

Greek Islands Adventure

MAC and Friends

October 2010



Here's where we traveled during our Greek Islands Adventure:

Day 1 – October 4 Bodrum to Marmaris to Rhodes

Day 2 – October 5 Rhodes, Symi, Knidos

Day 3 – October 6 Knidos, Nisyros

Day 4 – October 7 Nisyros, Kos

Day 5 – October 8 Kos, Kalymnos

Day 6 – October 9 Kalymnos & St. Nicholas Bay

Day 7 – October 10 St. Nicholas Bay, Leros

Day 8 – October 11 Leros, Arki

Day 9 – October 12 Arki, Patmos, Lipsi

Day 10 – October 13 Lipsi, Kalymnos, Bodrum

Day 11 – October 14 Bodrum

Days 12/13 – October 15 and October 16 Bodrum and lasos

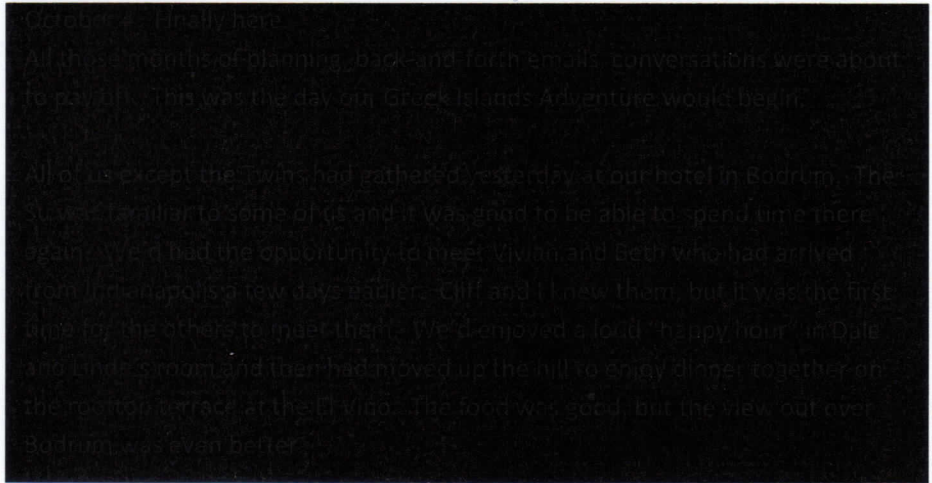


And here is our crew.....Adem, Selo, Çeto, Erdal and Ali



Monday, October 4 (*Susan's Birthday*)

Bodrum to Marmaris to Rhodes (Mary Ann)



So on Monday morning, we were ready to go. After several phone calls from Sidar and the arrival of the Twins, we were ready. Like ducks in a row, we rolled our luggage over the narrow cobbled pathway from the hotel to a parking area nearby where Sidar and a mini-bus were waiting for us.

By 10:15, we had all our luggage stowed away on the bus and were on our way. We were going to Marmaris, where our gulet was waiting for us.

But it would not be an ordinary ride. Our first inkling of adventures that might be in store for us came just an hour or so later. Our driver made a quick turn off the road and we found ourselves in the ancient city of Stratonikeia. We spent a little more than an hour there, but during that time we were able to visit the theater and several other places. We were also all fascinated by the gentleman fashioning tinware in the all-but-abandoned village. Needless to say, when we did get back on the mini-bus, there were several wrapped packages with us as well.



We continued on to Marmaris, and along the way, we drew numbers to see who would be staying where on the boat. Although the cabins would all be nice, there were two that were larger than the others. So the fair way to do it was to draw numbers. Corbins and Camerons were the lucky winners.



We arrived in Marmaris around 2:15. Our first order of business was to take our luggage to the gulet. That was when we got our first look at the Zeus, our home for the next two weeks, and the crew we would be with. I don't think any of us were disappointed.



We didn't spend much time at the boat, as we were ready for lunch. Sidar led us into town and we went to Adana Sofrasi where we enjoyed the pida and salad lunch that Sidar orchestrated.



After we finished, we had a little time to do some shopping before going back to the gulet. Sidar and I had a mission....we needed to find a birthday cake and flowers as it was Susan's birthday. Simple task. Not really. Fresh flowers were only available at a florist. After several inquiries, we finally found one nearby. Going inside was another experience. The owner was busy in the small shop, and when another customer came in, Sidar didn't miss a beat. He helped the customer pick out a rose, took the payment, and the customer left the shop thinking he had been dealing with the owner! The owner eventually was able to help us and we left with a nice bouquet for Susan.

Getting a cake was also an adventure. We found a bakery and then we had to decide on a cake. We found something suitable, had it packed and we were off to the gulet again.

By 4:15 we were on the boat and getting settled. The captain had taken our passports and was off doing necessary paperwork. By 5:15 pm we were underway.

Our destination was Rhodes and we pulled into the harbor there just before 8. Our first order of business was to enjoy our dinner on board....a feast of mezes and sea bream. We topped it off with pieces of Susan's birthday cake.

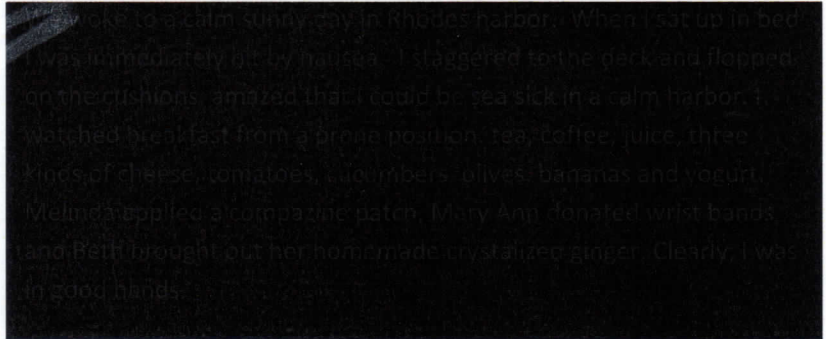
Afterwards we had time to go ashore and explore the Old Town streets. The evening was warm, Old Town was magically lit up, and it was one of those pinch-me-I-can't-believe-I'm-really-here experiences.

By the time we got back to the Zeus, it was time to reflect on the first day of our adventure as we were gently rocked to sleep.



Tuesday, October 5 (*Cliff's Birthday*)

Rhodes, Symi and Knidos (Susan)

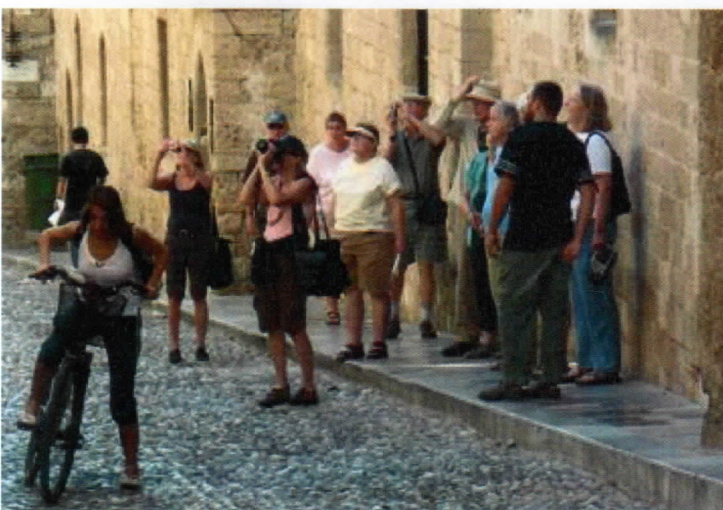
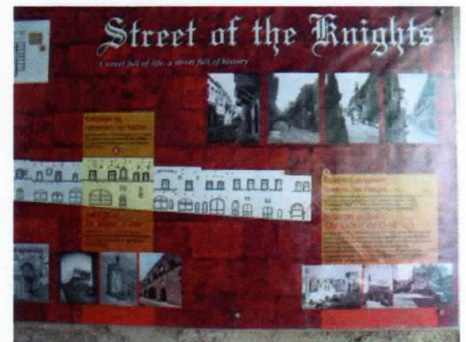


I had a little tea and bread under Sidar's supervision. (Later Mary Ann asked me if David and I had kept our porthole open – yes. Sidar advised that the huge yacht next to us was belching diesel fumes all night.) During breakfast Sidar was asked about our itinerary. He responded that he couldn't divulge it for "security reasons" – an early hint that this would not be a predictable day.

