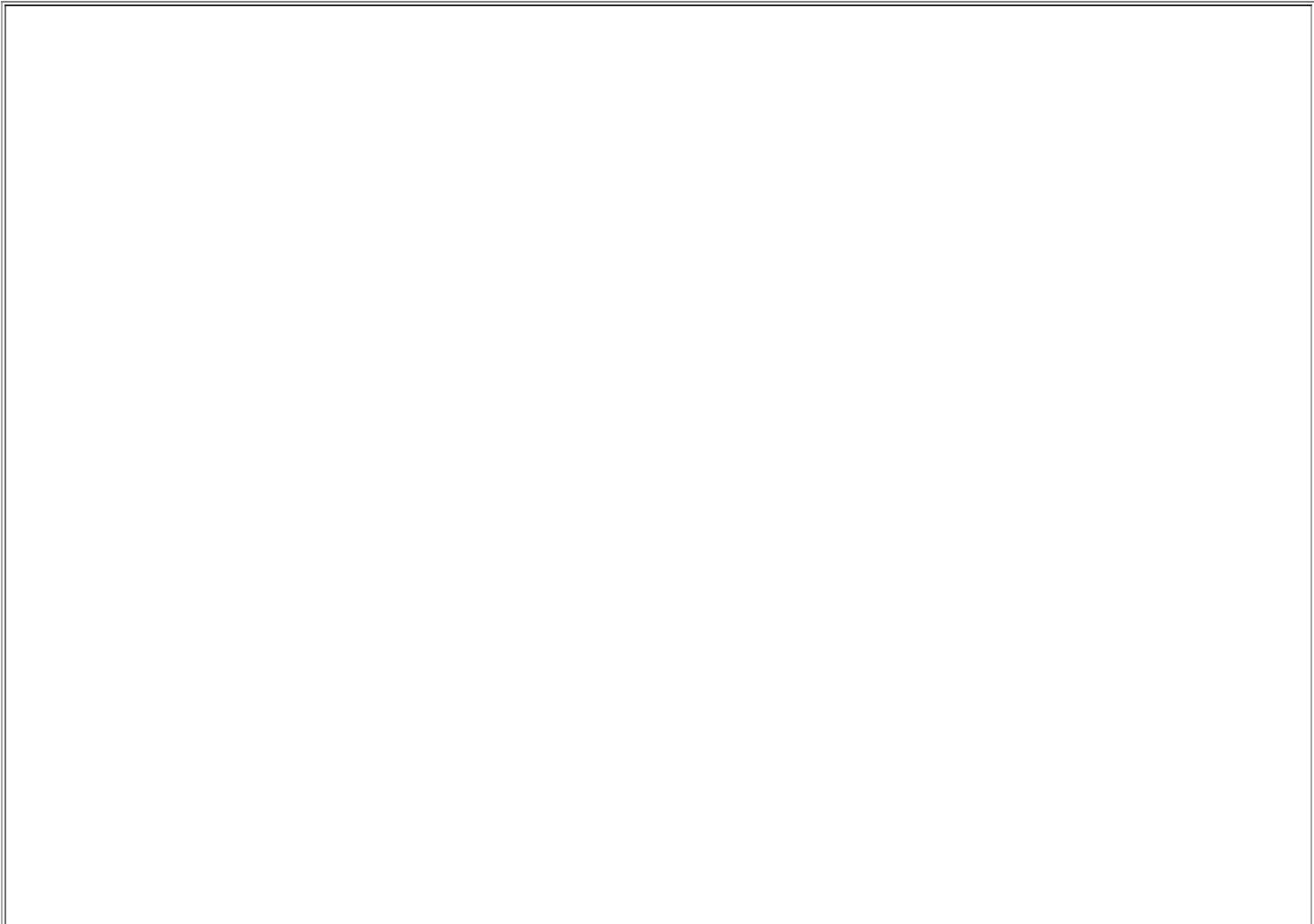
Our captain got us in position off the northern tip of the island and awaited the sun's setting. It was very pretty! Some low clouds did not allow the sun to actually set in the water but it was still great.



