

Travel

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'Rio's glamour is no longer faded — she's hip, edgy and bohemian'

Kirsty Lang on Rio de Janeiro

20 best boutique hotels in Greece

From a cool beach retreat to a hideaway in the countryside, **Annabelle Thorpe** picks her favourite stylish stays on the Greek islands

1 Ostraco Mykonos

Spend lazy afternoons curled up on giant sofa cushions beneath bamboo pergolas, sip cocktails beside the pristine pool, or watch the sunset from your private terrace — all classic Mykonos pleasures, given a high-style twist at one of the island's luxurious addresses. Ostraco has 21 elegant rooms, and although there's no restaurant, lavish breakfasts are served till 12.30pm — giving plenty of time to recover from the night before.

Stay Doubles from £119 B&B through i-escape (i-escape.com). Easyjet (easyjet.com) flies direct to Mykonos from Gatwick, Luton and Manchester.

2 Perantzada 1811 Art Hotel Ithaca

Steeped in myth, Ithaca is an atmospheric island with the beautiful neo-classical town of Vathi at its heart. Perantzada is a carefully converted 19th-century mansion a short walk from the centre of the town on the quieter side of the bay. Rooms mix up white minimalist decor with splashes of colour, poetry inscribed on the walls, and art dotted throughout. Breakfasts are served on the terraces or the airy dining room, where fresh fruit and cakes are left out to graze on during the day.

Stay A week at the Perantzada Art Hotel costs from £1,182, including flights and B&B accommodation through Simpson Travel (0845 1543178, simpsontravel.com).

3 Melenos Lindos Rhodes

There's something rather magical about the village of Lindos, where no cars are allowed and donkeys carry tourists up to the ancient acropolis. The Melenos Lindos has just 12 rooms spread across four terraces overlooking the sea, each beautifully decorated with flower-filled pots, fountains and cushion-filled alcoves in the white walls. At night, the open-air bar is lit by paper lanterns; impossibly romantic.

Stay A week's B&B is from £1,390pp, including flights and one dinner through Elixir Holidays (020-77222222, elixirholidays.com) ▶



Kyrimal House on the Mani peninsula (15) has one of the region's best restaurants

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4 Orloff Resort Spetses

The all-white rooms at the Orloff Resort, close to the picturesque old harbour of Spetses town manage to pull off being minimalist without being stark. Each room has one splash of colour: saffron-hued throws on the bed, tangerine lampshades, jade-green shutters. There's something effortlessly cool about it from the neat khaki and white breakfast terrace to the olive trees around the pool.

Stay: Doubles from £82 B&B (00 30 22980 75444, orloffresort.com). Spetses is two and a half hours by ferry from Piraeus.



5 Delfino Blu Corfu

Opening out onto the beautiful San Stefano beach on the north-west tip of the island, the only issue with Delfino Blu is finding availability. Guests who come often tend to repeat the experience, for the gorgeous beachfront location, the 12 stylish rooms with exposed walls and the spacious terraces, and there's a far less grandiose feel to proceedings than many Santorini hotels. The village of Oia is about a ten-minute walk.

Stay: A week costs from £924, including B&B accommodation and flights through Sunvil (020-8568 4499, sunvil.co.uk).

hillside, with a small pool and a lovely terrace for breakfast, and there's a far less grandiose feel to proceedings than many Santorini hotels. The village of Oia is about a ten-minute walk.

Stay: A week costs from £924, including B&B accommodation and flights through Sunvil (020-8568 4499, sunvil.co.uk).

6 Levantes Ios

There's much to love about Levantes; its spectacular location, perched above Mylopotas beach, the elegant stone terraces dotted with plump cream sofas and over-sized lanterns, and the light airy rooms decorated with modern art — several of which have their own private pools. It's an easy stroll to the beach, and some excellent tavernas and local shops.

Stay: Doubles from £68 B&B (00 30 22860 92588, levantes.gr). Easyjet (easyjet.com) flies to Santorini from Gatwick and Manchester; the ferry to Ios takes an hour.