After breakfast, Sidar walked us to the end of the harbor where Colossus should have been. He gently debunked the story of a towering giant spanning the harbor entrance where there are now delicate statues of a buck and doe. We asked about several windmills under construction. Sidar said they pumped water and were common in the islands.

Then we passed through the wall of the Old City, using a different gate than our prior evening's entrance off the harbor that had led to a circus of tourist vendors.

We walked up the stone-paved Avenue of the Knights that was lined by the stark front walls of the knights' quarters. The carving and coats of arms at the entrance to each building identified one of seven groups of knights by their language and region:



At the top of the street we peered over the walls of the Palace of the Grand Masters. Sidar shared the history of the palace and the city, the Crusades and the Ottomans, and the palace's last reconstruction for Mussolini that was so poorly done. Then Sidar left us to wander on our own, with instructions to be back on the boat by 11:00 a.m. Our Captain had declared that we would lunch on Symi. David and I headed off to find the Hotel Andreas that we would return to at the end of the trip. By some miracle, we walked straight to it – the last time that would happen in the Old City.



The day's itinerary unfolded moment to moment. Heading to Symi for lunch, we learned that we'd spend the night in Nisyros. Then, a change of plan! There were heavy winds in the main channel between Symi and Nisyros. We'd anchor in a bay on the Turkish mainland for the night.

Arriving in a bay on Symi, some of us swam. Vivian and Dale snorkeled. Vivian found treasure in the form of pottery shards and an old anchor. That was enough to get Sidar in the water, holding up his swim shorts so they didn't fall off. He confirmed that



Vivian's objects were from the Bronze Age, approximately 2,000 years old.

After a lunch of green beans in a delicious sauce, rice, yogurt, cucumber and salad, we pulled up anchor and headed for Knidos on the Turkish mainland.

Sidar led a knot tying lesson, to our crew's amusement. Gordon was quickly excused from practice, but several of us required individual tutoring. We found shelter from the wind and high waves in a safe cove, retreated from the deck and ate inside.

We enjoyed the bar hosted by Adem, exchanged Lopez gossip, and scoured the Greek Islands books for a hint of where we were headed. Cliff and Gordon played another installment of their perpetual cribbage game. It was an amazing day, but only the first of many.

Postscript from David and Susan

We want to acknowledge the gifts we received on this adventure: Mary Ann's amazing organizational skills that made wonderful things happen, Sidar's knowledge, patience and sense of humor, our captain's seamanship, and our crew's good humor in adapting to our every want.

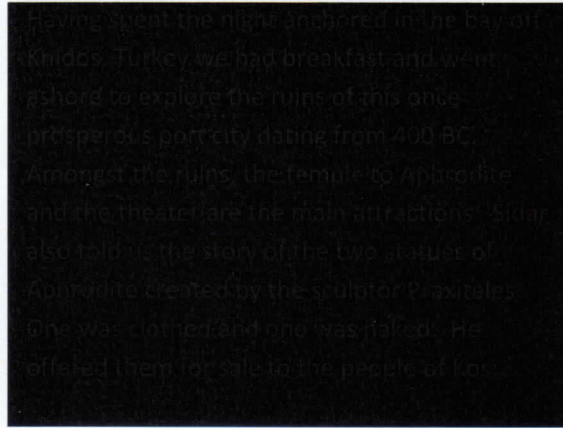


A few of our favorite things:

- ❖ Pre-trip dinner at the Istanbul Train Station with Sidar and Tylan
- ❖ Everything about the Su Otel, except for the price of cocktails
- ❖ Dinner at El Vino – wow!
- ❖ My wonderful flowers and cake – thank you Mary Ann!
- ❖ Evening sail to Rhodes
- ❖ Our cabin (particularly the blue glass sink in the head)
- ❖ Swimming in Symi and Arki bays
- ❖ The town of Nikea on Nisyros
- ❖ Early morning hike for pastry to the Pali bakery
- ❖ Bodrum in the rain
- ❖ Our great side trip to Stratonikeia to walk through the mix of little village and ruins and then watch/talk to the silversmiths
- ❖ The sailing day when the crew had time to individually sit down and talk with us .

Wednesday, October 6

Knidos to Nisyros (Joan)



They chose the clothed version; the people of Knidos bought the naked one to put in

their temple which overlooked the sea. This statue became a much sought after piece of art. It was moved numerous times ending up in the Palace of Lauros in Istanbul. It has now vanished without a trace, although copies do exist in a number of museums around the world.



After exploring the ruins we arrived back on the gulet about 11 a.m. and began our cruise to the Greek

island of Nisyros. We tied up in the village of Pali and explored the town for about 30 minutes until lunch. After lunch we hopped into two rental cars and headed for the volcano with Sidar and Cliff chauffeuring us.



Along the way we stopped to view and feel the heat of a natural sauna in a cave off the "main" road. We stopped at the sleepy village of Emborios before heading for the volcano site, the caldera.



After wandering around the caldera and enjoying something to drink at the local “snack bar”, we headed to the village of Nikea. We walked the tiny streets and then enjoyed a glass or two of homemade red wine at a café in the central square encircled by the local church and another restaurant.

From vantage points in both Emborios and Nikea, which are set on the volcano’s rim, we were able to look down into the caldera.

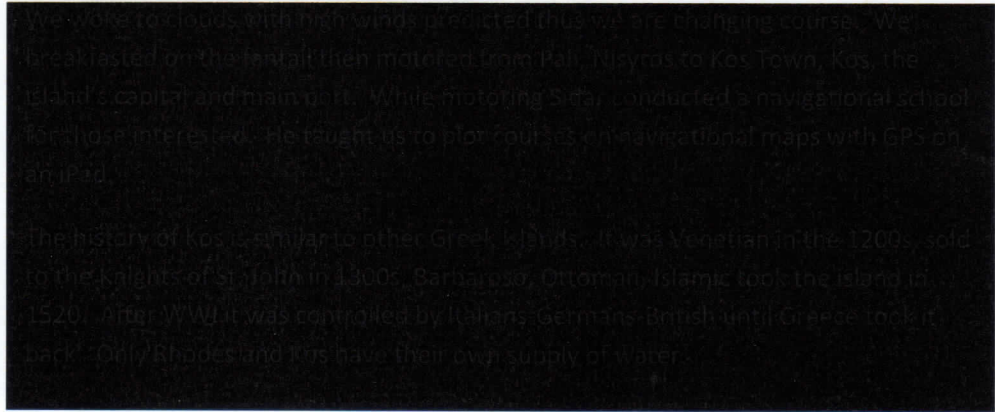
Our final visit was to Mandraki, a port and the main village on Nisyros. We wandered a bit and then headed back to the gulet.

We split up for dinner eating at three different restaurants along the Pali waterfront.



Thursday, October 7

Nisyros to Kos (Linde)



This is the home of Hippocrates, father of medicine (Hippocratic Oath). Legend said he taught his students under a Plane tree. We saw a Plane tree near the harbor but certainly not his because of the age of the tree. In 400 B.C. Kos became a healing center.

A lot of people watched as we tied up at the city's waterfront near the Castle of the Knights. We all fanned out and walked the town for an hour and came back for lunch of eggplant topped with lamb, beef, and cheese and broccoli with a fruit plate of apples and grapes for dessert.

