



Culture

ΜΑΤΩΝΤΗΣ
ΡΧΟΝΤΟΣ
ΚΑΦΗΣΙ

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We are all Greeks.
 Percy Shelley
 (1792-1822)

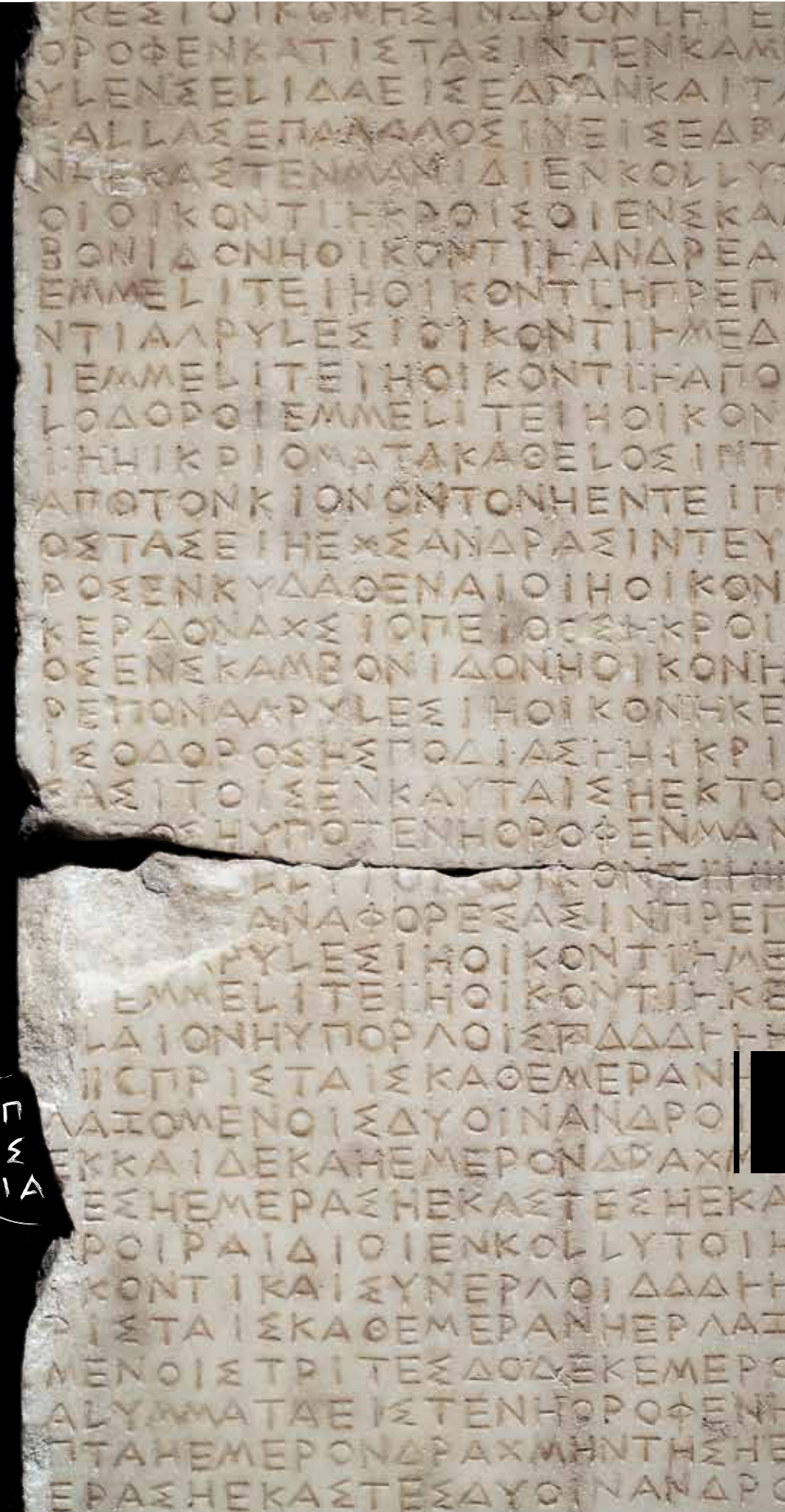
Our culture

...IS THE SHARED MEMORY OF HISTORICAL EXPERIENCES AND CREATIVE ACTION THAT WE ALL CARRY WITH US. GREECE IS A CAPTIVATING LAND.

Each nook and cranny is a surprise and a bewitching image. Around every corner something new and exciting emerges before you. Lush or stark. Serene or harsh. Unruly or harmonious.

Pictures of Greek culture, one after another, are as dazzling as golden florins. Toppled columns, statues, ruins of ancient temples. Agamemnon and Clytemnestra walked these very grounds. Electra waited for Orestes. Today they all come alive in ancient plays performed in the original theatres. Myths intertwined with customs, stories, and art can be found everywhere from the islands to continental Greece. Mosaics and frescoes. Charms, dreams, fables. Byzantine domes that stare doggedly at the heavens. Surrounded by sea and golden sand. Shady archways, windmills, tall proud towers. The sun scatters its bounty with an open hand. Each picture is taken straight from Greek nature and culture. An old wise crone sits outside her house in the street embroidering. The balcony of another house is strewn with tomatoes left to dry in the sun. The images disappear and pop up again. They keep you company along a path on majestic Mount Athos or in a shadowed arcade of one of its monumental monasteries. Beauty has defined Greece's cultural course through the ages. Ancient, Byzantine and Modern Greek civilization has always idealized beauty, which has been a constant in Greek tradition and the warmth of celebrated Greek hospitality.

Greece is a magnet for visitors, men of letters and intellectuals. Peregrinations were captured in beautiful pictures and famous words. European and world travellers visited this country in ever increasing numbers from the mid-eighteenth century onwards and left voluminous and varied accounts of their journeys. Thirst for knowledge lured visitors and continues to capture their attention. Antiquity was and still is an open invitation that draws westerners and many more to Greece. Archaeologists and antiquarians, lovers of Classical philosophy, history and letters, came to the country, paid tribute to the world of ancient Greece and spread the word to the rest of the world. They were and still are the best ambassadors of Greek culture.



Greek heritage and the world

GREECE WAS THE BIRTHPLACE OF WESTERN CULTURE. MODERN DEMOCRACIES, THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM, LEGAL EQUALITY, SYSTEMATIC THOUGHT AND SCIENCES, LITERARY FORMS AND ART ALL OWE A DEBT TO ANCIENT TIMES.



