

# Greece Just Becomes More Unforgettable Each Time

By **Paul Sourlos**

These are my ten most vivid memories of Greece for 2010:



## 1. Countless posters of Julia Alexandratou

Seriously, this girl is absolutely everywhere around Athens, on the side of every major road, above bus stops, even on the way to the airport, so that your last memory of Greece will be Julia. The truth is, her notoriety comes primarily from her sexuality, but you have to give credit where credit is due. The model knows how to 'spin it' in her favour, the release of her sex tape in 2010 only propelling her fame to new heights. Take a look for yourself at the statement on the poster. Translated it means: Play as you are. This is a not so subtle reference to Julia's comfort and public experience with nudity. I consider this rather controversial, as what message do young women in the Greek

community receive from this poster? A message that sexual freedom should be embraced? Or...that such free sexuality is simply wrong?

## 2. Super Paradise Beach and Paradise Beach Mykonos

Physically, Super Paradise Beach is one of the most aesthetically pleasing beaches in Mykonos, but honestly, Paradise Beach is where the party is, with professional dancers round the clock on top of the bar! Super Paradise didn't live up to the preconceptions I had of it as an equally non-stop rave, it is actually quite relaxing and tame in the afternoon, and no, there are no nudists. It is definitely worth a trip to though. The fast food there was actually of good quality, reasonably priced, and consisted paradoxically of home-cooked style meals, which was unexpected. Here are some of my personal photos of both beaches!

## 3. Cape Sounio

Cape Sounio or Sounion is simply breathtaking, by far the highlight of my trip in Greece in terms of the scope for amazing photography. Situated east of Athens, the drive is quite pleasant and only takes about 30 minutes from Athens's eastern suburbs. It is



worth visiting due to the stunning ruins of the Temple of Poseidon, god of the sea. It was unfortunately mostly destroyed in Persian and Ottoman invasions, however the main structure of the temple remains intact. Its strategic placement at the southernmost tip of the Attica peninsula makes complete sense even in the 21st century, as it gives you a full view of Athens city and out into the crystal clear Aegean Sea. Such a panoramic marvel is rare to find.

## 4. Sikyon Coast Hotel and Resort

This modern spectacle is a five star resort and beach destination open to the general public in Xylokastro, about one hour from Athens. I spent many days here sipping cocktails and soaking up the hot Greek sunshine with friends. The set up is classy, yet relaxed, appealing to a wide demographic financially and age-wise with reasonable prices for drinks and snacks. A place all holidaying in Xylokastro must discover, they make a mean Mohito!

## 5. Hotel Despotiko, Mykonos

An 18th century home over 200 years old was transformed in the 1970s into this amazing hotel. It has a unique retro charm with British and French boutique influence in the furniture, yet still features all the modern amenities needed to make your stay comfortable. Those who appreciate a historical element in their accom-

modation, such as myself, would not pass up the opportunity to stay here. It is one of Mykonos's best-kept secrets, and a less than ten-minute walk to the main section of town and the port.

## 6. The Food (in general)

There is nothing that needs to be said here, apart from that fact that if you are considering going on a diet, avoid

Greece. Everything simply tastes sublime from the crepes, to the souvlakia, and my personal favourite dolmades.

## 7. Freddocinos and Frappes

I received a rude awakening when I arrived in Greece that I would probably not receive a nice skim Flat White that was well made for at least a month. It is not in vogue to drink Western coffee anyway, which is why you just don't do it. Most people have Freddocinos and Frappes, which are like iced coffees without the ice cream and much, much stronger. Rather than drinking their coffee on the run on the way to work like we do here, they always sip it calmly on the beach or in the town square surrounded by friends. The level of relaxation time within the Greek lifestyle is incredible in vast contrast to Australia where deadlines dictate our daily schedules.

## 8. No sleep

As I often enjoying saying to the locals, "I am of-



ten asleep at dinner time here in Australia". The night is never wasted in bed in Greece, even if it is only out to dinner you will find the streets packed at midnight with people of all ages. To compensate, there is a midday siesta, which I found rather odd during my entire stay. Needless to say it was difficult to adhere to the daily quiet hours within the apartment complex where I stayed...some expletives were exchanged on occasions.

## 9. Mykonos night life

...is diverse and varied. Whether you are looking for a relaxed night along the shoreline restaurants in little Venice, or an action-packed adventure that you might forget parts of, further into the town, Mykonos has it all. Contrary to popular belief, the majority of the clubs are in fact straight clubs, not catering only to a homosexual market. The music played is mostly Western; with separate all Greek nightclubs for those looking for an authentic experience, including the Thallani Bar.

## 10. Shopping (and lots of it)

ZARA is an excellent stop for the fashion conscious of both sexes, with its affordable yet up to date trends satisfying the limitations of your budget. The closest Australian equivalents would be stores like Witchery, Marcs, Oxford, Country Road and General Pants Co. However, there is a large emphasis on clothes shopping even in smaller cities like Xylokastro containing fewer than 20,000 people. The variety and quality of clothing is unparalleled in towns with similar populations in Australia. There is a high degree of de-



signer clothing available at affordable prices for the consumer, with consistent sales and promotions offers having allowed the Greek fashion market to weather the GFC.