Then Sidar took us on a walk to Hippocrates tree and the ancient Agora (public market place), the longest in the world. Unfortunately these ruins were not well protected nor maintained but interesting to walk through.



We were left to wander the town where most of us first stopped at a liquor store to compare liquors and buy. Dale and I wandered down a long lane full of tourist shops. We did find one with local olive wood items.

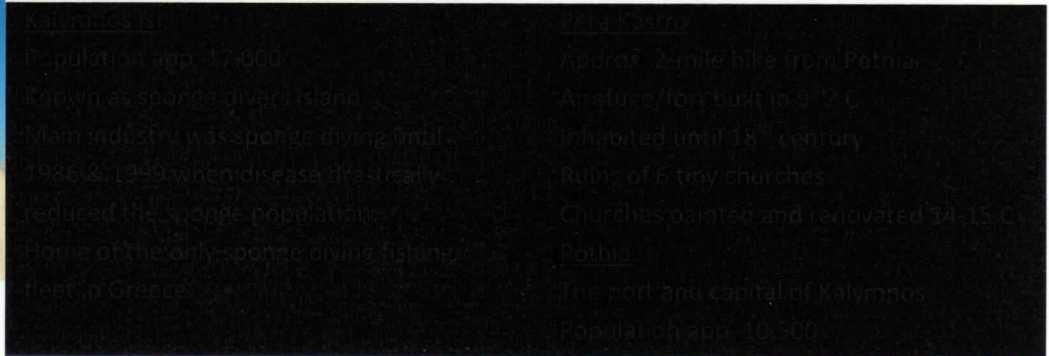
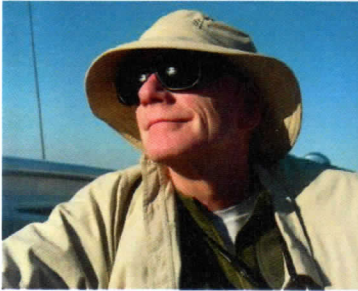


Back on board we had cocktails in the salon and decided as a group to go to a seaside Psarotaverna away from the main waterfront that Sidar and Captain Selo recommended. They accompanied us where they ordered typical Greek seafood. We dined on toasted bread and fried cheese (saganaki), fried tiny, tiny, shrimp (chim), calamari, octopus meatballs, etc. We stopped for ice cream bars on the walk back to the boat. It was another beautiful day.

We are enjoying our olive oil soap.

Friday, October 8

Kos to Kalymnos (Dale)



Kos to Kalymnos

A beautiful day with an intense blue sky and water. High wind, white caps and a rolling and pitching boat touched the human motion sensors a little. Due to the wave action Cliff had a short ride on the couch from one side of the salon to the other. Our first tie up in a little cove failed due to the wind but our second succeeded in an adjacent cove. Vivian, Linde, Sidar and I dove for purple urchins that look like those we see in Puget Sound. However, the ones we harvested didn't have sharp spines, didn't sting the hands and are so smart they pile small stones on their backs presumably for camouflage. Ali, the cook, opened our catch, spooned out the extremely small amount of 'meat', combined it with butter, garlic and olive oil and we sampled. Shortly thereafter we headed for Pothia harbor.



Kalymnos

Visible on entering the harbor - a very picturesque town with colorful residences built on the arid hills and many pleasure boats and very small fishing boats tied up on the waterfront. On tying up, the volume of traffic and generated noise gave the impression of a busy city. However, when going behind the front street you came to alleys with only a few shops and many residences all well maintained. The most striking feature of these structures was the beautiful craftsmanship shown in the iron banisters and balcony rails.

Who can forget the baklava from the pastry shop we visited more than once. They were so light they almost melted in your mouth. And, who can forget the Turkish coffee we were served at a waterfront coffee house, filled exclusively with fishermen (no women), and owned by a Turk who previously was a sponge diver.



While hiking two-miles up to Pera Kastro, the town transitioned from a noisy, touristy hub at the harbor to picturesque narrow cobble stone (one lane at most) streets with beautifully painted and maintained residences. Very quiet, peaceful and inviting. The streets and stairs were steep at times but the views of the buildings and bay made it worthwhile. On leaving the upper reaches of the town we passed a small yard with roosters, chickens and a goat, a grounding experience as we started up the stone path and stairs to the six tiny medieval churches at Pera Kastro. Inside these churches you could see portions of frescos on the walls and ceilings. The view of the city, bay and islands from these churches was spectacular.

Saturday, October 9

Kalymnos (David)

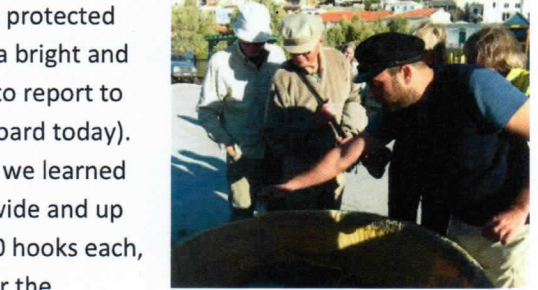


Having spent the night anchored in Pothia's protected bay on the island of Kalymnos, we woke to a bright and sunny day. Sidar announced that we were to report to the aft deck at 8:00 a.m. (no breakfast on board today). Walking along the south side of the harbor, we learned about fishing equipment (bottom nets 10' wide and up to a mile long, huge buckets of line with 300 hooks each, etc.). We also surveyed the quay looking for the

"perfect" Greek fishing boat (length X width at a 3:1 ratio).

By 8:45 a.m., we were getting less interested in fishing nets but spotted a large number of scooters and motorcycles at a building with outdoor tables and chairs. We had found the spot where the local fishermen ate breakfast. After feta-filled pastries and Greek coffee (made with Nescafe), we set off for the sponge museum. Kalymnos claims a long reputation as a source of great sponges. The museum proved to be elusive but the walk was great. On the way back to the boat, Sidar told us that Kalymnos had been colonized by Phoenicians in about the 2nd millennium BC. Since that time, it had been dominated by Persians, Genoans, the Knights of St. John, the Ottomans, and finally in 1912, the Italians.

But enough history; how about a hike? After a quick stop at the boat, we set out up the narrow road to the hora, sharing the walk with scooters, delivery trucks, and cars. After about 1.5 kms, we



found the trailhead up to the ruins of a castle of the Knights of St. John. Most of us opted for the steep climb up to the castle but Susan and Joan decided to scout out a place to eat. As the hikers drifted back down from the castle, we found Susan and Joan (now joined by Cliff and Mary Ann) on the front patio of someone's house. This turned out to be a great restaurant-home but we totally overwhelmed the gracious owner/waitress/cook. We had soon filled all the tables and consumed all the cold beer and hot french-fries with oregano that she could produce. Sidar 'helped' in the kitchen but it made our hostess nervous so she moved him out. This did prompt her to call her father and an adult daughter from neighboring houses so we soon had all we

could eat. We finished up with a wonderful chocolate banana cake. As we got ready to leave, our hostess apologized for not knowing that we were coming and offered to make us a great breakfast if we'd come back in the morning. We were all for it but the captain nixed it; bad weather ahead – have to move on.



My most memorable experience with locals happened the next day and was our impromptu lunch at a very small, outdoor restaurant just below Pera Kastro.

The owner was noticeably overwhelmed with the size of our group but was quickly assisted with food preparation by her daughter, Sidar and others. Her father appeared at times but only as an observer (typical male?). Although she was initially defensive about letting Sidar in her kitchen, his insistence and personality won her over quickly.

Once the lunch was served the owner was all smiles and I think she really enjoyed the experience. Her appreciation was evident by her offer to serve us breakfast the following morning at no cost. I think we left her with the impression that Americans are good, fun loving people. Alternatively, she may remember us only as those 'crazy Americans'. I'm sure we were the talk of the town for the next few days.



These unplanned, somewhat accidental experiences are what make these trips memorable. Thank you Sidar, Mary Ann and fellow travelers.