The Tholos at Delphi



Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum



The Acropolis Museum

*Wherever you go,
whatever you do, a true cultural
experience awaits you.*



Athens

Understandably, Greeks treasure their culture. It gives them more than a sense of partaking in a common identity, moulded over more than 3,500 years of recorded history. It also gives them a sense of gratification for contributing to the global community. The Greek heritage is embedded in the Greek psyche and yet it is open to all. More than 5,000 years of cultural riches – from Neolithic finds to striking examples of contemporary art – have found a hospitable home in more than 300 national and private museums. From the small everyday items to the grand sculptures, the Greek spirit is everywhere on display. The country is filled with UNESCO designated "World Heritage Sites" (Acropolis, Olympia, Aigai, Delphi, Delos, Epidaurus, Bassae, Samos, Mount Athos, Meteora, Mystras, Mycenae, Tiryns, Patmos, Thessaloniki, Daphni, Chios, Rhodes, Old Town of Corfu),

bequeathing to the world exquisite works of art, stunning archaeological discoveries, icons of rare beauty and grandiose buildings. Take the tour and come to "know thyself", as the renowned philosopher Socrates would prompt you to do. Climb up the "Sacred Rock", the Acropolis, which embodies the very idea of world heritage. A symbol of enduring achievements of the human spirit, Acropolis is home to four masterpieces of classical Greek art, built about 2,500 years ago - Parthenon, Propylaea, Erechtheion and the Temple of Athena Nike. This is one of the reasons why the "Sacred Rock" is considered a cornerstone of western civilization, an architectural masterpiece waiting to be discovered by every visitor. Set only 800 feet away, the new Acropolis Museum brings together all the surviving artefacts ever found on the site. Replicating the natural light of the Acropolis, the Museum's

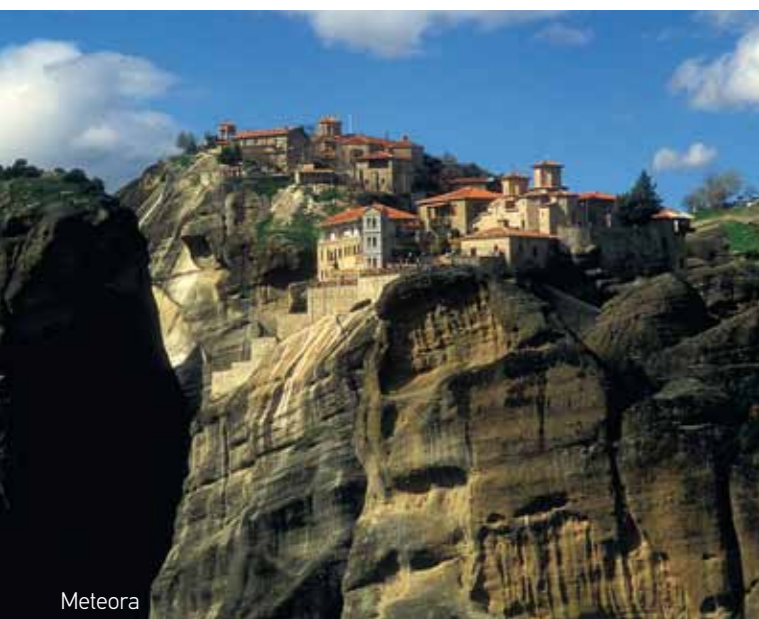
masterful architecture allows you to view simultaneously the exhibits and the place from where they originated. Visit Marathon, the site of one of the most celebrated battles in world history. A simple burial mound commemorates the 192 Athenians who died a heroic death defeating the much greater Persian forces and saving the city. But more than that, the battle of Marathon was a pivotal moment in European history by defining – in effect – the boundaries and culture of the West. Travel to the Peloponnese where Tyrins exudes the Mycenaean grandeur of a fortress town, complete with captivating ruins of Cyclopean walls. Trace the vestiges of Roman Thessaloniki, the Arch of Galerius, the Rotunda and the Roman Agora. Go southwest to Aigai, the ancient first capital of the Kingdom of Macedonia, discovered near Vergina. One of the Royal Tombs in the Great Tumulus is identified

as that of legendary Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great. The majestic gold larnax (ossuary), with the sixteen-pointed star of the royal Macedonian family is a must-see. Cross the deep blue waters and travel back to one of the oldest civilizations, the Cycladic; reach the Sacred Island of Delos where the god Apollo was born and visit Santorini with the prehistoric city in Akrotiri. Sail to Crete where the Minoan palace of Knossos continues to weave myth with architectural grandeur and unparalleled wall paintings. Feel like going back in time as you stroll through long, pillared halls, climb up the grand staircase, enter the throne-room complex and end up at the queen's Megaron apartments. Visit Greece and experience it for what it is: a world-class archaeological and historical wonderland.

Holy places, folk tradition and art

EVERY NEIGHBOURHOOD HAS ITS CHURCH AND EVERY CHURCH HAS ITS FLOCK.

Lighting a candle, saying a prayer, or making the sign of the cross in the air are typical rituals of people that historically – during consecutive and harsh foreign occupations – turned to the Orthodox Church for guidance and comfort.



Meteora



Patmos Island

From small chapels to large cathedrals, Greece's holy places tell an interesting story of spirituality, beautiful architecture and unsurpassed works of art, inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List. Smell the incense that burns in one of the majestic Byzantine churches that adorn Thessaloniki. Start with the grandiose 5th century Church of Agios Dimitrios, named after the city's patron saint, and take the tour. Agios Panteleimon, Church of the Metamorphosis, Panagia Achiropiitos, Agia Sofia, Agios Nikolaos Orfanos.

Meteora, the world-famous monasteries perched atop 1,000-foot-high inaccessible rocks appear to be "suspended in mid-air". Observe silence as you enter the Monastery of St. John the Theologian in Patmos Island and the dark Cave of the Apocalypse where he wrote the text of the Revelation. Visit the Monastery of Hosios (Saint) Loukas, the Hermit, who was canonized for his healing and prophetic powers. Feel the tranquility as you marvel at some of Greece's finest Byzantine frescoes.

Travel back in time. At the third peninsula of Halkidiki, Mount Athos is the spiritual home to twenty monasteries and to smaller dependencies (sketes) and hermitages. The complex became Agion Oros (Holy Mountain) in the Byzantine Era with a

gold-sealed decree of Emperor Alexius I Comnenus. Many of the monasteries hide unimaginable treasures, including priceless books and rare icons.