Sunset Cruise off Santorini -- Schooner in the distance. This photo by Mike Bomstein



Green teens enjoy the Sunset Cruise off Santorini -- This photo by Mike Bomstein



Fira, or Thira, as seen on the Sunset Cruise off Santorini -- This photo by Mike Bomstein

Sunset cruise off Santorini - Rocks seen from the prow.

You can see how these rocks might have looked like monsters to Odysseus!

Schooner captured in passing -- our pilot did NOT attempt to sail between these rocks!

A church on a small island off Santorini. Parishioners would need to take a small boat and land at the tiny wharf above.-

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Caption here -- . Second caption here.

A triple-master we saw on our ride.

Saturday, July 3 - Tour of Santos Winery and of Fira

Ianis, our hotelier, recommended this winery, since it would be cool, as it was a mountaintop, and beautiful, which it was! Iannis drove us to the winery. There they offered a tour, a multimedia show about how wines were made historically.

A special heavy, sweet wine called Vinsanto was much ballyhooed at this winery and at other places on the island. It's interesting historically, as it was favored throughout Europe for centuries.

From Santos Winery, we took a bus into downtown Fira.

Fira

This city is the capital of Santorini. Like many towns, it has great views of the harbor, especially the western or caldera view. After checking out many restaurants, we settled on Cafe Classico, renowned for its home-made ice cream. The ladies loved it! And the view was superb.

Sunday, July 4th - Santorini to Athens flight

On the morning of our last vacation day, Mike and I went down to the Kamari beach to look at the surf and the people. It's easy to pick up a lunch to go at the beach's corner stores. Dishes included spanikopita, apple pie, and more. Also, succulent cherry tomatoes were always available.

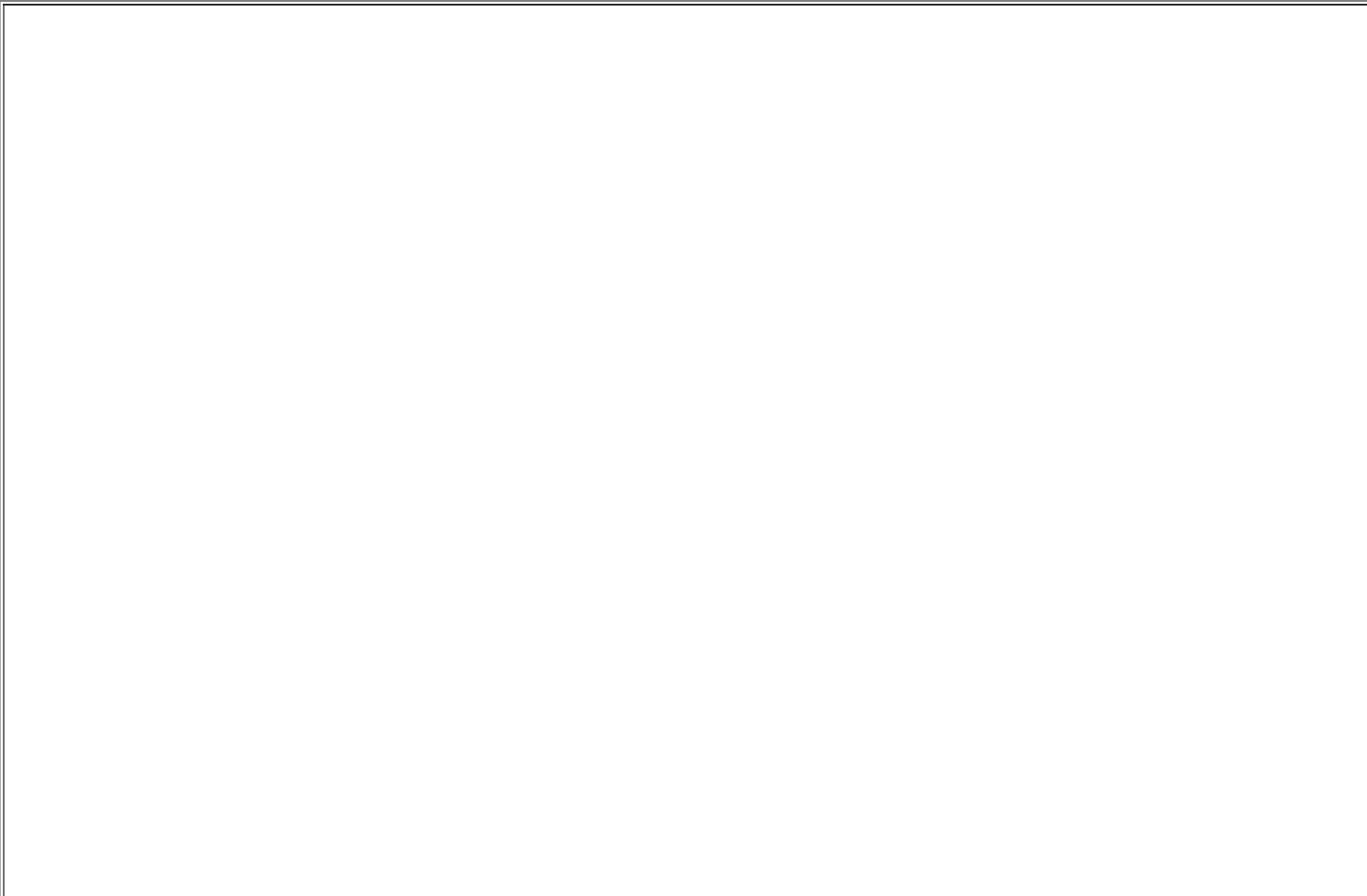
During Independence Day, some Brits staying at Atolos Villa to wish us a Happy 4th of July! Iannis, our hotelier, drove us to the Santorini Airport.