Sunday, October 10

Kalymnos to Leros (Mary)

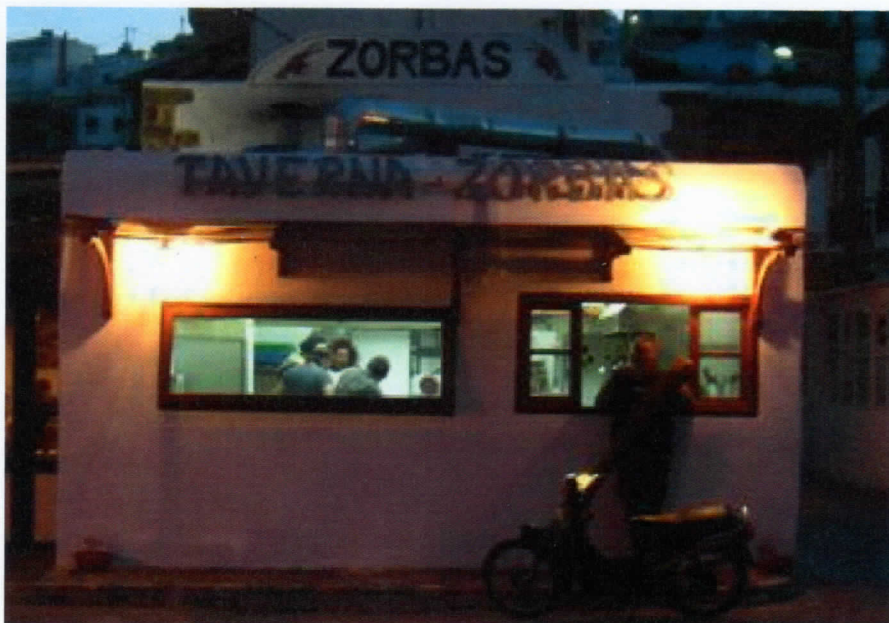


We sailed in the morning from Kalymnos (I think) and anchored briefly at Bay of St. Nicholas Bay, where we met the captain's delightfully wacky friend, Nicholas, who has lived there all of his life with his family and has taught himself seven languages. (???) His English sounding quite British. We then placed side bets on whether he did teach school or simply has an equally charming imagination.

We also spent much time with the group's favorite activity--the counting and classification of goats. We enjoyed a lazy morning after breakfast, while some washed out clothes, others climbed to the castle, to get a great view of the city. Later on, those who were very brave, Dale, Susan, Linde and Vivian, did some swimming, as the water was a little cold, and reported some sponges below.

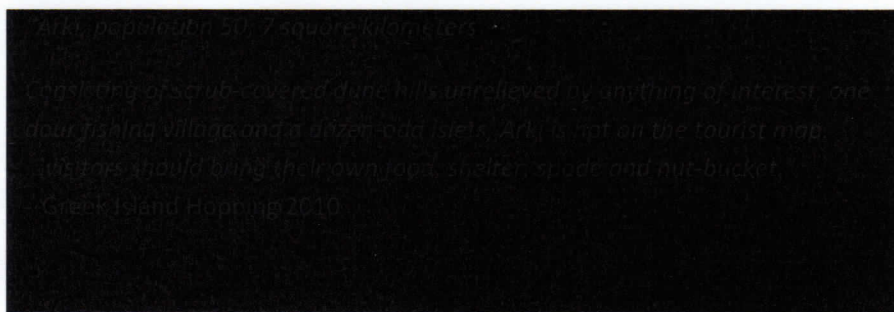


We sailed on to Leros, stopping at Palmalai harbor for a wonderful dinner at the local taverna with Sidar and the Captain for some light offerings: mezes of tzatziki, grilled octopus, calamari, chi-chi and silverfish (the last two particular items still a subject of much debate!) and for dessert, sliced apples with cinnamon.



Monday, October 11

Leros to Arki (Beth)

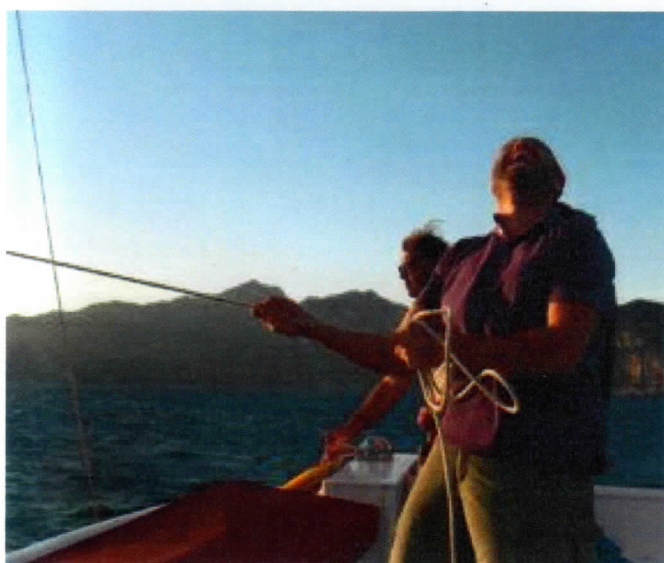


A few days earlier when it was clear that our original itinerary had been blown away by a storm in the Aegean, Arki was mentioned as one island that might be included on our new 'evade the storm' itinerary. I found the above description to be both amusing and intriguing. At this point in the trip, we were still getting to know our captain and crew and were not sure if a visit to Arki was their idea of a joke....or a true Aegean 'back door'. To be fair, another guidebook while describing Arki as one of the least visited of the Greek Islands, did go on to say there were rooms to be rented, a taverna, a mini-mart and that it had become somewhat of a haven for yachting types. My curiosity had been piqued.

Our day began in Leros. Breakfast was delayed while Adem went ashore for fresh bread. Daily fresh bread is a treat I get only when traveling abroad. I'm happy to sip a cup of tea and enjoy the view of the harbor while waiting for Adem's return.

After breakfast the crew readies the boat for our departure from Pandeli, Leros. Once out of the harbor we are greeted by smooth water, pleasant temperatures and a light breeze. The crew raises the jib and the foresail and the captain turns off the motor. For the first time on the trip we are truly sailing! It is amazing how quiet it is with the motor off. The sounds of the wind in the sails and the boat cutting through the water are peaceful and relaxing. The entire group is hanging out on the deck soaking up the experience. With the sails up, Sidar takes this time to explain terms, techniques and the physics of sailing. He also discusses historical and present day boat construction and some of the ancient boats he has helped rebuild.

His passion for sailing and the water is infectious and at this time there is no place I'd rather be. What a great day!



One by one, the crew joins us on the deck and, with Sidar as translator, we play '20 Questions' and find out about each of their families, girlfriends or wives, backgrounds, future plans, etc. They seem to enjoy that we are interested in them. Erdal especially likes the attention. His nickname among the crew is 'clean boy' for his obsessive attention to cleanliness around the boat...and for his sparkling white shorts!

As we approach Arki the crew brings down the sails. The jib line is jammed, necessitating a frantic trip to the kitchen to retrieve a knife from Ali. Erdal looks like a mad pirate holding the knife in his teeth as he walks out to free the line. Soon we are anchored in the Bay of Arki having a typical Turkish

lunch of rice and beans, cabbage with olives, the ever-popular bread with olive oil...and a new treat, red onion with salt. The Turkish way is to pour salt on the table and then dip chunks of red onion in it and eat. We are assured that Erdal will not mind that we are dumping salt all over the table. Watermelon for dessert while we are entertained by watching the goats come down from the rocky hills into a stone enclosure. The crew cannot believe how fascinated we are by goats. This is a good bay for swimming and snorkeling. No archeological finds but Erdal dives deep under the boat and retrieves two big shells from the opening to an octopus nest.