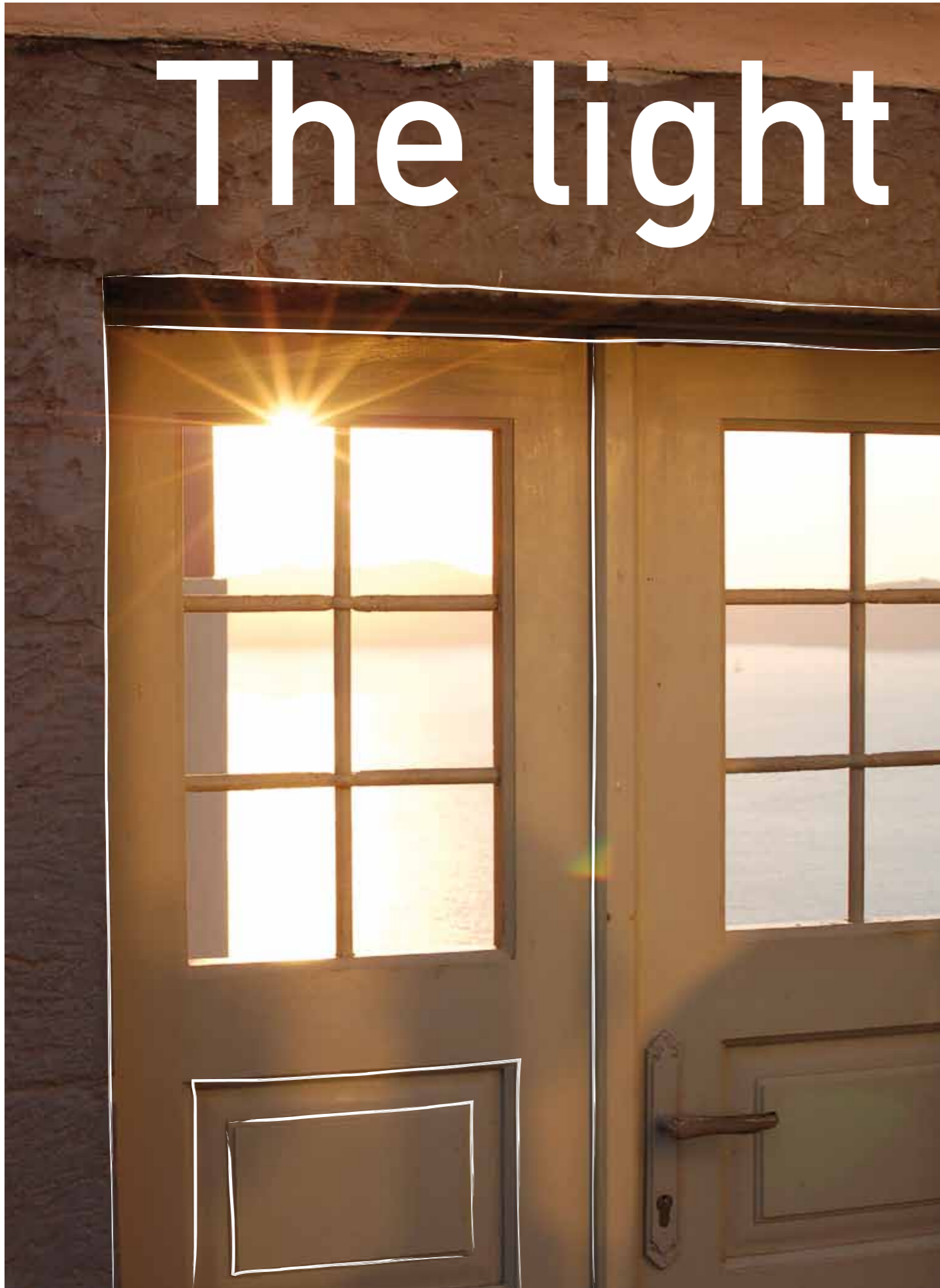
Customs and traditions whose roots trace back to time immemorial, religious feasts and historical anniversaries, sometimes local and other national, provide occasion for celebration. Visitors are more than welcome to enjoy these popular celebrations; without realizing it, they will eventually be drawn into them. Running through the calendar and travelling in different parts of Greece, there are so many chances to be part of feasts and fairs.

Saints' names are celebrated throughout the year in small and big panigyria (open-air festivities the day before and on the feast day of the saint) and everyone can participate in the celebration with pomp and circumstance. Crowning all religious festivals is Greek Easter. From the procession of Epitaphios of Christ, to Holy Saturday and the priest's Christos Anésti (Christ has risen), watch the Greeks as they become part of the commemoration and reenactment of events leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. On Easter Sunday, fasting is finally broken; tables are set with maghiritsa (Easter soup), roast lamb, red-dyed hard-boiled eggs, and glasses of red wine. Chances are that someone will invite you for a bite and a drink.

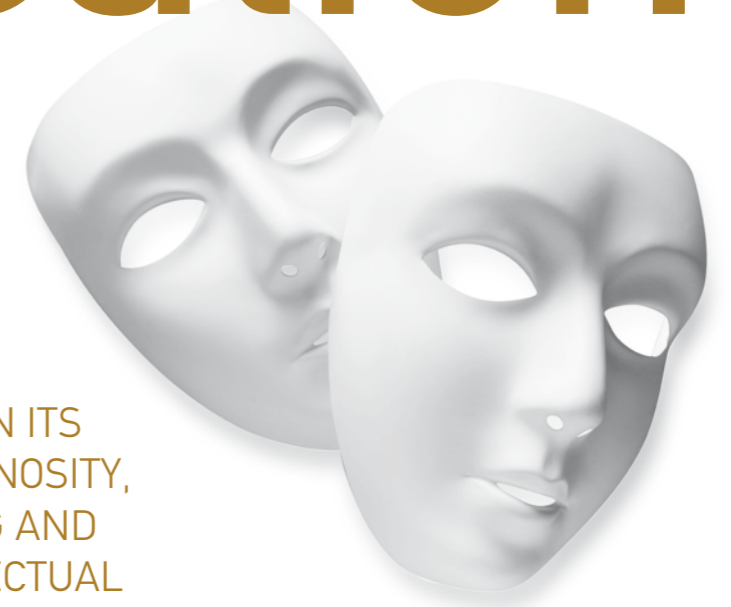
Tradition does not end here. The major Byzantine Museums in Athens, Thessaloniki, Veria, Ioannina and Kastoria with enthral you with their splendid exhibits of traditional art. The life and times of the Greek people, their artworks, jewellery, wood-carving, needle-work and weaving are displayed along with traditional costumes, wooden farming tools and period furniture in Folk and Ethnological Museums. Do not miss the drawings by popular self-taught artist Theofilos at the Greek Folk Art Museum.



The light



of creation



THE NATURAL LIGHT OF GREECE, IN ITS UNRIVALLED LIMPIDITY AND LUMINOSITY, WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A FERTILIZING AND DEFINING CONDITION FOR INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC CLIMAXES.

Described of high aesthetic value, the Greek light has been hymned over the centuries by master poets. It was the light that astonished Homer, Byron, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Dionysios Solomos and the Greek Nobel laureates Georgios Seferis and Odysseas Elytis. This light astonished foreign travellers and heightened their senses.

Under the sun - the so-called "sovereign sun" as praised by Elytis - everything becomes clear. As it touches all things Greek, old and new, it reveals the beauty of the Greek culture, forever absorbing, renewing, mixing the Dorian rhythm with the Hellenistic detail, and the Byzantine fresco with the medieval element. It is a unique light, imparting a certain joie de vivre imbued with the age-old virtue of "philoxenia" (hospitality, welcome, shelter).

