

THE GOOD LIFE

At F Zeen, a vision of Greek hospitality, incorporating local food, luxury wellbeing and simple sophistication, is a balm for mind, body and soul

“LET FOOD BE THY medicine and medicine be thy food” is a quote often attributed to Hippocrates, the Greek philosopher and physician who revolutionised how the world thinks about health. Hippocrates was from Kos, but his philosophy sits at the heart of the approach of F Zeen, a boutique holiday retreat on the beautiful, lush Greek island of Kefalonia, where organic food, mindful leisure and tranquillity are prioritised as ways of achieving personal wellbeing. F Zeen is an anglicised version of the Ancient Greek phrase “Ευ ζην”, which means “the good life”, a concept that the sister-brother partnership of Tasia and Christof Koumoudos believe encapsulates the idea behind the resort they founded in 2016.

“The whole idea is based on the Greek idea of the good life,” explains Tasia. “It is about wellbeing, mind and body balance and connectedness to our surroundings. Our father is from Kefalonia and we were raised in England, so we both travelled a lot. We felt there was a lack of authentic places, places with substance, so we created a venue that offers character and an authentic identity. We feel that concepts such as privacy, balance, health and wellbeing are very important – our strength comes from that vision. We have strong ideas and constantly remind ourselves that’s why we started this.”

F Zeen has 61 rooms and two private villas. The resort is for adults only, and is peaceful and spacious, with three swimming pools and 15 acres of beautiful, landscaped gardens. The latter have been created to celebrate the bountiful horticulture of Kefalonia, confirming the connection with nature at a resort that is set into the rocks above the Ionian Sea. The resort is a family affair; Tasia and Christof’s father

helped design the buildings using organic materials such as weathered stone and wood, while the elegantly raw interiors were created by their mother and feature artwork and furniture made by local artisans.

Wellbeing is the defining spirit at F Zeen, but this notion can adapt to the needs of each guest. That could mean a cocktail on the beach at sunset, hikes in the mountains, kayaking and snorkelling, yoga, a spa break, health or nature retreat, or using the outdoor gym, tennis court or outdoor cinema. Guests are encouraged to do as much or as little as they like. The sustainable ethos of the retreat is maintained at the two restaurants, Selini and Gaia, which favour traditional Greek recipes using local produce including ingredients harvested from the resort’s organic vegetable garden.

It is an idyllic experience and one that has delighted both guests and critics. Tasia and Christof are now preparing to take the concept to other Greek islands, maintaining the core elements that make F Zeen so successful but adapting them for different island communities, each of which has its own identity. “That is very important because when people get here, we want them to know they are in Greece, and in a particular part of Greece,” says Christof. “We can do that with elements such as architecture, interior design, landscaping and cuisine. We have a formula we are very happy with and feel we can do the Greek islands justice by keeping certain standards, such as the commitment to space, to health and to our guests’ wellbeing. There will be a luxury experience that is common to all, but each resort will have a specific character, relating to its own culture and history.”

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