We pull anchor and move to the main bay of Arki. The guidebooks are about right. Scrubby hills, a smattering of houses, a few little churches, a mini-mini-mart, three tavernas and lots of cats. We go ashore to stretch our legs and see if there is anything else to see. Not much. More goats.

Great news from Nikolas' Taverna...they have a big fish (red striper) that they will cook for us if we all eat there...otherwise they will send it to Patmos to be sold. Of course we say 'yes'. This turns out to be another wonderful group meal. Salad, calamari and wine to start...then the fish. Grilled over indirect heat, no seasoning, no aromatics...just the flavor of the fish and the fire. Yummy! Sidar instructs us that to respect the fish, you eat it all. Vivian takes the tail, Captain Selo the head...and the rest of us devour the rest. The cats get a few scraps and a local dog gets the two large eyes. Afterwards we dip our bread in the juices left on the platter to consume the last bit of the fish. What a fabulous meal!



From our waitress we learn a bit of how life is on such a small, remote island. There is no doctor, no police, no fire department. There was a fire here a week or two ago and it was fought by the locals. It was at night so a helicopter could not be sent from Samos. Luckily they got it put out as it was close to a gas station and could have been much worse. When women are pregnant on Arki, they go to Patmos about a month before their due date and stay until their baby is born. For me, this is truly one of those places that is great to visit, but I wouldn't want to live here. I went away with a deep appreciation for the people who live here full time.



A little shopping and a raki at the café/gift shop next door. The big find was a t-shirt that says: "Αυτό το μπλουζάκι το πήρα από ΑΡΚΙΟΥΣ". A few shirts were purchased without really knowing what it said. We found out later it roughly translates to "this t-shirt is from Arki".

Back to the boat for a nightcap and conversation. What an outstanding day this has been. 'Thanks' to Sidar and Captain Selo for taking us to Arki! I go to sleep reliving this day and wondering what adventure awaits us tomorrow.

Today's Sidarisms:

- This is not the warm arms of your mother. (when describing the compulsory military service)
 - Don't speak as if you are farting.
 - This is the most goating group I've ever had!
 - What you possess will possess you.
 - Give me your bread and you will die. (when dipping the bread in the juices of the whole fish after dinner)
 - Respect the fish by eating the whole thing.
 - If I spit up it's my mustache; if I spit down it's my beard. (Turkish version of 'between a rock and a hard place')
- (See more Sidarisms at the end of the journal.)

The website that tells about the ships Sidar has helped rebuild is:

http://www.360derece.info/english/360_eng.htm



Back in the harbor, we finally found a shop selling sponges. These were once the economic mainstay of the island but have since been all but fished out. At 4:00 p.m., the Captain reported a short break in the windy storm and decided that we should make a break for a small bay on the east side of the island. By 6:00 p.m., Adem and Erdal had us tied fast in Paleonisos Bay and the Captain declared it "Drink Time"! Our cook Ali had spent the day making mousaka which we enjoyed very much.

By the time we had finished the mousaka and much wine, we had agreed that we would make an "American" meal for the crew. A great debate then ensued as we attempted to identify the components of this meal. I offered to make chili rellenos but that got vetoed. We ended up promising to come up with an Indiana pork pot roast and some side dishes. Earlier we had talked about having the crew show/teach us some local dances but at this point we decided to hit the sack. One last look at the dark night sky and a plethora of stars and all the cabin doors were closed.



Tuesday, October 12

Arki to Patmos to Lipsi (Cliff)



We left Arki on the 15 and made it to Patmos. The sky was grey, the weather cool, and Captain Sek wanted to get across the open water before the weather deteriorated. We arrived about 8:45 and enjoyed a typical refreshing breakfast before our 45 minute walk to the World Heritage site of the Monastery of St. John and nearby Cave of the Apocalypse.

According to Wikipedia:

Patmos is mentioned in the Christian scriptural Book of Revelation. The book's introduction states that its author, John, was on Patmos when he was given and recorded a vision from Jesus. Early Christian tradition ascribed this writer John of Patmos as John the Apostle, though some modern scholars are uncertain. As such, Patmos is a destination for Christian pilgrims. Visitors can see the cave where John is said to have received the Revelation (the Cave of the Apocalypse), and several churches on the island are dedicated to Saint John.

Enroute to Lipsi in the afternoon, the tourists staged a “mini-mutiny,” and took over at least the galley while the crew looked on from a distance. Vivian, Beth, Mary, Melinda, Joan, Susan, Linde and (??who did I miss?) spent much of the time wondering how Ali could do so much with so little space.

Ali spent much of the time pacing outside like a nervous dad-to-be. Despite his concerns, the crew and guests eventually enjoyed a “typical” American dinner which included appetizers of chips with avocado guacamole and fruit salad, pot roast, mango salsa, grape salad, and dessert of peach cobbler with amaretto. An abundance of smiles and favorable comments confirmed the success of the mutiny—no one was forced to walk the plank.

While in a mellow mood afterward, the crew was subjected to a round of “Twenty Questions” about their families, work, and other personal inquiries. The evening ended with Çeto, Ali and Adem performing traditional folk dances.

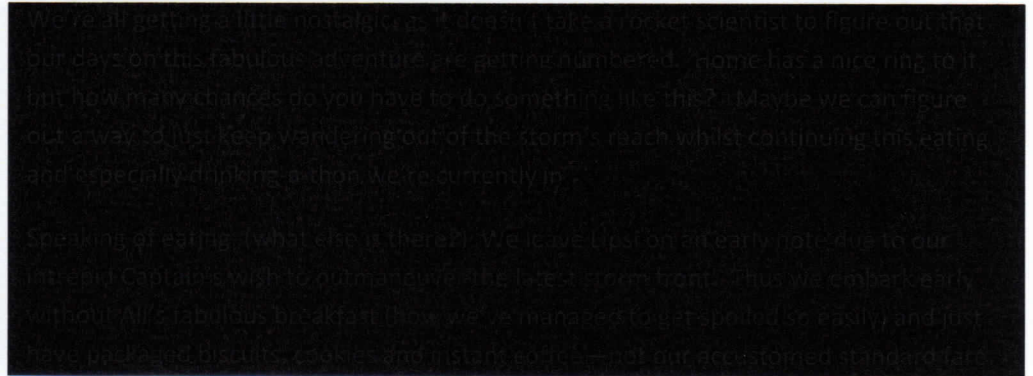


Vivian and Joan preparing the meat.



Wednesday, October 13

Lipsi to Kalymnos to Bodrum (Melinda)



Those of us who thought we could manage down below during our departure get a rude awakening (I'm speaking for myself here, but Lord!) as the boat starts lurching over huge swells. Some of us stayed in the protected cabin, hoping to catch a glimpse of Susan making a return appearance scooting across the floor while perched upon the couch, always a treat to see. But no, the Captain has now decided that he must pamper us a bit more by slowing down the motor during such interludes. Eventually the sun did come out, the excitement is over, and we are headed to Kalymnos—again. Is it anyone's imagination, or are we traveling in a circular fashion?

But, how can anyone complain? Now we know where to get the yummiest Gyros, where the best bakeries are (the eating frenzy, it just doesn't stop) and more sponges are awaiting. This is, after all the sponge capital of the world, and selection is unbeatable. Who knew what process they have to go through with all the pounding, squeezing grit to become the lovely specimens that we see. This is our last chance to use our Greek Euros, and it's been a bit dicey to estimate what we'll be needing without the



aid of our friendly credit cards. We sit back and watch each other come back on board with last minute purchases, some of us leaping on to the boat by departure time, and we all have fun with show and tell.