"... it lies bathed in a light such as the eye has never yet beheld, and in which it rejoices as though now first awakening to the gift of sight. This light is indescribably keen yet soft. It

brings out the smallest details with clarity, a gentle clarity that makes the heart beat higher and enfolds the nearer view in a transfiguring veil - I can describe it only in these terms. Once can compare it to nothing except Spirit."

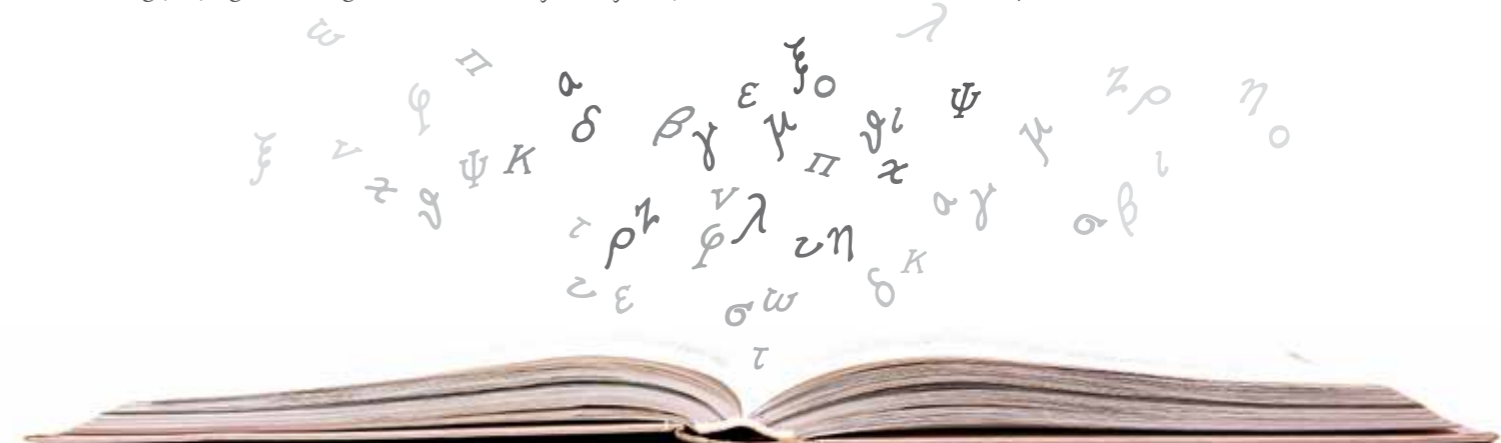
Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "Moments in Greece"

... Here the light penetrates directly to the soul, opens the doors and windows of the heart, makes one naked, exposed, isolated in a metaphysical bliss which makes everything clear without being known."

Henry Miller, "The Colossus of Maroussi"

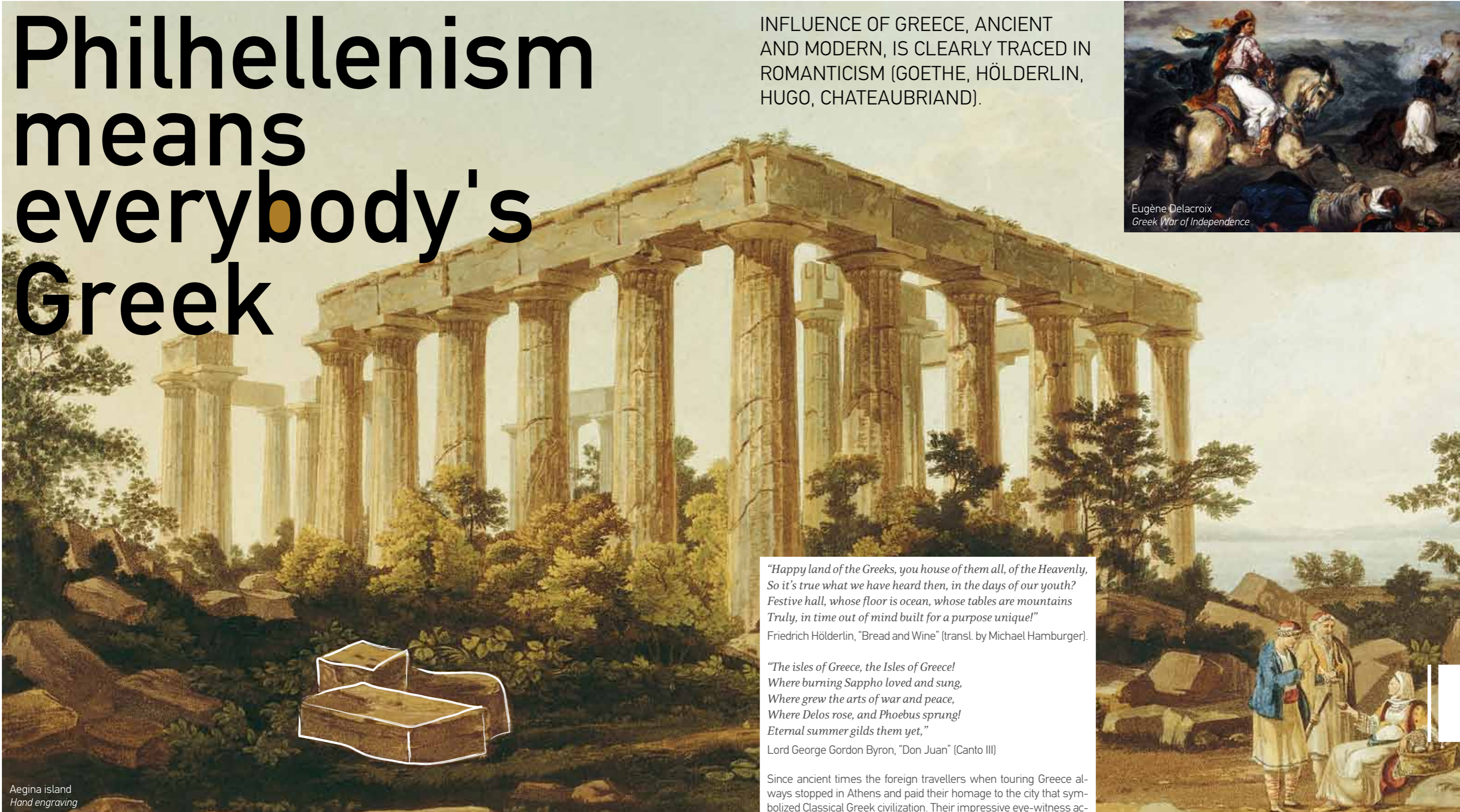
"It was a flapping of wings over azure shining waves, a sparkle of the sun on the rocks, we heard the sound of the footsteps of the nomadic waters on slabs the colour of embers,"

Octavio Paz, "Kostas Papaioannou"



Philhellenism means everybody's Greek

INFLUENCE OF GREECE, ANCIENT AND MODERN, IS CLEARLY TRACED IN ROMANTICISM (GOETHE, HÖLDERLIN, HUGO, CHATEAUBRIAND).



