

Dear Friends,

It seems appropriate to pinch the title of this little update from the Supertramp album from the 70's. Down in Platania a couple of days ago we bumped into David, an English guy on an extended summer Platania holiday. He had been enjoying lazy days on the beach, a bit of hiking, a bus trip to Volos and slightly quieter than usual evenings at the harbourside tavernas. David was totally unaware that there had been a national truck drivers strike last week.



The fact is, down here you don't have to wander far from home to have fun. Everyone with more than a postage stamp of land now has an abundant supply of delicious fruit and veg. How many ways can you make a cucumber recipe interesting? I tried Kathryn's 'cucumber surprise' yesterday. Fantastic! Just a load of cucumber, nothing else added, delicious but a surprise none the less! No food shortages here.

We have been grateful for offers of food parcels, but they are not needed.

The fuel crisis did of course create a great deal of alarm and worry, both domestically and for visitors about to embark on their holidays. But all our guests got by, fuel was available the whole time on Pelion with a few independent garages and a refinery in Volos keeping things going in this area.

But all this worry did lead us to discuss some alternative transport options. What with our work on the footpaths and old donkey paths, what better time to convince friends, neighbours of the value in putting more effort into opening up these old routes next autumn and winter. Jimmy's dad Nikos is one of the few people around here to own a donkey. He is quite attached to it, but finds it all rather hard work to look after it without actually working it. He has offered it to us, on a sort of Donkey loan basis, no obligation, try it for a couple of months, see how you get on..... What do you think?



Trying to gauge public opinion, I have mentioned the idea to a few local people whilst queuing for petrol or bemoaning the price of it when you can get some.

We are thinking would it not be possible to instigate a 'Randi Donkey Breeding Program'? It could work don't you think? Of course we only have access rights now to one donkey and we are not sure if it is a boy or a girl. We know of another in Tsagarada called 'Boy George'. We wonder if this one is a boy or a girl, hard to tell by it's name unfortunately, but it does seem quite a gay donkey often to be seen with a straw hat and flower behind it's ear. (Boy George auditioned as the donkey in the Mama Mia film, but in the end was the wrong colour).

The other option would be to try the Sikas family mule in the breeding program. At least it's local... We will keep thinking about this and report back in the spring time, probably early April!

Finally I have a suggestion if you fancy a last minute bargain holiday... Look up flights to Skiathos, or Thessaloniki. For example, yesterday I saw a return flight



Bristol to Skiathos return leaving this Friday for one week £108 !! (source www.kissflights.com or try Thompson Flights) The Randi cottage may be full but there are rooms available or just bring a 2 man tent and camp on a beach (strictly forbidden but done all the time!).... Bring some 1970's music and go back in time, relive your Greek backpacker dreams! (Also you would be here in time for Saturday nights Platania's beach party and Sunday nights live beach rock band!)

The Randi cottage by the way is still available for some dates in 2011. We have done some pricing adjustments and offers for those wanting regular or repeat visits and will certainly do a deal on any of the above dates to friends in receipt of this e mail!!

Wishing you all a great summer

Cheers

Chris and Kathryn