



A LAND OF PLENTY

Kefalonia

Suzanne Koumoudos, owner of F Zeen retreat, located on Lourdas Beach, waxes lyrical about the Greek island she calls home, its beauty and everything it has to offer



IMAGES: F ZEEN

Lourdas Beach
ABOVE: A villa pool at F Zeen

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST THINGS TO DO NEAR LOURDAS BEACH?

The early morning is a great time to explore secluded beaches by kayak. Alternatively, hike Mount Ainos: on top, there's a temple dedicated to Zeus and, when looking out to the sea, you can spot Zeus Island. But I like to sit and be present in nature. During summer, the sound of cicadas is overwhelming.

WHAT ABOUT EPIC VISTAS?

Lourdas offers great views of Zakynthos Island, and the 45-minute walk to Sissia Monastery takes in the entire coast. In summer, you can sit at Selini restaurant and admire the sun set above St George's Castle.

WHAT SHOULD ALL TRAVELLERS TRY?

Slow-cooked octopus with fava, citrus preserves and locally bottled olive oil. Kefalonia honey has a distinct taste too: it's produced with wild thyme and indigenous conifer trees that only grow on Mount Ainos, which give it a wonderful flavour.

HOW DID ALL THIS INSPIRE F ZEEN?

The property consisted of centuries-old olive groves that bordered with a conifer forest, so we recreated an old village. In 1953, an earthquake devastated the southern part of Kefalonia. We used those weathered stones for the exterior and wanted guests to connect with and feel immersed in nature.

KEFALONIA IS SPECIAL BECAUSE...

It's retained its charm by not becoming too commercialised. There's a fine balance between service providers being courteous and preserving a destination's authenticity.

PLAN THE TRIP

Stay at adults-only F Zeen retreat, which has two restaurants, three pools and two spas. Room options range from doubles with a garden terrace to a villa with a pool and panoramic sea views. fzeenretreat.com

F ZEEN