*"Happy land of the Greeks, you house of them all, of the Heavenly,
So it's true what we have heard then, in the days of our youth?
Festive hall, whose floor is ocean, whose tables are mountains
Truly, in time out of mind built for a purpose unique!"*
Friedrich Hölderlin, "Bread and Wine" (transl. by Michael Hamburger).

*"The isles of Greece, the Isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,"*

Lord George Gordon Byron, "Don Juan" (Canto III)

Since ancient times the foreign travellers when touring Greece always stopped in Athens and paid their homage to the city that symbolized Classical Greek civilization. Their impressive eye-witness accounts still ravish the modern reader with their passion and emotion.

*"Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
Westward, much nearer by south-west; behold
Where on the Aegean shore a city stands,
Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil-
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of Arts
And Eloquence, native to famous wits."*

John Milton, "Paradise lost" (4th book, 236-241)

*"A divine work! Athens, diviner yet,
Gleamed with its crest of columns, on the will
Of man, as on a mount of diamond, set;
For thou wert, and thine all-creative skill
Peopled, with forms that mock the eternal dead
In marble immortality, that hill
Which was thine earliest throne and latest oracle"*
Percy Shelley, "Ode to Liberty" (V, 69-75)

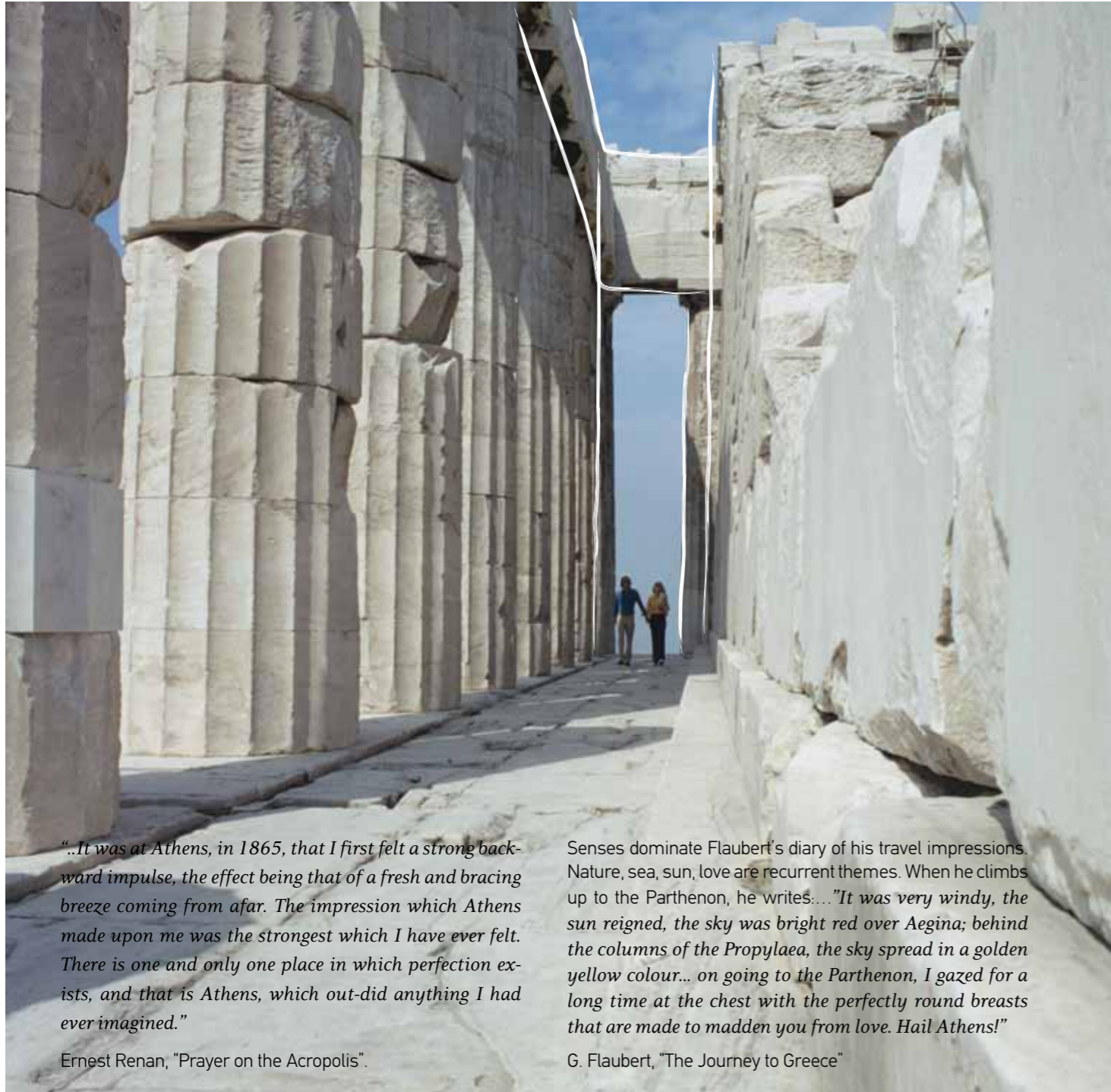
Greece has been a major source of inspiration for the art movements in the 18th and 19th centuries. Classicism and Neoclassicism were deeply influenced by Ancient Greek art borrowing forms, motifs, imagery and architecture through Palladio's interpretation of Classical architecture. Romanticism and Philhellenism became inseparable sides of the intellectual movement in Europe, which mobilized Euro-

pean public opinion. Europe displayed its remarkable solidarity when the Greek War of Independence broke in 1821 (Lord Byron, Shelley, Delacroix). Numerous romantic poets and men of letters (Lamartine, Nerval, Gautier et al.) travelled to Greece and they transubstantiated their impressions into enthusiastic texts where they celebrated the Greek landscape, the Greek light, the big blue.



The Parthenon

The Land of inspiration



"...It was at Athens, in 1865, that I first felt a strong backward impulse, the effect being that of a fresh and bracing breeze coming from afar. The impression which Athens made upon me was the strongest which I have ever felt. There is one and only one place in which perfection exists, and that is Athens, which out-did anything I had ever imagined."

Ernest Renan, "Prayer on the Acropolis".