8 Boutique Hotel Galini Zakynthos

The wooded hills of northern Zakynthos are very different from the built-up beach resorts the island is known for, and the Galini is wonderfully secluded amid vineyards and forest. The five suites have a rustic, country-house feel with exposed stone walls and antiques dotted around the rooms, and besides the infinity pool there's a delightful lounge area tucked away in the forest for total relaxation.

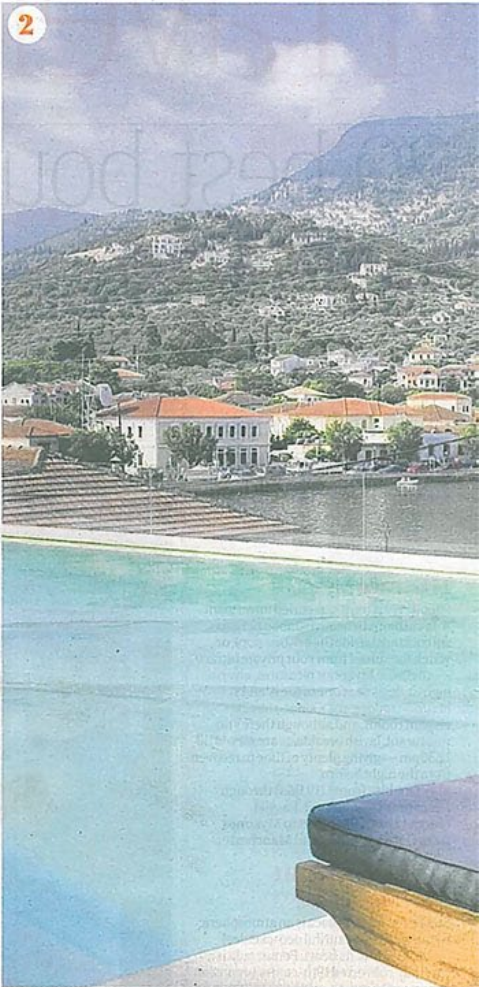
Stay: Doubles from £106 B&B (00 30 2695 301018, boutiquehotelgalini.nl). Monarch (monarch.co.uk) flies to Zante from four UK airports.



9 Bourtzi Boutique Hotel Skiathos

Skiathos town is the party capital of the Sporades islands, but the chilled out cocktail-hour atmosphere here is welcoming to all ages. The Bourtzi is at the heart of the action, and although it has 38 rooms, the hotel retains a boutique feel, from the chandelier-decked cocktail bar to the cute white and pastel decor of the rooms. It's the perfect night-out crash pad.

Stay: Doubles from £51 B&B (00 30 24270 21304, hotelbourtzi.gr). Monarch (monarch.co.uk) flies to Skiathos from Gatwick and Manchester.



