

## Our Holiday in Greece Continues by Spiro Liacos. Mykonos. Sunday June 8, 2008

(see index page at [www.meanttobemusicals.com.au/Greece](http://www.meanttobemusicals.com.au/Greece))

As soon as we got off the boat at the New Port of Mykonos, 5 people came up to us offering us rooms. They had pictures of their establishments, and they were talking over the top of each other. We ended up getting two apartments with kitchens for a total of 80 Euro, only about 200m metres from Ornos beach, 2 kilometres out of the town. The lady drove us to the hotel, so we didn't have to buy bus tickets. We drove over Mykonos town which looked very pretty and 5 minutes later we were there. Brilliant. Everybody was saying that Mykonos is expensive. Not in June it isn't. Each room is supposed to cost 90 Euro in the middle season but it has cost us only 40 Euro. Have the Mykonians built too many hotels? Is there too much competition? Is a dot-com style crash coming?



Ornos is beautiful. The rectangular white-washed buildings with blue- or maroon-painted shutters look gorgeous. We went to the hotel's pool and the kids had a ball playing around in it. Nick has learned to swim the freestyle quite well. Athan can dog paddle the whole length of the pool, about 6 metres.



We then walked to the beach, which was lined with beach umbrellas and deck chairs. As Aussies, we chose just to sit on the sand. The sand was a little pebbly, but easy enough to walk on. The water was clean and fairly warm. There were plenty of fish swimming around and the kids and I enjoyed exploring some of the underwater small



tufts of sea weed at the

end of the beach around which most of the fish were. Very nice. After our souvlaki dinner, we went looking for a playground. A traffic cop told us there was one at the end of the beach but we didn't find it. We asked a lady sweeping the yard of her hotel and she said that Mykonos doesn't have any; Mykonos is only for party goers and people with alternative lifestyles, though she used the word gay. I have heard that Mykonos is a party island but we saw no evidence of wild behaviour. The seaside cafeterias were filled with families. It seems quite a nice place.

Monday June 9, 2008

We went to Mykonos Town (also called Hora by the locals) in the morning. What a beautiful place. We parked near the port and walked into the town. All the buildings were white-washed with blue-painted shutters and doors. The footpaths between the shops were grey slate and they had patterns of curvy white lines painted on them. The streets were narrow and brimming with shops and eateries. We walked past the tiny Church of St. Nicholas, right on the water front; totally white except for the blue dome. Around the corner was another church, totally white with a small bell at the top. Moving



on, we walked through Little Venice, so called because the eateries are right up against the water. Small waves lap against the rock wall that separates the tables and chairs



from the ocean. At the very end of the small strip of open-air cafeterias, the balconies of the bars overhang the wall and are directly over the ocean. They are supported by painted wooden

struts.

From here, the famous windmills could be seen on a low hill to the south. These are about 7m high cylindrical buildings with a conical thatched roof. Mykonos is quite a windy place, so many windmills were built to turn the wheat and barley into flour. The windmills had no sails, but they still looked great. We walked to them



and took a few shots.



Right next to them was a playground! Mykonos is not all party goers it seems. We stayed there for a while and then had tiropittes for lunch. After a little more walking around, we made our way to the port and boarded a ferry to Tinos. Tinos is the home of the Panagia Evangelistria



icon and the monastery that houses it. After a 30-minute ferry trip, we arrived at the port. We walked up the hill towards the monastery. The road has a carpeted strip bolted down on it, on which, apparently, people who want to make a special prayer crawl on towards the monastery. The monastery itself was quite attractive. It was surrounded by a wall and the cream-coloured church was

very pretty. Inside, the icon of Panagia could barely be seen under the silver gifts that people had left. We stayed a while and then went back to the port. The kids played on the playground for a while and I went for a walk around the town. The town wasn't very pretty, but it seems to be a proper town, with supermarkets, car dealerships, other shops. Mykonos's



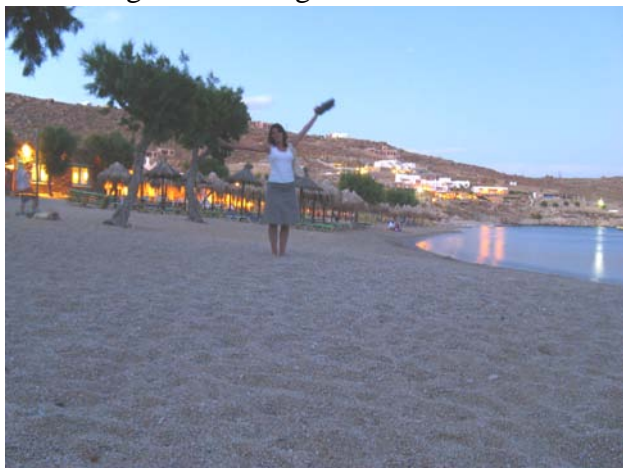


buildings in contrast seem exclusively tourist orientated.

