

Newsletter January 2012

We are often asked - in the light of all the news coverage - what life is really like in Greece now and what the future will bring.

The truth is that on a small rural island like Skopelos, everything goes on pretty much as normal and the troubles of the mainland seem a long way away. The olives have been harvested and it was a good year, both for the quantity and the quality of the oil. It has been a cooler than average winter with enough rain to keep our forests green, but there have been plenty of clear sunny days with temperatures around 15 degrees for long walks in the countryside seeking signs of spring.

The first almond blossoms are out, much to the delight of the white tailed bumble bees who seem to be having a particularly good start to the season. Wild narcissus are also particularly evident this year. There are several species here with multiple trumpets and an intense perfume. The fragile looking but tough-as-boots anemones are braving the winds that give them their name to colour up the olive groves.

Economically, there is some belt-tightening going on, but the weaker euro is encouraging visitors from the UK, North America and Australia to find their way to the hospitable embrace of our island - for holidays and for buying homes here.

There are real estate bargains to be had now. Pool villas have typically come down in price by 15% in the last year and some older houses for renovation have dropped prices by 10% or more.

Getting here is easier for the UK independent traveller in 2012. Ryanair has started flying to Thessaloniki from London Stansted. EasyJet continues to operate from London Gatwick to both Athens and Thessaloniki and the Ryanair competition should keep those prices keen.

New properties for holiday rent

This season we have two new holiday rental options – from air-conditioned all-mod-cons-luxury to a sweet and simple woodland hideaway.

Roosevelt Villas <http://www.glossa-houses.com/cgi-bin/show.cgi?id=32&rental=true> consist of three very spacious, light and airy apartments just outside the village, within easy reach of shops, tavernas and the bus-stop. They each have two bedrooms and two bathrooms, and lovely views over the village to the sea and the islands. There are quite a few steps to get there, but well worth it!

Woodland Cottage <http://www.glossa-houses.com/cgi-bin/show.cgi?id=29&rental=true> is a simple cottage set in pine woods, surrounded by some majestic koukounarias – the pine trees highly prized for their pine nuts by the Greeks. There is a magical peaceful atmosphere, and the stars at night are astonishing.

There is a double bedroom with en-suite bathroom and a sleeping platform, sitting room and another bathroom. Lot of outside terrace space adds to the relaxed atmosphere. You need to hire a car, preferably four-wheel drive.

Satellite TV

Our latest improvement in Eleanora's House, Clifftop Cottage and the Old Wine Store is the addition of satellite TV with a good range of news, sports and film channels. Of course no-one comes to Glossa to watch the TV, but just in case you can't bear to miss the Olympics, or catch up on your daily news fix, it's there.

And here is a **Special Weekend Offer**: Book one of those three properties before midnight on 31st January 2012 and get a 10% discount.

<http://www.glossa-houses.com/cgi-bin/show.cgi?rental=true>

Best wishes,

Jo and Roger.

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