

The Greek Island Hideaway Redefining the Holistic Holiday

A packed schedule and a feel-good vibe make this Eden-like haven in Kefalonia 2023's standout island sanctuary for slow living and laidback wellness.

THE FIRST THING you notice about F Zeen, is its abundance. Lushly planted with more than 8,000 trees and plants, the hotel sits in 20 acres on a hill above Lourdas beach on Kefalonia's stunning south coast, and teems with the glories of the natural world: flowers in full bloom, scented bushes crawling over stone walls, the sound of birdsong filling the air. At every turn you are spoiled for choice; one forest pathway leads up to a secret yoga deck with stunning sea views, another to an outdoor gym hidden in the trees. Its charming labyrinthine layout encourages you to explore at your own pace, get lost, chance upon one of its many hilltop hideaways.

But it's the packed weekly schedule that really knocks you sideways. On any given day there will be aerial yoga on one deck, breathwork and meditation on another, HIIT sessions in the gym, an interval workout on the beach. All of it complimentary to guests. It's like a full-service health and fitness retreat, but one you can duck in and out of without feeling the slightest pang of guilt about how much or how little you do.

Beyond the group classes, there is enough going on to fill a fortnight, and then some. You can paddleboard or snorkel, play tennis, watch a film at the wonderful under-the-stars outdoor cinema, lounge by one of three pools, book the golf simulator tucked away in the forest, take a guided hike to the peak of Mount Ainos, or head to the Idor Spa for a rejuvenating Ionian massage.



The rooms at F Zeen have been decorated using a colour palette of earthy tones and sand-coloured stone. All have views over the sparkling waters of the Ionian Sea.

The rooms are themselves little sanctuaries, all earthy tones and sand-coloured stone. Some of the gorgeous suites have their own pools and incredible views over to Zakynthos. If you're travelling with friends be sure to book the three-bedroom villa, which has its own pool, yoga deck, gym, and kitchen.

There are two restaurants, Gaia and Selini, both of which make good use of the hotel's abundant chef's garden and the surrounding sea to create perfectly measured menus, featuring big bold flavours and super-fresh salads. Think grilled octopus doused with oil and lemon, and big bowls of risotto studded with seafood – delicious food that is naturally and unpretentiously healthy.

This kind of balanced approach in the kitchen is part of F Zeen's wider vision of the good life: slow-paced and soulful, everything done in harmony with the environment around it. It's a way of being that it's honed to a fine art.

fzeenretreat.com

