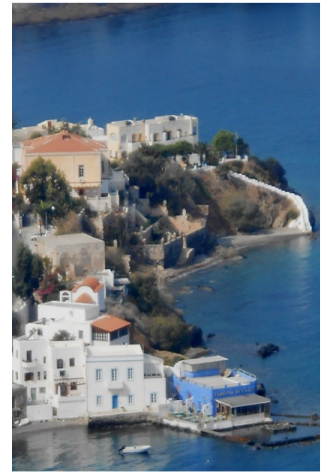




Old Favourites and New Surprises....



Just when you think you've seen what Leros has to offer, you come upon something quite astonishing... High in the bone-dry hills above Xirokampos, after tramping up a dusty goat path and elbowing my way through the herd (as one does), I finally viewed the quite lovely cariacatures and paintings that line the walls of the filthy, smelly goatshed, painted during the Italian occupation by a German soldier and still vibrant.



Lamb morsels with sundried tomatoes and feta in puff pastry with yoghurt sauce.



Tadziki with mint and ouzo.



Beef souvlaki, grilled peppers, tomatoes and roast potatoes.



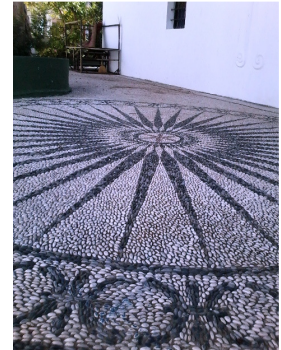
Grilled sardines on a bed of marinated carrots and squash.

We are quite proud of the many fine tavernas on Leros and El Greco, with its tables on the beach of Pandeli, is rapidly becoming a favourite, packed on Sundays with local Greeks, always a good sign. Their dishes have an extra little twist.

Below- examples of the pebble mosaic floors found in the Dodecanse islands. Idly wandering in to a building opposite my hotel on Rhodes, it turned out to be the church of a Franciscan order with a Friar Tuck monk in brown robes and rope belt up a stepladder lighting the altar candles, somewhat surreal amongst the streets of tacky souvenir stalls.



On a quick trip to **Rhodes** to get my bones loosened up at the best chiropractor in the islands, in a backstreet of the Old Town, I chanced upon the studio of Pericles (named after the father of democracy...live up to that), an amazing young man following in his father's footsteps to continue the dying art of icon painting. He let me watch and generously explained the techniques used. Hand-made icons are still painted using egg tempura, a mixture of egg yolk and white wine or vinegar and natural dyes from plants and the colours last for **500 years!** Murals for the churches are done in acrylics following strict guidelines and all are blessed.



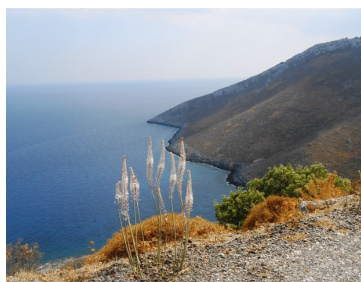
And then I met...an old man who has collected brass and copper heirlooms from the islands' villages for almost 50 years and repairs and sells them. In his workshop was a picture of his father, a coal merchant on Simi. At a great age he lost his sight. So he decided to get a fishing boat (well, why not?!) He was by all accounts such a character that Athens TV came and interviewed him. The Greeks so love to tell their stories and do it with such relish that you invariably end up laughing and parting with much patting on the back and warm greetings every time you pass by again.



Leros's thyme honey.



Newly opened, abandoned military watchpoint gives fantastic panoramas on our autumn walks.



And so the days are drawing in. The hunt is on for a new boat as we troll endless websites and plan a visit to Holland. Peter, our ship's doctor, joined us here for a week and we understand that he is looking for a new position on the inland waterways of Europe. The Admiral is putting in a good word for him...Birgitte and Joachim from "Freya", a Malo 116 like Havana, are just starting their adventures and will winter here. Jeff and Annick from "Little Big Stone" are back. Long may Leros and the islands continue to surprise us all...