Senses dominate Flaubert's diary of his travel impressions. Nature, sea, sun, love are recurrent themes. When he climbs up to the Parthenon, he writes...*"It was very windy, the sun reigned, the sky was bright red over Aegina; behind the columns of the Propylaea, the sky spread in a golden yellow colour... on going to the Parthenon, I gazed for a long time at the chest with the perfectly round breasts that are made to madden you from love. Hail Athens!"*

G. Flaubert, "The Journey to Greece"



Mykonos island

Typical is the case of the Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico, founder of the "metaphysical" art movement. His work is inspired by the influence of Greek culture and the recollections of his childhood in his native town, Volos. Recurring leitmotifs in his paintings are the steam-powered train of Pelion, Jason and the Argonauts, the Centaur Chiron and many other mythological themes; Orpheus, Hector and Andromache, Orestes.

The emblematic Cycladic idols fascinated with their simplicity of structure and potency of form, the great artists Picasso, Modigliani, and Brancusi.

The famous architect and urbanist Le Corbusier literally discovered the classical symmetry when visiting the archaeological sites of Greece, especially the Parthenon, which he would later praise in his book "Towards a new architecture". Also, the vernacular architecture offered him a repertory of geometric forms and taught him the treatment of light and the utilization of landscape as an architectural frame.

In the 20th and 21st centuries the art of cinema does not cease to draw inspiration from Greece. Filmmakers in Hollywood and "Cinecittà" had had a marked preference for scripts inspired from ancient Greek mythology and history. In 1942 the diving pioneer, famous for his shark documentaries, Oscar –award-winner Hans Hass completed the filming of his second underwater movie called "Men among Sharks", which was produced in the Aegean Sea (Pagasetic Gulf, Sporades, Crete). Many films fol-

lowed and tried to imprint on the lens the Greek landscape, essence and way of life.

"The Boy on the Dolphin", The "Guns of Navarone", "America, America", "The Big Blue", "Captain Corelli's Mandolin", "Mamma Mia": These are only some of the films that established Greece on the international film scene and made the Greek cultural identity known. At the same time, they are some of the best publicity tools for Greek destinations, all over the world.

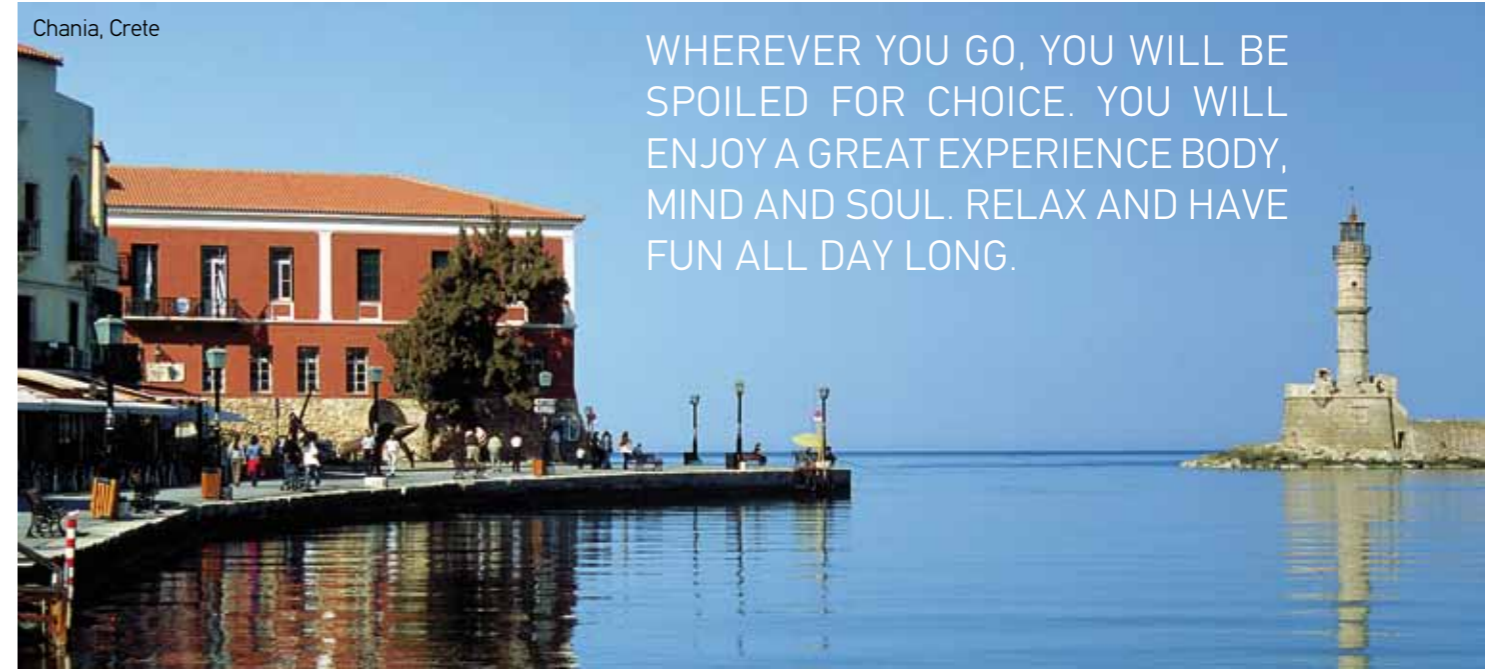


Sights and tastes to explore



Corfu island - Achilleion

Chania, Crete



WHEREVER YOU GO, YOU WILL BE SPOILED FOR CHOICE. YOU WILL ENJOY A GREAT EXPERIENCE BODY, MIND AND SOUL. RELAX AND HAVE FUN ALL DAY LONG.

Walk on the "Grande Promenade" in the Athens' historic centre and stroll down history lane: Acropolis, the Ancient Agora, the Theatre of Dionysos, the Roman Agora, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, and the Kerameikos cemetery form the core of ancient Athens. Up on the hill, Pnyx conjures images of democracy in action, as the general assembly (Ecclesia) met during Pericles' golden age and exercised "rule by the people". Take a break. Have a light lunch and a shot of ouzo in Plaka, the oldest neighbourhood of Athens. Pick up some great bargains at the Monastiraki flea market. Sit on a bench at the city's Green oasis, the National Garden.

Seize the day. There's so much to explore. Lose yourself in the labyrinthine back streets and medieval fortifications of the Old Town in Rhodes. Wear your shining armour, as you stroll down the Avenue of the Knights and down to their lodgings, the Inns of the Tongues. Relax in Corfu, where Sissi, Empress Elizabeth of Austria, kept the Achillion, a summer retreat named after Achilles, her favourite hero. Discover the magnificent old town of Ioannina, with the imposing monuments, the colourful neighbourhoods and the famous silver workshops. Wander along the quay of Volos and seize the opportunity to savour the locally produced spirit (tsipouro) while indulging in delectable seafood dishes in a warm traditional setting. Climb up to the imposing Palamidi castle that dominates the city of Nafplio; don't miss the picturesque fortress of Bourtzi that arises from the sea. Absorb the exotic mix of Venetian and Ottoman buildings, as you round

about in one of the delightful streets of Chania's Old Town. Visit the Archaeological Museum of Iraklio, one of the most important museums in Greece; there you can see most of the unique treasures of the Minoan civilization unearthed at Knossos, Phaistos, Malia and other sites.