We then got back on a ferry, this time a high-speed catamaran that only took 15 minutes to return to Mykonos. This one doesn't have open deck or lounge areas; it's like an aeroplane, though not as squasy. Our trip to Tinos was cost 5 Euro per adult, and we decided not buy return tickets because there were two return boats, one at 6 and one at 9. Unfortunately, the 6 o'clock ferry cost 11 Euro per adult, because it was the fast ferry.

I can't stand Greece's ferry system. The lady at Mykonos told us that if we lose our tickets, then we won't be able to board unless we purchase new ones. I suppose that it speeds up entry, because the crew doesn't have to bother with checking identity.

When we got back to Mykonos, we had dinner (toasted sandwiches; yum) and then went for a drive to Paradise Beach, the party capital of the island. The sun was just setting, so we knew there wouldn't be many people there. There were a few bars next to the small-pebble/sandy beach. One of them was pumping out loud dance music and a handful of (young) people were dancing. We bought some Cokes and ice-creams and drank to Paul Ganas's health (since he had told us about this beach). The boys were dancing and thinking that the bar scene is cool.



Tuesday June 10, 2008



We went to the island of Delos today. Delos is a small island near Mykonos. In the 5<sup>th</sup> BC it was the site of a prosperous city, with temples and buildings to house the business people who controlled trade all over the Mediterranean. The Delian League, the confederation of Greek city states that had joined together to fight the Persians, was based here. After Athens became the most powerful city state when it defeated the Persians, it removed the treasury of the Delian League from Delos to Athens, and the slow decline of the island began. The site is fantastic. The remains, including the walls, of many buildings can be seen. Temples, the theatre, ornate mosaics on the

floors of some of the dwellings, and remains of drains and cisterns used for carrying water into and out of the city. It was fairly hot, which makes walking around a little difficult. We went into the museum where we saw more ancient statues of gods and mythical Greek heroes. The original Lions of Naxos, which used to line the main street, are also housed in the museum; copies stand in their place outside. We climbed to the top of the 100m-hill (or so) with views of the whole island and beyond to Mykonos. It was very windy!





We then returned to Mykonos, had lunch in the town, and returned to our apartments. The kids went for a swim in the pool and I went for a drive to some of the island's beaches on the south-east coast. They were quite nice; the sand/gravel was clean and so was the water. After dinner, we went to Super Paradise beach, but no-one was there and none of



the bars were open. The kids were play fighting on the sand. Why did they call it Super Paradise? Was it a trick of the locals to take people away from Paradise beach?

Wednesday June 11, 2008



We packed up our stuff, and left it at a luggage deposit office near the port. We then walked around Mykonos town. I had left my USB stick in the internet café yesterday and it was on the desk today; what a stroke of luck. The boys and I went on the internet for an hour or so while the girls went shopping/browsing. We met up again for lunch and then went to the port to catch our ferry to Thira (Santorini). We had to wait in a huge line for the ferry. The tourist season is slowly bringing in more and more crowds. At 2:15, 15 minutes before we were due to depart, an announcement in Greek was made saying that the ferry wouldn't arrive until 3. Great, I thought but no-one seemed to mind. Then the same announcement was made in English. Oohhhhhhhhhhh!



Quite obviously there aren't many Greek-speaking people catching ferries at this time of year. The ferry finally came and

we headed off for Thira (Santorini). The Flying Cat was not pleasant; it was too cold and it was a little shabby. The seat numbers were non-existent so we had no idea where we were supposed to sit. We were finally told that passengers to Thira (Santorini) had to sit upstairs. We left our luggage in a big pile near the doorway. The sea was a little rough, too. However, most seats were empty and I found a powerpoint, so Athan entertained playing on the computer for about 2 hours. Thira (Santorini) here we come. Let's hope we can find accommodation easily.

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