

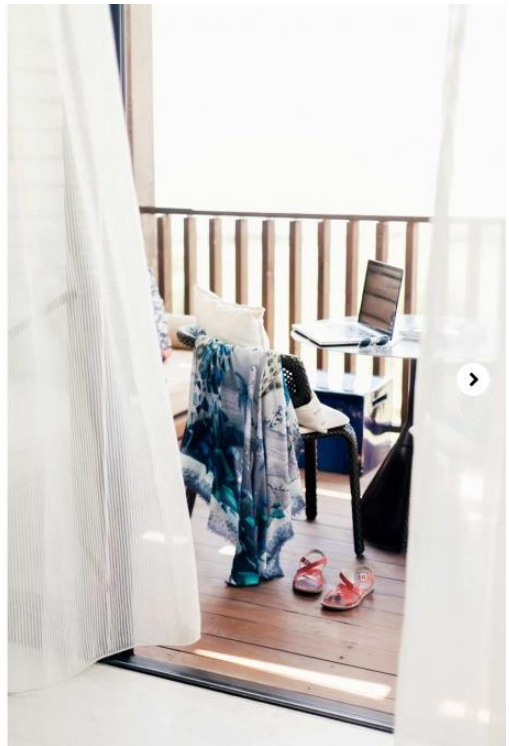
STYLE SLICKER

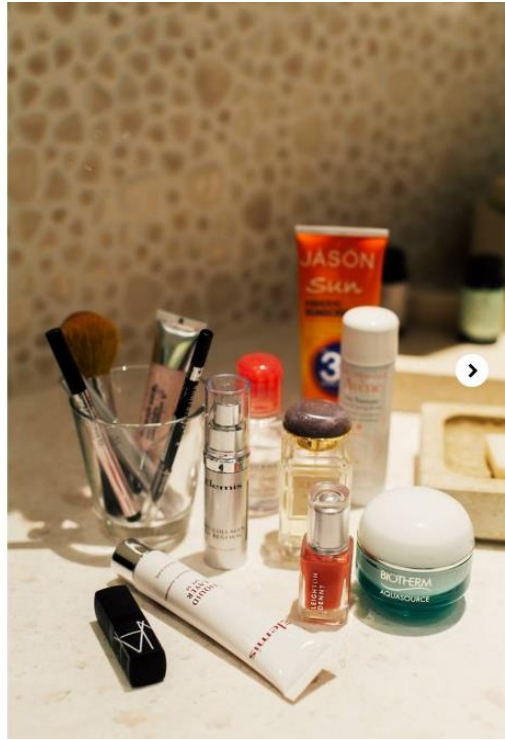
EUROPE, GREECE, LIFESTYLE, TRAVEL

GREECE VISUAL DIARY: COSTA NAVARINO

16TH SEPTEMBER 2015







I love visiting countries or cities I've never been and people I've never met, even if it's not on my bucket list I love exploring. But this trip to Costa Navarino in Greece was particularly special to me, one of my favourite films of all time, **Before Midnight** (2013) directed by Richard Linklater, has a close connection with Costa Navarino, it was partly filmed in one of the two hotels and much of the filming took place in the Peloponnesian region of Messinia including Kardamili, Gulf of Messenia, Pylos, the ruins of Mycenaean Palace of Nestor and many more. Those who have not heard of the film, it's an American romantic drama film, the third in a trilogy, following *Before Sunrise* (1995) filmed in Vienna, and *Before Sunset* (2004) filmed in Paris, and third one in southern Peloponnese. It's the film's longest love story and centres around a couple (Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy) engage in a long, discursive conversations. When a PR emailed me an invitation to this trip, read the subject line, I immediately said yes without hesitation! You wouldn't believe I already planned a perfect quote from the film's famous scene to end the post.

