

# MEDITERRANEAN


SIGGY AND HEATHER | TRIP AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN | SUNDAY, 12 MAY 2013

## Between The Mountains and The Sea

Greece's Pilon peninsula has a mountain range in the north-east corner. The southern part becomes gentler and descends to beautiful seas. The history of this place is really very interesting. During one Turkish occupation (we have lost track of which war that was), the inhabitants took to these remote regions and managed to avoid domination. They had their own secret schools and spawned a lot of ideas that led to a later war of independence. That really tells you how rugged this area is.

We left early enough and stopped briefly to get some cash at the nearby ATM. While I waited in the parked van and Heather got the cash, council workers closed the road either side of me. The town was going to have a party and we were stuck in the middle. The organizers finally realized my predicament and a worker directed me to a side street so I could turn our van, "Wilhelm," around. So, guided by Emily and riding Wilhelm, we set off.

We got to the top of the mountain OK but it took much longer than expected.

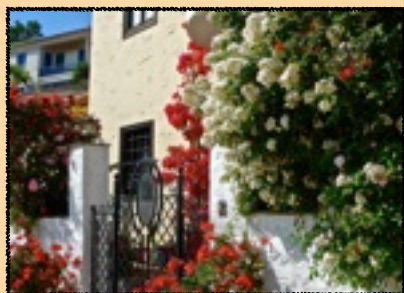
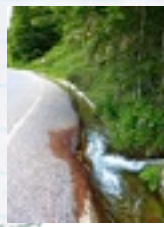
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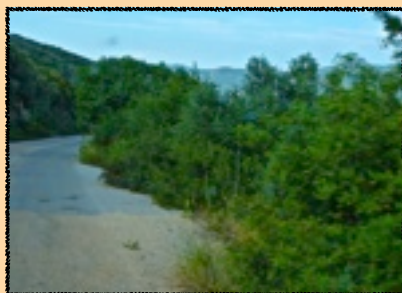
## Water

Greece (and Turkey) has public watering holes located all over the country. They are signposted and have a tap with running water. We assume it is to provide all and sundry with suitable drinking water.

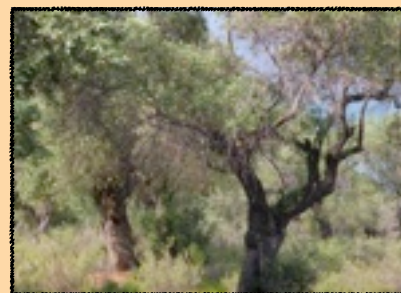
I also found it interesting today to see water rushing in an open roadside channel down many kilometers of roadway to what I surmise was the water reservoir for the local town at the bottom of the mountain. The channel appeared to be well maintained. It crossed the road many times and occasionally went through pipes.



**FLOWERS EVERYWHERE** It is so nice to see flowers adorning houses. It has really been noticeable here, especially the roses.



**ROAD HAIRCUTS** So many of the roads here have plants that encroach so far on to the road it is dangerous. You have to drive in the centre of the road to avoid them. Is lack of road maintenance funds a symptom of the GFC?



**OLIVE TREES** The landscape in this region is dotted with thousands of olive trees. Gauging by the heavily gnarled and very thick trunks the majority appear to be seriously old.

## SNAPS



NICE PLACE TO PARK. WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE IS THE SHEER DROP ON THE LEFT



TYPICAL ROAD ON PILION



EXPANSIVE PILION VIEWS



MOUNTAIN VILLAGE

Heather had purchased a local map but we still did not manage to find many of the places we intended to see. The locations on the ground showed no great relationship to the map. We spent a good deal of time zigzagging up the mountain through thick vegetation of chestnut, oak, walnut, eucalyptus and wild olive groves. The light played through the leaves and dappled on the ground. Later, when we headed back down, we were surprised to find that it had rained. We loved the old olive trees. The roads were all bitumen - "two" lanes, but narrow. We were glad it was a Sunday. The bigger boys we saw on the side of the road were "resting". Just look at the picture to see how they "park".

The view at the top was awesome and the houses and villages we came across were most interesting. Firstly, many of the roofs were made of grey slate (like the Zaghoria region) and secondly, because of the extreme steepness of the landscape, the houses cascaded down the slopes (or up - whichever way you see it from). The windy roads kept going and despite having the map (and Emily) we still got lost a number of times. We were not stressed however.

At one stage we seemed to have gate crashed a village Sunday lunch. Everyone was dressed to the nines and enjoying a meal in the centre of town. There was no room through for Wilhelm so the diners had to move their cars aside.

Having a Dutch number plate was little help but I sensed that waving our Australian flag up and down rapidly many times did the trick.

Where and how silly people park vehicles constantly amazes us - particularly large trucks - literally anywhere will do. Eventually we fumbled our way out of the more mountainous area and, after a light lunch at a sleepy village where we were coaxed inside by a local farmer and shown how the local honey was made, we drove south to the gentler, seaside slopes.

This area seems as remote as anywhere we have been to date. Early on there were gorgeous little villages sited right on the water but further on there was nothing but rugged coastline for many kilometers.

At the end of the road sat Trikeri, a surprisingly large village, where cars aren't king. We parked outside and spent some time walking around the narrow streets and enjoyed the quiet. It was relatively late and few people were around.

We decided not to stay overnight but to drive back up the peninsula so that we could get an early start for Delphi tomorrow.

When we arrived back at our caravan park a brief but heavy thunder storm capped off a lovely warm and sunny day.





# PHOTOS



Trikeri church



Trikeri church