Enough with sightseeing! Simply enjoy the good life. Party hard with the locals at the annual Patras Carnival. Wear a costume, climb up a colourful float, and join the Great Sunday parade. Trek hidden trails and uncover nature-made marvels at the Vikos-Aoos National Park in Epirus. In Kastoria, follow the lakeside road and enjoy the breathtaking view; boating in the lake of Kastoria is an unprecedented experience. Hang about the waterfront towards Thessaloniki's emblematic White Tower. Smell the aroma of exotic spices in the open-air meat and vegetable Modiano market and then go for a coffee at Ano Poli, the old quarter of the city. Dine out - a simple meal may well be a real gastronomic experience. Olive oil, the protagonist of the Greek diet, elevates every dish. Ask for feta cheese in your ubiquitous Greek salad; it has gained the same protected status as Parma ham and champagne. Taste the avgotaraho of Messolonghi (a distinctive fish roe), the organic red saffron grown in Kozani, or the mastic, the aromatic resin which thrives in Chios. Sip the great wine from one of Greece's twenty "Appellations of Origin of Superior Quality". The unique local tastes guarantee that you are in for many culinary surprises during your stay in Greece.

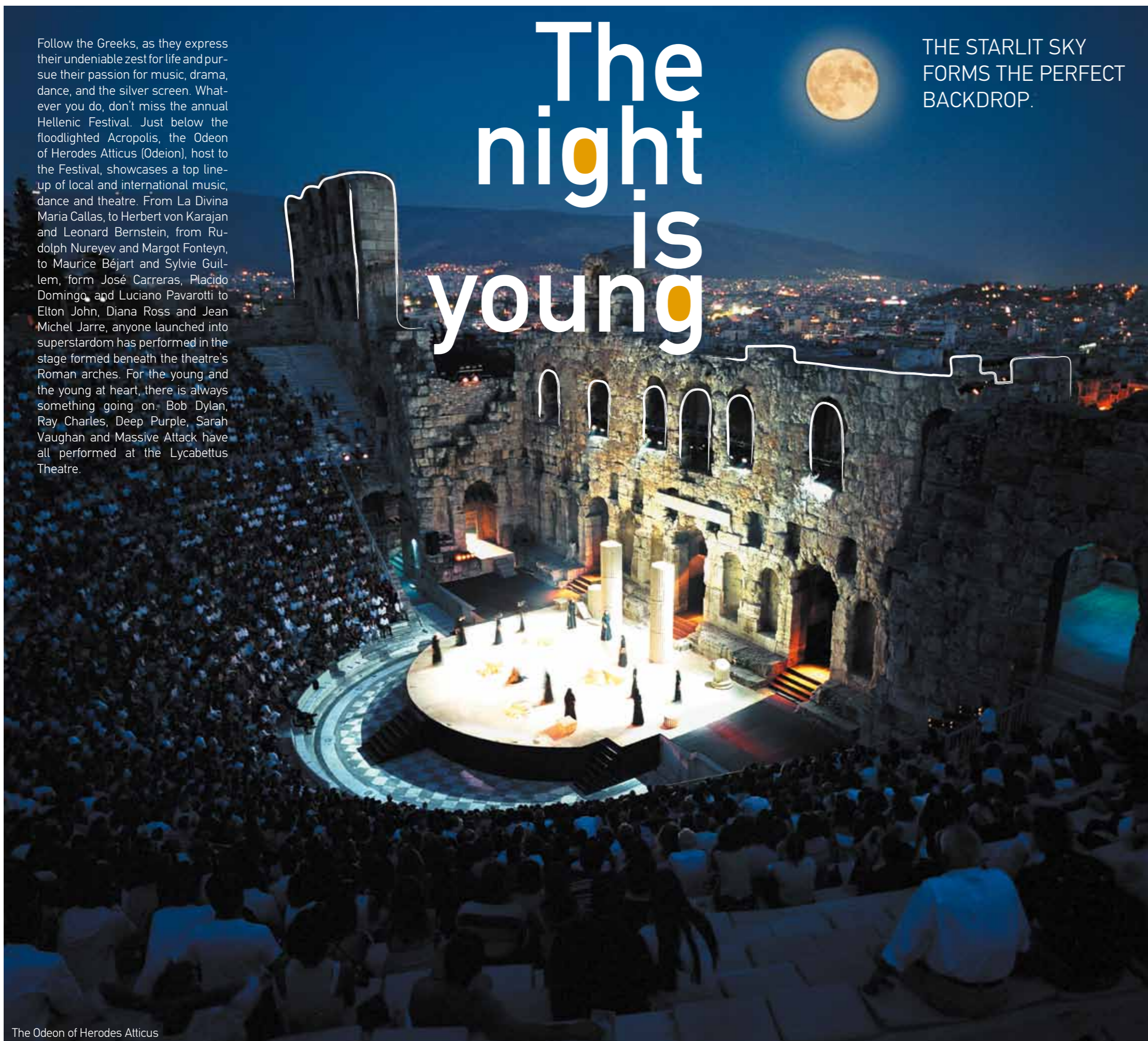


Patra's Carnival

Follow the Greeks, as they express their undeniable zest for life and pursue their passion for music, drama, dance, and the silver screen. Whatever you do, don't miss the annual Hellenic Festival. Just below the floodlighted Acropolis, the Odeon of Herodes Atticus (Odeion), host to the Festival, showcases a top line-up of local and international music, dance and theatre. From La Divina Maria Callas, to Herbert von Karajan and Leonard Bernstein, from Rudolph Nureyev and Margot Fonteyn, to Maurice Béjart and Sylvie Guillem, from José Carreras, Plácido Domingo, and Luciano Pavarotti to Elton John, Diana Ross and Jean Michel Jarre, anyone launched into superstardom has performed in the stage formed beneath the theatre's Roman arches. For the young and the young at heart, there is always something going on. Bob Dylan, Ray Charles, Deep Purple, Sarah Vaughan and Massive Attack have all performed at the Lycabettus Theatre.

The night is young

THE STARLIT SKY FORMS THE PERFECT BACKDROP.



The Odeon of Herodes Atticus

Catch a concert or an opera at the Athens Concert Hall (Megaro Moussikis) where world-class Greek and international artists perform at its state-of-the-art stage. The Greek National Opera has produced and hosted many acclaimed performances at the Olympia and Acropolis Theatres. A literal artistic palace, the Pallas Theatre has become an inviting home for music and dance lovers.