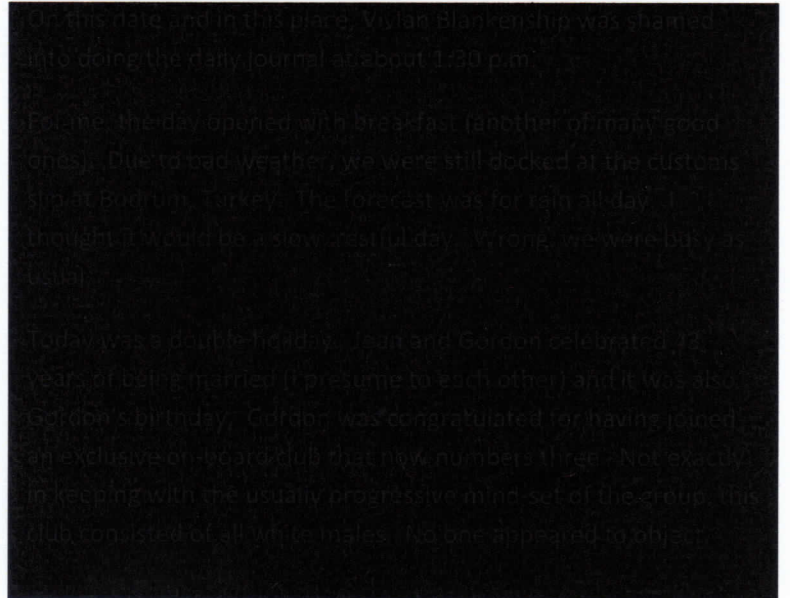
All the while Ali is making visits from the galley; the pressure is on—he's sweating! Appropriately, this is the last official meal of the trip, and he feels that he must live up to his reputation. And he does. With THIRTEEN dishes, all of them delicious, picture worthy (Beth, share those courses with us) and we enjoy every last bite as we sit on the deck in Bodrum with the Turkish flag flying full sail—never looking better. We all take pictures as couples with the flag behind, now it's getting serious, this ending thing. And who would have thought it would be so difficult to catch a properly unfurled flag in the wind, and a happy, smiling, sunburned face at the same time?

On our own: Mary and I thought we were the only ones lucky enough to stumble across the Farmer's Market and all of its splendor. Favorite find: knives fashioned from the horns of our friends the goats! Now, wish that we had bought 10. Because we loved those goats, Sidar! Then off to the Turkish Bath; thinking that we need one of these every six months, but forgetting that the oil stays in your hair for a long time....a very long time. Discovery of the day: The Istanbul Airport has a hair salon open 24 hours so that @ 3 AM while you're spending the night at the airport you can go wash your hair! Is this a great country, or what?

Mary Ann, we can't thank you enough for including us. Sidar, you're priceless. Thanks to everyone, we had a blast.

Thursday, October 14 (*Gordon's birthday, Eustis' anniversary*)

Bodrum (Vivian)



About 9 a.m., with Sidar as our guide, we headed out to the Bodrum Castle of St. Peter and the Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology. The highlight of the tour was hearing about Sidar's personal involvement in the reconstruction of the shipwreck of the ancient Uluburun (c. 14th century B.C.). The Uluburun is the oldest excavated shipwreck known and a full scale model of it is on display. The view of the boat is from bow to stern, with all the decks visible and the cargo and other shipboard items on display in their known location within the wreck. Items found included fully packed amphoras, jewelry, tools and Bronze Age arms. As a group, we spent a good three hours touring the museum. Sidar was pleased with our interest and told Mary Ann that no other group had spent as much time with him there. Our interest made us hungry; filling the mind must empty the stomach.



Since it was still raining, we returned to the Zeus and ordered five kinds of excellent pizzas. Yummy! We discussed upcoming activities for the next two days-Friday and Saturday-and passed out business cards with addresses, etc. We amused ourselves watching a tour gulet trying to moor next to us at Customs. They had tried to reach Kos but the passengers made it return due to the weather. We groaned when it backed into the Customs dock with a crash, and we were confident that would never have happened had our Captain Selo been at the helm.

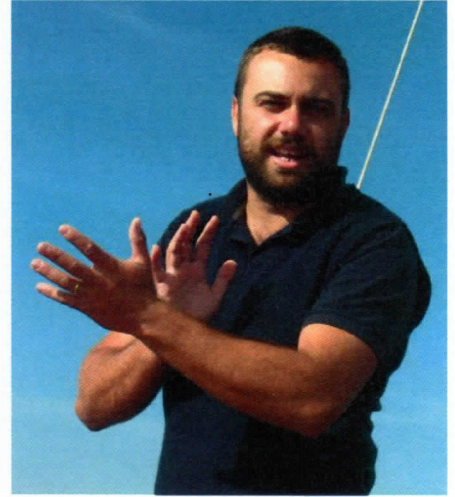
Beth collected Sidarisms during our trip. The two she has recorded for today are:

- "Even if you are speaking the word of God, you shouldn't be speaking too long."
- Sidar closed the curtains in the cabin so what little sun we had that day would not glare on the men sitting on the couch. Sidar then remarked "Don't kiss each other when I close the curtains."

Beth says: Here are more Sidarisms. Some are Turkish sayings, some are just funny things that came up and some are things that are 'just so Sidar'.

SIDARISMS

- This world is moving.
- So that's how it works.
- For security reasons...
 - I cannot tell you what our plans are.
 - I cannot answer that (question).
 - ...others ???
- Stars are like rich bitches; planets are like working women.
- Let's do it.
- Not every man with a beard is your father.
- Don't worry. No waves. We're going to hit this rock and finish it.
- Let's drink in order to get more beautiful.
- This is not the warm arms of your mother. (military service)
- Don't speak as if you are farting.
- This is the most goating group I've ever had.



- What you possess will possess you.
- Give me your bread and you will die. (sopping up fish juices with bread)
- Respect the fish by eating the whole fish.
- If I spit up it's my mustache, if I spit down it's my beard. (~between a rock and a hard place)
- Go for it.
- Even if you're speaking the word of God, you shouldn't speak too long.
- Don't kiss each other when I close the curtains.

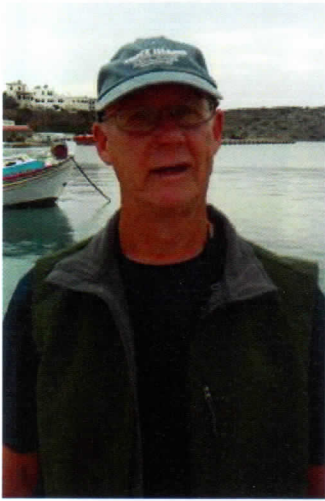
I also made note of one Mary Ann-ism

- The Turkish flies.



Thursday, October 14

Bodrum (Gordon)



Made this morning for a light rain and feeling on the Zeus. The crew had great food ready and on the table. After breakfast we departed the vessel with Sidar as our guide for the Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archeology. We spent three plus hours exploring, learning history and lore. By the time we departed the Museum it had become quite stormy so everyone returned to the Zeus and ordered out for pizza. We enjoyed pizza and beer with the crew while the storm raged and increased over the afternoon.

Late afternoon the rain stopped and Joan and I took a walk along the water front. They were setting up for their boat show featuring many beautiful and expensive gulets. Joan and I returned to the "Zeus" around 5 pm to enjoy a glass of wine before others came back to celebrate our wedding anniversary.



That evening around 7, Captain Selo led us to a favorite restaurant of his, Nazli



Meyhane, where we enjoyed mezes with wine then fish (fresh tuna) which he had purchased and had the restaurant cook for us. Included in the meal was ground fava beans (like hummus) with fennel seed, eggplant marinated with red bell peppers, octopus cold and marinated, calamari – fried (some the best I have ever eaten) and broiled mushrooms with parmesan cheese.

While we were enjoying our dinner the skies opened up. We were under cover but many of the diners (mostly made up of locals) were not. They along with the wait staff at our and surrounding restaurants had to run for cover.

After dinner we walked back to the gulet where I was treated to a delicious birthday cake (coffee mousse filling). Thank you Linde. We all then turned in or rolled into bed about 11 PM.



Friday, October 15

Bodrum (Gordon)

I had little sleep last night as a major storm blew through which caused the lines and rigging of the "Zeus" to keep slapping all night. Morning came with showers still about. Breakfast was our last meal aboard the "Zeus".