10 Torri E Merli Paxos

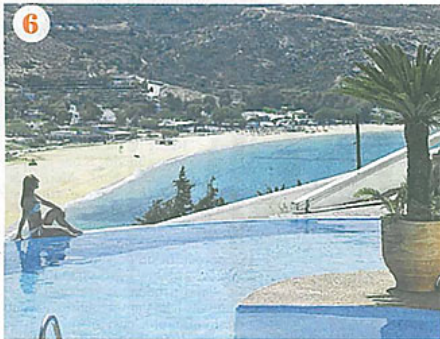
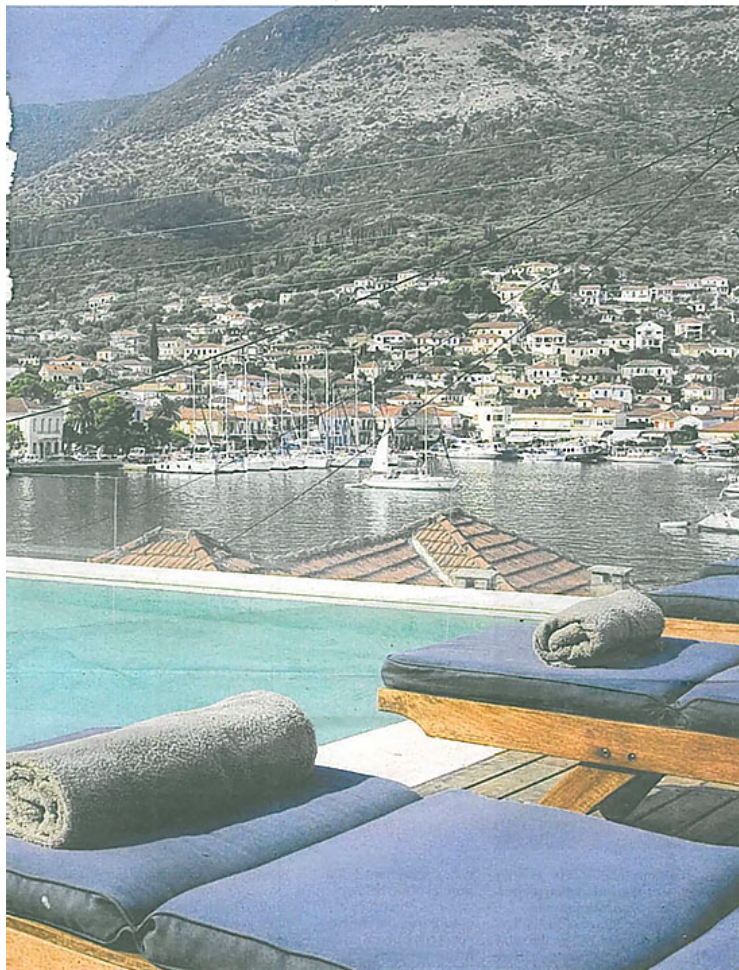
A spectacular Venetian-style house that dates from the 18th century, Torri E Merli is surrounded by olive groves and is one of the few remaining fortified manor houses on the island. The seven suites epitomise rustic country house chic, with exposed brick and

7 Esperas Houses Santorini

It's all about the views on the volcanic island of Santorini, and Esperas Houses — a clutch of 17 elegant cave-style rooms, cut into the rock — has the perfect location to catch the sunset. The hotel clings to the

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stonework, sumptuous beds and sleek, glass and marble bathrooms. The hotel's special add-on is the tisaneria, a wonderful candlelit tea room that you'll find in the cellar.

Stay Doubles from £140 B&B (00 30 2621 234123, torriemerli.com). Thomas Cook (flythomascook.com) flies to Corfu from four UK airports; the hydrofoil from Corfu takes an hour.

11 Melian Boutique Hotel & Spa Milos

Perched right on Pelekouda Beach, the Melian has 15 pristine-white rooms with splashes of vibrant blue furnishings, elegant iron-frame beds and hand-made furniture. The spa is a real draw, with a good range of therapies, hammam and whirlpool bath while the terraces, complete with billowing drapes and rattan furniture, offer uninterrupted sea views.

Stay B&B doubles from €220 (00 30 22870 28200, melian.gr). High-speed ferries from Piraeus take two and a half hours.

12 Nikos Takis Fashion Hotel Rhodes

At Rhodes town's hippest address, the Greek fashion designers Nikos and Takis have turned their creative hand to hotel design, with seven opulent rooms in a grand, whitewashed mansion just a few steps from the Magistro's Palace. Breakfast can be taken in the pretty garden, and although there's no restaurant, Rhodes town's collection of tavernas and upscale eateries are all within strolling distance.

Stay Doubles from £98 B&B (00 30 22410



70773, nikostakisshotel.com). Thomas Cook (flythomascook.com) flies to Rhodes from Gatwick and six regional airports.