Up north, the Thessaloniki Concert Hall, matches the international and local repertoire of its Athens twin. Catch a theatre play. From Athens, home to more than 200 theatres, to Thessaloniki and its overarching national Theatre of Northern Greece, to the Regional and Municipal Theatres all over the country you can see everything, from Sophocles and Beckett, to Karagiozis shadow theatre (a puppet and fictional character of Greek folklore) and political revue.

A more discreet yet no less impressive assortment of ancient Greek drama and modern theatre is presented at the ancient world-renowned Theatre of Epidaurus, second home of the Hellenic Festival. In case you are sitting up on the last 55th row, do not worry. Its acoustics remain unparalleled. The Little Theatre of Epidaurus, with its Musical July Festival and its quirkier stage productions, has acquired quite a following.

The Theatre of Epidaurus



The "Pallas" theatre at Voukourestiou Street



Orfeo - Olympus Festival

Greek film has picked up pace. Thessaloniki's International Film Festival has gained recognition as Southeast Europe's pre-eminent forum for the screening of new films; more than 150 films compete for the prestigious awards every year. With a tradition that spans from the Oscar-studded performance of Katina Paxinou in "For Whom the Bell Tolls", to Elia Kazan's Hollywood reign, to Kostas Gavras' Oscar winning "Z" and Michalis Kakogiannis' Oscar-packed "Zorba the Greek", Greek dazzled America and Europe alike.

From Ardas to Vyronas (an Athens' suburb), to Corfu, Thessaloniki, Philippi, Folegandros, Xanthi, Nafplio, Samothraki, Volos, Crete, festivals abound, especially during the long Greek summer. In Kos, the Castle of Knights and the Odeon open their doors to the Hippocrates Festival, named after the father of modern medicine who was born on the island. Put on your dancing shoes even if you won't take part at the Kalamata International Dance Festival. Get up to the evocative sounds of klarino (clarinet) and dance, in a circle, the traditional poganisios (dance from the Epirus region) at the Ioannina International Folk Festival.

Wherever you go, listen to the music play; rebetika (referred to as the Greek blues), and laika (urban folk music), in tavernas, dimotika and nisiotika (regional folk music of the mainland and the islands) in panigyria, R&B in funky restaurants, jazz, latin,

alternative rock in clubs and venues around the country. Greeks swear by the music of outstanding composers Mikis Theodorakis, the late Manos Hadjidakis, and the entechno (artistic) tradition that they generated. While Nana Mouskouri and Demis Roussos became international icons, the Oscar winner Vangelis wrote the inspiring film score for the "Chariots of Fire". Take it easy or pump up the volume. The nightclub scene welcomes night owls, with celebrated DJs regularly setting the dance board on fire. Watch the latest blockbuster or art house flick in an open-air, under the stars, summer cinema, that only in Greece one can enjoy. Feel the breeze on your face and smell the fuschia-coloured bougainvillea siding the projection screen. Whatever you do, stay up. Do not miss a night out for the world.

See dance



Streetdance

listen



Kiri Te Kanawa - Dimitria Festival



Thessaloniki International Film Festival



The Athens Concert Hall



National Gallery

THE GREEK SPIRIT, A FORCE OF CREATIVITY AND RENEWAL THROUGHOUT GREECE'S LONG HISTORY, HAS YET AGAIN TRANSFORMED THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE.

Athens itself is a city transformed. The 2004 Athens Olympic Games, the widely acknowledged "unforgettable, dream games" left a new important legacy: transportation infrastructure of a new era, green parks and squares, world-class sports facilities and a gleaming, Calatrava-inspired Olympic Sports Complex. The Olympic cities of Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras, Iraklio, and Volos were revamped, refurbished, cleaned up. The Rio-Antirrio Bridge, an engineering masterpiece, is celebrated as one of the world's longest cable-stayed bridge. From the neoclassical renovation surge to the well-designed face-lift of grey and graying façades to the creation of post-modern structures, the new aesthetic has sprawled from the centre to the periphery.

The opportunity now is to showcase Greece's rich cultural heritage in evolutionary buildings - a fine example of which is the new Acropolis Museum - and combine it with the age-old tradition. Take a virtual walk down the ancient agora at the futuristic cultural centre of the Foundation of the Hellenic World. The trend now is rescuing urban, derelict places from

the sea of cement and transforming them into new and vibrant exhibition spaces. Situated in "Gazi" (district of Athens), named after the old gas factory next to Kerameikos, "Technopolis" stands amidst chimneys, enormous cauldrons, funnels and disused ovens. A "factory" for the arts, it regularly furnishes out exhibitions, open-air jazz, rock and theatre performances, rave nights and parties. No space is off-limits. The National Glyptothek houses its vast collection in Goudi, in one of the renovated buildings of the old royal stables. Every space is accessible. The National Bank's Headquarters were redesigned to include a glass ground floor, when the archaeological mattock unearthed the Acharnai gate of the Athenian wall circuit. The transforming mood has even gone underground. The Athens metro resembles more of a museum. Many of the archaeological finds unearthed at the time of construction are exhibited in the Syntagma, Akropoli, Evangelismos, Monastiraki, Panepistimio and Egaleo stations, together with a pantheon of the works of modern Greek painters and sculptors.



Athens Metro



The Olympic Stadium of Athens

Tomorrow's Heritage Today



Konstantinos Parthenis
The Harbor of Kalamata

Embrace the visual richness of four centuries of Greek art in the National Art Gallery - Museum Alexandros Soutzos. Take notice of the gallery's prized paintings by El Greco who is perhaps the most famous Greek painter of all times. Immerse yourself in the inspiring works of 20th century Greek masters, Ghika, Parthenis, Lytras, Maleas, Volanakis and Moralis. Go to the Benaki Museum and visit Greece's oldest and finest private collection. Its exquisite displays will travel you from prehistoric times to the formation of the modern Greek state.

A newfound confidence has given a harmonious tempo; a new generation of dynamic galleries is becoming visible abroad, exporting homegrown talent. "Art-Athina", the art fair organized by the Hellenic Art Galleries Association, has become a stable and crowd-attracting institution. The former Fix Brewery, a tribute to 60's industrial architecture, is soon to house the extensive collections of the National Museum of Contemporary Art. In Thessaloniki, the State Museum of Contemporary Art organized its own biennial, biennále: 1. Art buffs regularly head to the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, the State Museum's autonomous branch, and the Contemporary Art Centre of Thessaloniki for a whiff of new-media and video art. Dynamic photography exhibitions are organized by the Thessaloniki Museum of Photography.

Greece preserves its legacy but at the same time it transforms its symbolism in a modern and fresh way. Diverse and often competing forces are finding new and original media for expression. This is the future "heritage" of Greece worth experiencing today.



Art Athina



Nikolaos Lytras
The straw hat

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