David and Susan departed the group and headed off to catch their ferry to Kos and then on to Rhodes. Around 0930 the rest of us said good bye to "Zeus" and the crew and made our way to the Su Hotel.



After getting to our room, most everybody went exploring Bodrum on their own. Joan and I wandered back down to the waterfront which was having their annual boat race removing the Turkish gulet and then went and had coffee in an outdoor cafe. From there we went back along the waterfront and up to the Farmer's Market by the bus station. I was very polite and a wonderful place to spend time. Joan made the pay for an little old man who was selling hand carved wooden spoons and I made a collection. We later went back to him and ask if we could take his picture he just beamed.

We then wandered back to the Su Hotel and relaxed in their dining room. We found ourselves in place to go to a shop afterward. When Joan and Beth arrived and asked if they could join us. Soon Dale and Paul arrived and we enjoyed the other dinner. (Joan and I) headed back to our room to think about our adventures over the past two weeks.



Friday, October 15

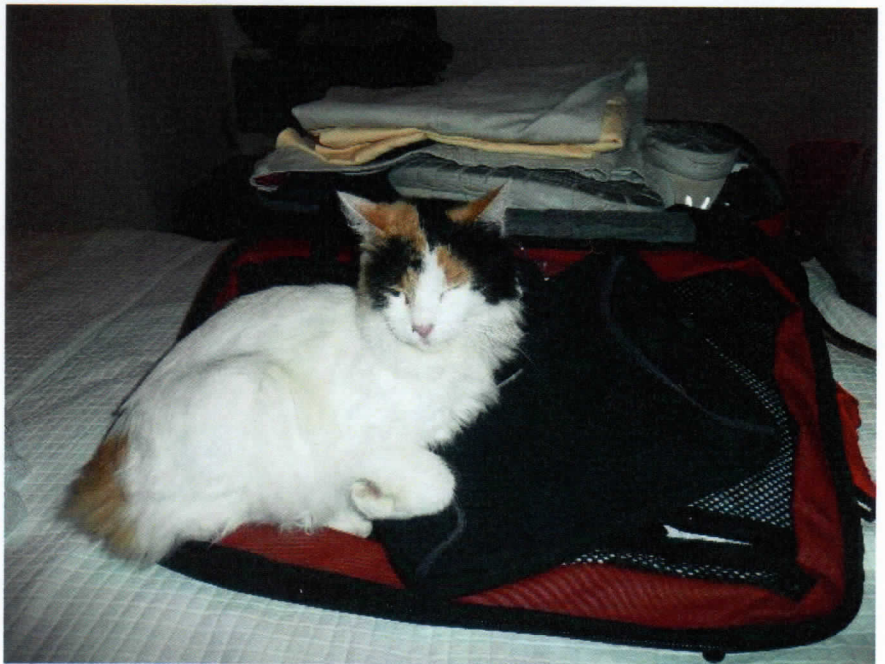
Bodrum (Beth & Vivian)

Today is our last day waking up on the Zeus. The engines have not run for awhile thus the showers were short and cold...but we are wide awake! A quick breakfast, final things tucked into suitcases and then the good-byes start. First to the Corbins who are catching the ferry to Rhodes, then to Captain Selo...finally we disembark and say good-bye to the Zeus. She's been a good home for 10 days and we'll miss the fun times onboard and being gently rocked to sleep each night.

We leave the Zeus for a walk uphill through the narrow streets to the Su Otel. I'm sure we were quite the spectacle, the long string of us like ducks in a row, wrestling our uncooperative suitcases and heavy trinket-laden packs. What luck...our rooms are ready! Warm showers and air conditioning!! Our first order of business is to turn over our damp and musty clothes to the housekeeping staff at the Su to be laundered. Much easier than spending time in a laundromat.

On to souvenir shopping and lunch. We find a Turkish flag to go along with the Greek flag we picked up in Kalymnos. With some effort we find and purchase the ubiquitous Turkish tea glasses with red and gold saucers. Lunch is at Körfez, a restaurant on the waterfront with a charming owner that we met before the trip. One last order of calamari and red mullet (this time Vivian ate the heads!) More shopping in the maze of shops between the harbors, then up the street to the grocery near the Otogar. We see the weekly market but are out of energy and out of room for any more souvenirs. Like locals by now, we dodge cars and motorscooters on the way back to the Su, pick up our laundry, shower, then treat ourselves to CLEAN CLOTHES! Who knew what a pick-me-up clean clothes could be!

We are leaving tomorrow right after the visit at Ali's village, so we have to be completely packed for the trip home when we leave in the morning. Lucky for us, we have a packing helper...Viski. She is one of the resident cats at the Su and has been our constant companion here, thanks in part to the cat food Vivian purchased at the beginning of the trip! Viski makes herself at home in our room, lounging on the bed and inspecting all of our belongings. It's good when the hotels have cats, but by the end of a trip, it just makes us more anxious to get home to our own.



We opt for a dinner at the hotel, joining Joan and Gordon who are already there. Soon Dale and Linde arrive and pull up two more chairs—one last group dinner. Camerons stop by and chat on their way back from their day's adventure.

A glass of raki is all the nudge we need to fall asleep. It's been another of many good days.

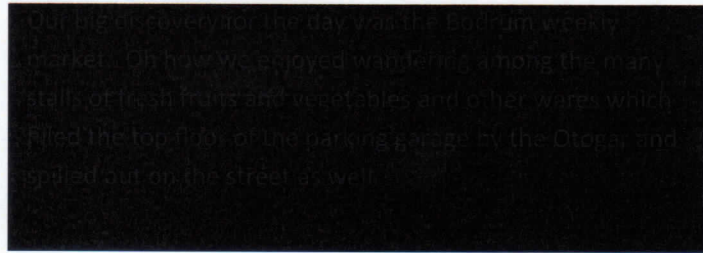
Friday, October 15

Bodrum (Mary Ann)

The bitter-sweetness of our trip continues. After losing Sidar yesterday, we gradually began to say good-bye to the Friends. After breakfast the Corbins left us to catch the ferry to Kos. They would ultimately end up on Rhodes, spending some days before coming back to the US.

The rest of us packed up our things and said good-bye to the gulet which had been our "home" for these past few weeks. We would say our farewell to the crew later, as we still had one more excursion to enjoy with most of them.

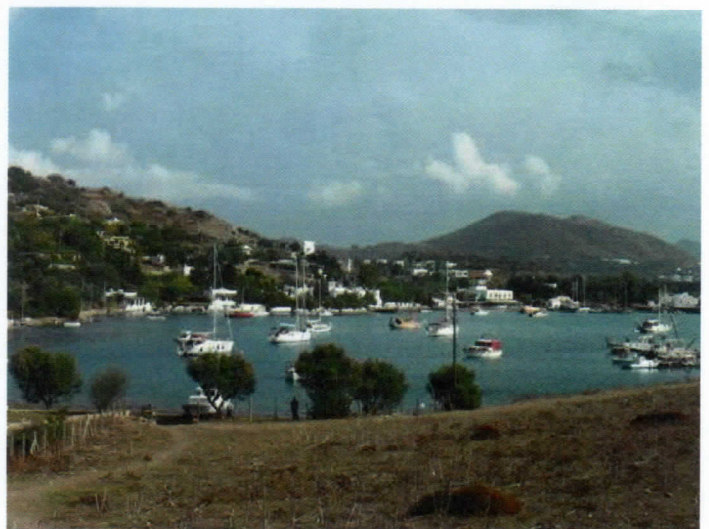
After leaving the gulet we made our way back to the Su Otel, where our adventure had begun. The Twins would leave later in the day, but went with us to leave their things there while they did some last minute shopping before leaving for the flight home.



Later we took a dolmus to Gümüşlük. While we were wandering around this sleepy village, we stumbled upon Dale and Linde who had gone out exploring as well.