Our flight was about 30 minutes liking - smooth sailing! We stayed at the Airport Sofitel, which was relatively luxurious. Dinner there at the Mesoghaia Restaurant was one of our best. I truly enjoyed a broiled seafood meal that included salmon, cheese-stuffed calamari, and octopus. We shared a dessert 3 ways. Our waiter told us it would take 20 minutes to prepare. But who cared? We chatted and then he brought out a warm "bombe." It was called "chocolate fondant," a warm pastry shell stuffed with chocolate mo0usse and topped with an orange "Australians grape." It looked like a cumquat ball tucked into a crepy flower.

Monday, July 5, 2010 - Athens to Philly Flight

Our flight lasted about 10 1/2 hours - from 11:30 am in Athens to 4-ish Eastern time. At least it was smooth! We chased the sun the whole time, never in darkness.

What a great trip! We are fortunate to have taken it and encourage you to do the same, if our account intrigues you!



A view from our plane as we prepared to land in Philly. Center City is in the distance and mothballed old Navy ships are in the foreg

Another view from our plane as we prepared to land in Philly. In the foreground are (left) Liberty Financial Field (Eagles) Citizens Bank Park behind Wachovia Center (Sixers and Flyers) and I believe the Spectrum behind it

The End... but perhaps the beginning of your own plans to visit Greece? :)

Some reading, listening and web ideas...

General and Tourism:

Top 10 ATHENS. Eyewitness Travel. A DK book with good small color photos. \$12 USA.

(Also see travel books that specialize in Greek Islands. Books on Greece in general cover very little on islands.)

SANTORINI a unique place - Tourist Guide, Useful Information, Map. Adam Editions.

www.dalini.org We bought this book on Santorini.

Art and Architecture:

Art and Experience in Classical Greece by J.J. Pollitt, Cambridge University Press, 1972, 208 pages, many black and white illustrations. It has a deeply detailed section on the Parthenon and the Erechtheon.

"Secrets of the Parthenon," a Nova special on Youtube.com, 54 minutes - Good discussion of how the ancient Greeks developed a system of measurement and especially of proportion in building their

magnificent structures.

Greek Mythology:

Greek Mythology - Gods & heroes - the Trojan War - the Odyssey by Katerina Swervi, Archaeologist, Ekdotike Ahenon .A., Athens 2009 - Sumptuously illustrated book filled with authentic Greek depictions of mythological figures, an amazing gods' genealogy chart and more. 256 pages. Purchased in Greece.