13 Paradise Island Villas Heraklion, Crete

Paradise Island offers a huddle of villas with all the services of a luxury boutique hotel. Guests can dine in their villa or take cocktails at the neon-lit cocktail bar and dinner in the Ambrosia restaurant. There are two pools and a tennis court, and the villas boast chandeliers and marble bathrooms.

Stay From £540pp per week room-only, based on four sharing, with car hire but excluding flights through Scott Dunn (020-35825265, scottdunn.com). Skyscanner.net has return flights to Crete from about £135 this month.

14 Syrou Melathron Syros

An often overlooked island of the Cyclades islands, unspoilt Syros has a vibrant port, with elegant neoclassical buildings, of which the Syrou Melathron is a prime example. A restored captain's house on the harbour front, its 21 rooms are a little bland but the location and fabulous roof terrace make it the best billet in Syros town by far.

Stay Doubles from £55 B&B through i-escape.com. Syros is two hours and 20 minutes from Piraeus by high-speed catamaran.

15 Kyrimai House Gerolimenas, Mani

Kyrimai was once the trade centre for the Mani peninsula, and its location — almost entirely surrounded by water — gives it a private island feel. The 19th-century building has an air of grandeur, but the rooms are a cosy mix of local stone, dark wood and crisp linens. The restaurant, overseen by Michelin-starred Yiannis Baxevanis, is one of the region's best.

Stay A week costs from £818pp, including flights and B&B accommodation through Sunvil (020-8758 4747, sunvil.co.uk).

16 Aigis Suites Kea

The wonderful Aigis Suites are perched on a hilltop above the picturesque harbour at Vourkari. These seven suites, all white sofas and crisp cream decor, have private terraces with lovely views, while the pool area is straight out of an Ibiza photoshoot. Sundowners at the bar are a must.

Stay Doubles from £140 B&B (00 30 22880 21825, aigissuites.com). Kea is one hour by ferry from Lavrion port (about a 90-minute drive from Athens).

17 Hotel Glaros Naxos

Perfect for beach-bunnies, the Glaros is located right on the sand of Agios Georgios beach, and a short stroll from the centre of Naxos town. The 13 rooms are simple but stylish, with clean white decor and balconies overlooking the beach, while the gleaming terrace is a great spot for a lazy breakfast. There's no pool, but the reasonable price reflects that — and with a beach so close, who needs one? **Stay** Doubles from £55 B&B (00 30 22850 23101, hotelglaros.com). Naxos is a three and a half-hour high-speed ferry from Piraeus.

18 Irida Boutique Hotel Parga

Parga town, on the western coast of the Greek mainland opposite Corfu, has a lovely relaxed vibe, matched by the hilltop Irida Hotel, which looks out across the rooftops to the Ionian Sea beyond. The seven suites each have their own individual style: Waves suite is coloured with a sea-blue palette, while Pebble is simply elegant in cool greys and creams.

Stay Doubles from £64 B&B (00 30 26840 32562, iridaboutiquehotel.gr). Thomas Cook (flythomascook.com) flies to Preveza from Gatwick and Manchester.

19 The Old Markets Symi

The historic port on Symi is protected by a national preservation order, and in the Old Markets the original shops have been carefully restored to create five luxurious rooms, each themed around an aspect of the island's trading past. In spite of the small number of rooms, spa treatments are available and lunches/dinners can be arranged on request, with a different menu each day and an aperitivo each evening on the terrace.

Stay Doubles from £149 B&B (020-7720 1936, theoldmarkets.com). Symi is a 90-minute ferry crossing from Rhodes.

20 Casa Vitae Rethymnon, Crete

Situated in the heart of Rethymnon's picturesque old town, Casa Vitae makes an ideal base for exploring the winding historical streets, restaurant-lined Venetian harbour, and long sandy beach beyond. The hotel is a restored 17th-century nobleman's residence, with 11 comfortable rooms, and a lovely walled courtyard for breakfasts or an early evening beer.

Stay A week costs from £675pp, including flights and B&B accommodation through Cachet Travel (020-8847 8700, cachet-travel.co.uk).