From the moment I arrived at **The Romanos**, after a four hour car journey from the airport, my thoughts were 'My gosh this place is huge!', 'I'm dyslexic I'm going to get lost.' Costa Navarino is home to two luxury hotels, The Westin Resort Costa Navarino and The Romanos, a Luxury Collection Resort, as well as the award winning Anazoe Spa, alluring natural sceneries – extensive grounds with olive groves, indigenous trees and plants as well as golf course, recreation centre, restaurants and shops, even a tiny chapel. Perfect for a romantic getaway or a holiday wedding, perhaps?



I have the tendency to wake up in the crack of dawn where ever I travel, take a stroll around the neighbourhood or in hope of catching a #moneyshot sunrise depending what direction the window or balcony face, sometimes the window view can be a hit or a miss, I rarely have disappointments.

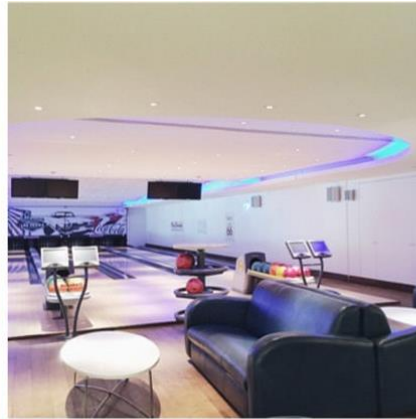
Thankfully my balcony view faces the enormous golf course, so green in fact it's like a giant green pea soup, there's the glistening blue sea and clear blue skies in the distance. Working on my laptop replying endless of work-related emails with a cup of English Earl Grey tea in the balcony, listening to my favourite tracks while wearing a headphone, the feeling of joy and bliss, it felt like a mini retreat in my own comfortable zone.



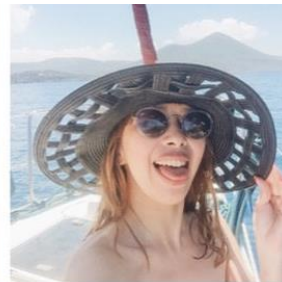


Anazoe Spa, the 4000 square metre spa offers a unique wellness sanctuary, with a full range of specialty treatments based on health and beauty practices of ancient Greece, utilising the area's natural and revitalising ingredients. I'm a big fan of spa treatments that involves with heat, I went for the Messinian Salt & Honey Scrub. This luscious honey-based scrub uses the honey of Messinia to soften your skin while lifting your spirit with a combination of healing oils and local herb essences. The treatment lasted 50 minutes, I never felt so relaxed and comforting with sheets of warm honey on my back, the treatment left my skin feeling supple and smooth. I did snooze, eventually.





Something adventurous lies within the resort, there's children facilities and activity centre offering exciting recreational and educational programs for different age groups including overnight stay options, bowling area, Navarino Natura Hall, **recreational programs for adults** – cycling, golf, tennis, sea yachting, underwater diving and many more. The water slides in the childrens waterpark look ever-so tempting, I can imagine myself being on the slide wearing an inflatable arm bands like a giddy child.



A sailing excursion with Navarino Sea yachting at the Bay of Navarino. I got my first taste of yachting on this exhilarating half day experience, exploring the unknown islets of Messenia, swimming in the crystal clear waters, discovering the varied and historic coastline, and secrets of this crossroads of ancient civilisations.



You can't leave Greece without having sampling Greece's most popular alcoholic drink Ouzo! A strong anise flavoured liqueur often used as an ingredient in recipes for food ranging from seafood to sweets. With my big smiley face, I really couldn't comment on the taste, it's an acquired taste. At least I've tried it.





Sublime beach views and ridiculously GREAT seafood at **Barbouni**, located next to the crystal clear blue waters of Ionian Sea and on The Dunes Beach. The restaurant offers wide selection of sandwiches, freshly caught fish, enticing snacks and refreshments. Their octopus dish won me over. I cannot praise this restaurant more highly.

Stay tuned for part 2!

Kit Lee was a guest of Costa Navarino.

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