



'Blue Flags' in Samos

Four beaches on the eastern Aegean island of Samos, all in the greater region of the municipality of Pythagorio, have been awarded the "Blue Flag" distinction this year, the Greek Society for the Protection of Nature announced on Monday.

The awarding of a Blue Flag is based on compliance with 29 criteria, namely, compliance with the requirements and standards for excellent bathing water quality, and confirmed with regular tests conducted twice a month during the summer season.

The Blue Flag is a voluntary eco-label awarded to more than 3,200 beaches and marinas in 37 countries across Europe, South Africa, Morocco, Tunisia, New Zealand, Canada and the Caribbean.

The Blue Flag Programme is owned and operated by the independent non-profit organisation Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

New Acropolis Museum website

Just a few days before its official inauguration, the New Acropolis Museum will open its electronic "gates" to the public on Monday at the website www.theacropolis-museum.gr.

The website introduces the Museum to online visitors, enabling them to tour the display areas, and to read up on its history and operation.

The site is a virtual electronic map that takes the visitor on a tour of Greece's unique cultural heritage, unfolding the route from antiquity to the present that encompasses not only the exhibits and Greece's history, but also modern-day Hellenic culture.

The site will also apply an e-ticketing system, for the first time by a Greek museum, enabling future visitors anywhere in the world to book entry to the New Acropolis Museum at a specific date and time. This innovative application will enable the Museum to manage visiting hours while at the same time decongesting possible waiting lines at the entrance.

The Museum's electronic gate will open on Monday, June 15, at 11 p.m. (local time), while the Museum itself will be inaugurated on Saturday, June 20, by Greek President of the Republic Karolos Papoulias.

Entry to the Museum on its first three days of operation (Sunday, June 21 to Tuesday, June 23) will be available only to holders of e-tickets, while tickets will begin to be sold at the Museum beginning on Wednesday, June 24.

Fitness: Greek dancing

What is it?

In the wake of Stavros Flatley's recent appearance in the final of Britain's Got Talent, there were opportunities aplenty for gyms to jump on the Greek dancing bandwagon — and so they surely will, Gymbox showing the way with a Greek dance workout on July 1. It promises jumping, lunging, side-stepping and twirling with a few of the dancing duo's trademark moves — including that "chainsaw" hip shimmy — thrown in for good measure.

Who's it aimed at?

From those who want a giggle to those looking to relive tension — optional plate-smashing is included at the end.

What's the idea?

Greek dancing is aerobically demanding. In the hour-long Gymbox class you will quickly work up a sweat with furious-paced moves



that include steps from the most common Greek dance, the Syrto, which is performed in a line that moves from left to right in "follow my leader" fashion. It is quite easy to learn but, if all else fails, just try a Tsifteteli, the Greek version of a belly dance — there are no set moves, you just get out there and wiggle.

Can I try?

Classes start at Gymbox clubs across London this month (gym-

box.co.uk). Other UK gyms are planning similar additions to their timetables but, in the meantime, discover where you can find lessons at greekdance.org.

Worth the effort?

An hour of Greek dancing can burn up an impressive 296 calories — more than some aerobics classes — and, provided you steer clear of the sticky baklava and yoghurt afterwards, could lead to a big Greek fat loss.

Hairdressing fight coming to a head

HAIRDRESSERS across NSW are sharpening their scissors in the fight to enforce greater regulation of their industry.

Hair and Beauty Australia's (HBA) NSW executive director Gregory Christo is lobbying the State Government to make amendments to the Hairdressers Act 2003 when it is reviewed later in the year. The act focuses on monitoring people who

want to become a hairdresser or open their own salon.

HBA will put forward a three-point proposal, including a state exam for all apprentices and students graduating from fast-track courses; a driver's licence-type system where people are placed on a two-year precautionary licence; and the introduction of a salon licensing system.

"We want greater regulation in the industry," Mr Christo said.

"The industry would be taken more seriously and

licensing would allow the Government to have a greater hold on the matter."

Representing around 800 salons statewide, HBA said its biggest concern was the growing number of salons operating from a residential property.

"Some people finish their apprenticeship and the following day they are doing people's hair at home," Mr Christo said.

"They are dealing with chemicals that can damage your skin.

"We only make submis-

sions based on what our members want; our members have fully supported our position on home hairdressing."

The NSW Hair and Beauty Award - which replaced WorkChoices last September - outlines the award scheme for all hairdressers, while a new separate Hair and Beauty Industry Award which covers only those salons that operate as a company will come into effect next year.

One hairdresser contacted the Leader to outline the poor working conditions she had encountered in her eight years' working in the sector.

"We're told we won't receive overtime wages as we have a give-and-take system," the letter read.

"We stay and do overtime but in return [we are supposed] to be able to go home early at [other] times. Of course with a system like this everyone feels it's take, take and take."

Public consultation for changes to the Hairdressers Act 2003 closes on June 19.

Article from The Leader

CAPTION: Fine cut: "Headgardeners" at Cronulla will follow the possible changes to the Hairdressers Act closely. Picture: John Veage

