

CLOSE UP

SUMMER STYLE

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Bikinis

GORGEOUS
HAIR

*Zera
Effort*

GO-TO
Summer
Activities

*By Tonia
Buxton*

COOL
IDEAS

*For your
baby's
nursery*

SUPERstar

*Brie
Larson*

ONE LONG,
HOT SUMMER

With CAROLINE FLACK

SUMMER 2019
closeupuk.com

A Family **ACTIVE HOLIDAY**

words by Tonia Buxton





“It’s amazing - whilst you exercise you have the view of the stunning Ionian Sea, the sound of the waves and the island Kefalonia in the distance.”

The island of Lefkada feels like the Greece of my childhood, unspoilt by mass tourism, calm and unpretentious. When we arrive at the Cosmos Beach Hotel where we will be spending our week, we are greeted by the Neilson’s Crew who are all smiley, enthusiastic and very welcoming.

There is a whole range of activities both in and out of the water that you can get involved with or not as you choose, I like the Neilson’s moto #relaxashardasyoulike. Zeno, my 11-year-old son went in with a group of children who were of similar age who were led by Amber, a beautiful bundle of energy. Zeph at 14 had the choice of joining the adult groups or going in with the kids, he did a bit of both.

I started my first day with a yoga class guided by wonderful Maria who helped me get rid of all the stress of travelling and relax into my day, it’s amazing as whilst you exercise you have the view of the stunning Ionian Sea, the sound of the waves and the island Kefalonia in the distance.

Every day is divided into activities, you can join a run or yoga or a core exercise session in the morning then bootcamp or circuits in the afternoon, but what I loved best was that everyday ended with a stretch and relax session which was wonderful.

The next morning Paul and Zeph went off on a guided mountain bike ride while Zeno and I took it easy. Then it’s a bit of windsurfing, bit of fitness and a lot of doing nothing but looking out at the beautiful view, while my children are thoroughly entertained and happy.

We decided to hire a car and do a tour of the island, which we easily did in a day and it was well worth doing as Lefkada is an island of dramatic scenery. Mountains and then hairpin bends down to the clear azure blue sea. A must visit is Porto Kastiki beach, go early so you can have it to yourselves, white sand, the bluest of blue seas and crazy foaming waves, we loved it there. Before moving on we sat at one of the little cafes at the top and drank a frappé, cold coffee Greek style.

We drove on and came to harbour town of Nidri, the view driving down into it is just awe inspiring, the colours of the trees, flowers, sea and boats is stunning. It is the biggest town on the island, but still pretty small, we walked about and bought a lovely olive wood bowl to take home, there are lots of restaurants on the harbour front, some a bit touristy, but I can highly recommend Basilico, delicious food, we especially liked the aubergine saganaki, baked in the oven with feta cheese and the wild mushrooms too.



The Cosmos Beach Hotel has wonderful lunches and suppers but if you decide you want something different, there is Pondi restaurant which is a 3 minute walk away or it is a 15 minute walk into Vasiliki town along the beach and there are some lovely restaurants to visit there. We loved Oceans which had the best and freshest fish, and their fava (split yellow lentils) was so good. Along the harbour there are again some touristy restaurants, but Vagelaras is a family run restaurant and is great, my sons loved Youvetsi, slow cooked lamb with orzo pasta. The island also has some pretty good indigenous wines, so make sure you try them out.

We were all sad when the week came to an end, it really is the best of holidays, for me especially if you have children as the kids clubs are so good, but I would come back when the schools are not off and have the adult experience too. After eating and drinking to my heart’s content and because of the choices of things to do, I came back from this holiday fitter and more toned. Total ‘win win’ for me.

www.cosmos-vassiliki.com