

TRAVELING WITH THE STARS:

Melina Kanakaredes

Actress Melina Kanakaredes, who plays Detective Stella Bonasera on CSI: NY, wrote the May 13 episode of the CBS police drama. The second-generation Greek American who hails from Ohio shares her travel highlights and tips.

Q: Where have you been lately that you liked or were surprised by?

A: We went to St. Louis to visit family that had just moved from Los Angeles. The last time I was there I was 10 years old. Of course I remember the St. Louis Arch, but that's about it. I never expected it to be as cosmopolitan as it was. The kids loved the amusement park/playground called The City Museum. It was certainly a highlight for big kids and little kids alike.

We were also surprised by the wonderful restaurants. A special one that comes to mind for breakfast in downtown St. Louis is called Rooster. Definitely sample the chocolate chip crêpe and I suggest you feed it to your kids in the morning before you go to the City Museum. This way they can work off all the chocolate before you go home. I would also recommend dinner at family-owned Amigos Cantina in Kirkwood, Mo. Ask for my nephew Michael to serve you.

Q: What's the best place you've ever visited and why?

A: Monemvasia, Greece. It's in the Peloponnese. It is one of the most romantic, beautiful places in Greece and it's where the Greeks go for their honeymoon. I've traveled to Greece so many times and it wasn't until a few years ago that I discovered it. It's a mountain that had been separated from the mainland during an earthquake in 375AD. It is now an island without cars. You are either on foot or donkey. The exterior of the buildings are 500AD, but the inside is 2009. You dive off the rocks into the ocean to swim. You are surrounded by amazing 360-degree views of the water. It has five restaurants, all great. It is the ultimate secluded honeymoon getaway.

Q: What's the most surprising/unexpected place you've ever visited and why?

A: The point at which Victoria Falls meets Zimbabwe. Having never white-water rafted before, somehow I allowed myself, during a trip to Africa, to be convinced by friends to attempt the Grade 5 rapids on the border of

Zimbabwe and Victoria Falls where neither country would be responsible for your death. Fortunately, I survived to tell the story. Although it was beautiful, between the rapids and the crocodiles, my splash into the waters was terrifying at best.

Q: What's your favorite vacation spot and why?

A: Greece. Aside from the obvious benefits of our children continuing to learn about our culture and being allowed the opportunity to practice the Greek language, the country has so much to offer in the form of tourism. We frequent both northern and southern Greece traveling there every summer. I would say one of my favorite locations is Halkidiki, which is a three-fingered peninsula two hours away from Thessaloniki. The water is crystal clear with the most amazing shade of blue.

Q: Can you offer an insider tip or recommendation for your favorite vacation place?

A: Sani Asterias Suites is the place I recommend to stay on Halkidiki. A room on the ocean is best and the restaurants are phenomenal.



Our Heroic Struggles

Much more ought to be said on the recent work of George Zangalis. This book is a major work not merely because of its 600 pages and long title: *Migrant Workers and Ethnic Communities. Their Struggles for Social Justice and Cultural Rights. The Role of Greek-Australians* (Melbourne: Common Ground 2009). Above all it is a record of numerous struggles in the direction of a multicultural and democratic society waged by migrants and others from different ethnic backgrounds. To the author these joint inter-ethnic struggles had quite an impact, starting with the declaration of the principles of multiculturalism by the federal Government in 1972. By the end of the twentieth century all levels of government in the Australian Commonwealth had multicultural policies and programs.

The book is also original work. It is based largely on primary material collected by the author in the course of his own activities in Melbourne since 1950 but also material from activists in other Australian cities. The whole study cites about 700 persons who could be called multicultural activists. More than half this number are Greek Australians. The second largest group are British Australians or simply Australians. Among them are trade unionists like the author, teachers and other public servants, social workers, a few ALP politicians, philanthropists and philhellenes, the latter becoming active in the campaign to free Greek political prisoners, restore Greek democracy and support Cyprus independence.

The author is mainly interested in the struggles occurring in the wider society where problems and inequalities were felt rather than in ethnic communities. Hence we have campaigns to give migrants a say in workplaces, trade unions, politics and the media and campaigns for multicultural education which included the teaching of ethnic community languages in public schools. Some joint activities are dealt with in detail, especially migrant workers' conferences and the work of ethnic community councils or similar

bodies from the 1970s onwards. The largest chapters deal with the struggles for culture, language and identity; and Greek-Australian and other migrants in politics. There is even a chapter about the 'English on the Job' campaign.

By concentrating on 'grass-roots' activities the author contributes to a greater understanding of the processes involved in developing a multi-ethnic and multicultural society. He also presents us with short but interesting biographies of activists, especially Greek-Australians.

Although Zangalis relies heavily on the struggles of Greek-Australians and on Greek language material to tell his story the book by no means presents a Greek or Hellenocentric view which tends to view migrants and expatriates as successful entrepreneurs like the adventurous and clever Odysseus who returns to Ithaca with fortunes. On this point the author had little trouble in noting (from census reports) that the Odyssey of migrants all too often started and ended in factories and other workplaces receiving low pay after which they struggled on the age pension.

The material used by the author no less than his approach or methodology tells us quite a lot about Greek-Australians and their role. We certainly know why they have public presence including in business. Zangalis points to a large and growing body of writings by Greek-Australians. Much of it is literature which has been researched and appears in the published works of Dr George Kanarakis (Charles Sturt University).

All told, George Zangalis has challenged us to take a closer look at our history. Among other things his study adds to our understanding of the relationship between ethnic communities and society, labour history and Australian history and culture as a whole. Greek-Australians and others have written extensively in these areas but there are surprisingly few references to inter-ethnic workers struggles which is the main narrative of this book.

Dr. M.P. Tsounis