

MEDITERRANEAN

SIGGY AND HEATHER | TRIP AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN | THURSDAY, 9 MAY 2013

Another Driving Day

The drive out of Turkey and back into Greece has taken us two days. We would have preferred the ferry route but it was not meant to be. We are currently free camping near Asprovalta - a nondescript hamlet on the Greek coast. The aim is to make a short visit to the Sithonian peninsular tomorrow before heading south for a quick tour around Pilio. Both areas have been recommended to us. Both have narrow roads and are very hilly but after driving through the totally manic centres of Izmir, Canakkale and Alexandroupoli I can tackle anything.

Out of Turkey and back to Greece

Retracing our steps back in to Greece only cemented in our minds how dirty and disorganized Turkey appears to be. First impressions start and finish at the border and Turkey was and is not a pretty sight. It is ironic that we usually enjoy the areas between major attractions (and there is a lot of area to cover) but our fondest remembrances of Turkey will be the ancient ruins and old buildings - not the new.

The border crossing was uneventful. The Turks gave our passports a quick stamp and the Greek customs guy simply waved us on. Our drive through north eastern Greece along the freeway was almost relaxing. There is no way you can keep up with the speedy Greek drivers (they drive just as fast as Turkish drivers) so why not go at your own pace and save fuel.

Greece must be keen to foster clean energy. There was a juxtaposition of coal power plants fouling up a valley with smog and lots of clean green solar energy farms further on. Greece is incredibly green with broad acreage farming (as was Turkey). The mountains seem incredibly high. We had expected a dry and barren landscape.



CONTIKI We rocked up to the Gallipoli caravan park for the second time and could not believe the number of people staying there. We thought the holiday season had just opened. When the Contiki bus with 60 loud Australian's left early in the morning the place was suddenly quiet again. The penny dropped.

CAMPING

FINDING CAMP SITES HAS NOT BEEN TOO DIFFICULT SO FAR. OCCASIONALLY WE HAVE NOT FOUND THE ONE WE PLANNED BUT ON THE WHOLE CARAVAN PARKS WE HAVE BEEN TO HAVE BEEN MORE THAN ACCEPTABLE. SOME HAVE BEEN REALLY TERRIFIC - CLEAN TOILETS, HOT SHOWERS, EASY TO GET TO CHEMICAL TOILET OUTLETS. ONLY ONE OR TWO HAVE LEFT A LOT TO BE DESIRED. THE AVERAGE PRICE TO STAY A NIGHT HAS BEEN AROUND A\$25.

ROAD TOLLS

UNMANNED TOLLS HAVE BEEN THE BANE OF OUR LIVES. IN TURKEY THEY ARE TOTALLY ELECTRONIC. THE TROUBLE IS THAT IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND OUT HOW TO BUY A TOLL PASS. WE PASSED THROUGH TWO TOLLS IN TURKEY BY MISTAKE. CAMPER FRIENDS WANTED TO PAY THEIR TOLL AT A POST OFFICE (AFTER THE EVENT) BUT WERE TOLD TO "FORGET ABOUT IT". THE POST OFFICE NEAR ONE TOLL GATE WE PASSED WAS CLOSED.



SPREKEN SIE DEUTCH? Met an old man in the supermarket in Alexandroupoli. Told him we were Australian's so he started to speak German. Must have thought I meant Austria until I hopped like a kangaroo. He said he could not speak English so still continued to rattle on in German. I must look German.