We enjoyed our time in Gümüşlük. We watched a fisherman work on his boat, and then later climbed to the top of the hill on the adjacent peninsula and enjoyed commanding views up and down the coastline and out into nearby islands. Before going back into Bodrum, we joined locals and enjoyed a meatball sandwich as the sun set.

We took the dolmus back into Bodrum and discovered that Beth and Vivian, plus the Kiskers and Eustis' were all enjoying a meal together at the hotel. After some conversation with them, we decided to call it a day.....a very good day.



Saturday, October 16

Bodrum and Iasos (Mary Ann)

Those of us remaining were off on an adventure today. We were going to explore Ali's village. The captain had made arrangements for a vehicle and at 9 a.m., he arrived to take the eight of us in a minibus to Iasos. We were a bit surprised and delighted when we made a stop along the way to pick up Çeto and his wife, Turceyin, who were joining us for the day.



It took us about an hour to get to Iasos. Ali met us and he very proudly walked us through the ancient site. We had the place to ourselves. There was no one else around except for some cows and an occasional motorbike. Ali was a good tour guide and patiently showed us various aspects of the ancient city. We were constantly amazed at what we saw....remnants of buildings, theaters, etc. We circled through the site and ended up back along the water.

Then we were led through the streets of the village and ended up at the local museum. I think we were all amazed at the things on display in the museum....wonderful treasures which had been found at the site and were now on display.

Afterwards we followed Ali up to his house, where his mother and some relatives were waiting for us. We were treated to goslème, which the ladies prepared over a wood fire. It was a real treat.

Then it was time to return to Bodrum. Beth and Vivian were flying out later in the afternoon. We thought we were dropping them off at the airport. But we ended up leaving them by the side of the road at the entrance to the airport, where they caught a cab for the rest of the journey to the airport.



Once we were back at the hotel, we took it easy until it was time for happy hour at the Eustis room. Then later, the Kiskers, Eustis' and Camerons went out to dinner. On our way back, we strolled along the harbor and found the Zeus again. It had moved from its place near Customs and was now closer to the main part of town.

We left Bodrum on October 17, as did the Eustis' and Kiskers. We were all going back to Istanbul....Kiskers and Camerons to stay a few more days and Eustis' to fly home. We were on the same flight as the Kiskers, and then shared a taxi once we got back in Istanbul. Kiskers stayed in Old Town near the Spice Market. We imposed on Sidar and his family for a few days before returning home.

We enjoyed those few extra days in Istanbul. We had the opportunity to explore some parts of Istanbul that were new to us. Probably most enjoyable was just some time to walk along the Bosphorous and time to explore some new neighborhoods. We have fond memories of spending hours one morning, at a Starbucks, which was located right on the Bosphorous and had a fabulous view.

So our Greek Islands adventure had come to an end. In a word, it was fabulous....and probably the best vacation we have ever enjoyed. The Friends who were with us.....the crew.....the boat.....Sidar. What a combination!!

It truly was the magical trip, and the adventure could never be repeated even if we tried. It was a once in a lifetime experience, and we are grateful we could spend it with such wonderful folks!

Corbin's Postscript

October 15-21, Kos and Rhodes

We left the boat and Bodrum on the rainy morning of October 15 and headed to Kos via the Kos-Bodrum Express. We spent the night in the inexpensive, simple, but attractive Hotel Afendoulis, about 1km from the harbor. We had a great lunch in the Barbas Taverna across the street.



The Asklepieion is located to the Asklepieion (photo left) on a guided tour – slightly embarrassing but a lot cheaper than a taxi. On a hill 3 km from town, it's a huge site on three levels: the ruins of several ancient temples, a medical school and a hospital that followed the teachings of Hippocrates. The view from the top is breathtaking. We returned to town for lunch and a swim in the harbor, boarded the ferry to Rhodes.

We arrived in Rhodes on a night of pouring rain. A walking tour ride through alleys brought us to the back wall of the Old City and the little Hotel Andrea, run by a gregarious couple, the French Aline Camille and Belgian Patrick. Our tiny room overlooked the breakfast terrace and its panoramic view of the Old City (photo right).



Our first day was spent in the amazing indoor-outdoor archaeological museum. The highlight of our time in the Old City. In the evening we had a delicious meal at Romeo's, an elegant outdoor restaurant a few alley twists from our hotel.

The second day we took an hour bus ride to Lindos, a beautiful white village on the east coast topped by its Acropolis (below) on a high cliff over the water.

Amidst the jam of people and tourist shops on the way up there, we found a very ornate little Greek Orthodox Church. The interior walls were entirely covered with pictographs depicting Bible stories from Adam and Eve to the four horsemen of the Apocolipse. Lindos was well worth the day we spent there. We're also pretty sure that that Sidar doesn't approve of the way the Temple of Athena is restored.

On our third day we explored Rhodes new town and the beaches while dodging intermittent torrents of rain – a good reason to stop and eat. On our last day we walked outside the wall around the Old City and peered in each Gate, another experience we recommend. Although we had cloudy, windy and stormy weather on Rhodes, we benefitted from the lack of crowds.



Kiskers Postscript

Before meeting in Bodrum Dale and I stopped in Amsterdam for four days to visit museums, walk along canals and watch the incredible number of bikers. This was our first visit outside of the airport. On Saturday night we met Beth and Vivian for the first time in the Cameron's room and had a delightful visit with them.

After the leaving the boat and settling at the Su we spent Friday catching a mini bus to the Bodrum peninsula to the towns of Gümüşlük and Yalıkavak that Sidar had recommended. Before we boarded our bus we happened on the large Bodrum open air market. These markets are always a fascinating experience.



On the beach of Gümüşlük we met a Brit who told us all about the archeological excavations off shore. Then we met him down the beach again and he insisted we taste the wonderful local feta cheese he loves.

We had lunch at a tiny restaurant over the water. Evidently a lot of British vacation in this town. He told us how to catch a bus to the next town and that we had to transfer to another bus part way there. The first bus driver let us out too soon and we spent an hour trying to figure out where the other bus stop was which turned out to be a block away, down the hill but out of our sight line.

The bus ride along the coast was wonderful. We finally arrived at Yalıkavak that had a very wide bay with a walkway along the water thus no cars or scooters. Dale counted only seven boats in the entire harbor. We had a beer on the waterfront among people admiring the sunset and caught our crowded mini bus back to Bodrum.

On Sunday night we caught our plane back to Istanbul with the Camerons. We shared a taxi to our hotel. Even with Sidar's phone instructions to the driver he couldn't find the Hotellino and finally let us off several blocks away. We walked down hill in the dark and a carpet salesman pointed us to the hotel. We loved the modern hotel next to the big hole Istanbul is digging under the sea. We were near the Spice Market and tram.

In the next two days we enjoyed visiting the spices, the Grand Bazaar and new town again. We found fascinating the Holy Quran in its 1400th Anniversary Exhibition at the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art that the Eustis's had recommended. Leaving the hotel at 3:30 a.m. they gave us a packet of Turkish coffee to take home. What a wonderful trip!

Mary's Postscript



Our final day in Bodrum:

After breakfast, and final farewells Melinda and I visited the huge Bodrum weekly farmers market, and then finally treated ourselves to a great Turkish bath, complete with oil rub, which unfortunately we continued to wear for the next few days, (The oil! It doesn't go away!), and then a wonderful lunch at "The Place" fish restaurant as a way of saying goodbye to the trip. We spent the night at the airport to await an early plane--as we all agree--that's a long way to spend the night.



Now at home, the trip remains a lovely memory, of an unforgettable time. Many many thanks to everyone for the fun times, and especially to Sidar and Mary Ann for all of your careful planning and preparation. You promised a trip unlike any other, and it was. A very heartfelt thank you!



Sidar and Greek Island Voyage October, 2010



Our Guides in Knidos, Turkey October, 2010



