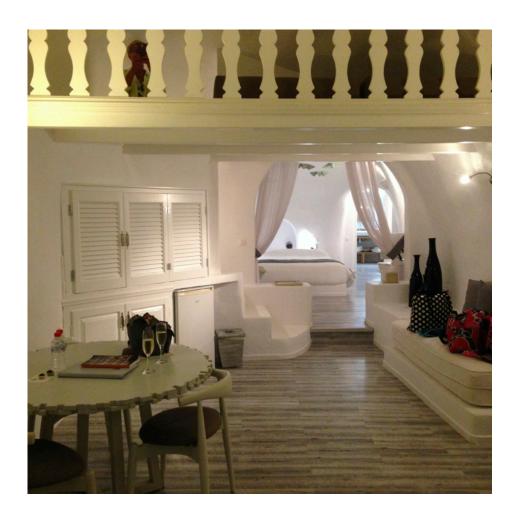


Santorini, Greece

June 23 - 27, 2015



June 23, 2015 - The driver from our hotel picked us up at the airport. We arrived after it was already dark, so we couldn't see much of our surroundings. We had to walk down a lot of stairs to our room. When we got to the Mill Houses Elegant Suites, we were pleasantly surprised to see another gorgeous junior suite with a small kitchenette behind the cabinet doors.

It was "cave style" built into the side of the cliff. Anna and I had stayed in a "cave style" hotel when we traveled through central Turkey years ago. They tend to feel a little damp inside.

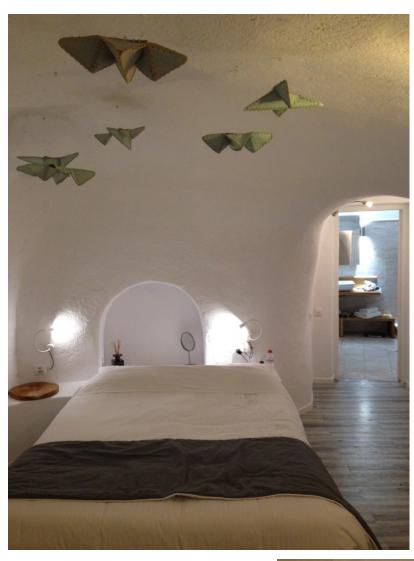




They supplied beach towels to use at the pool. Our room was right at the pool level.

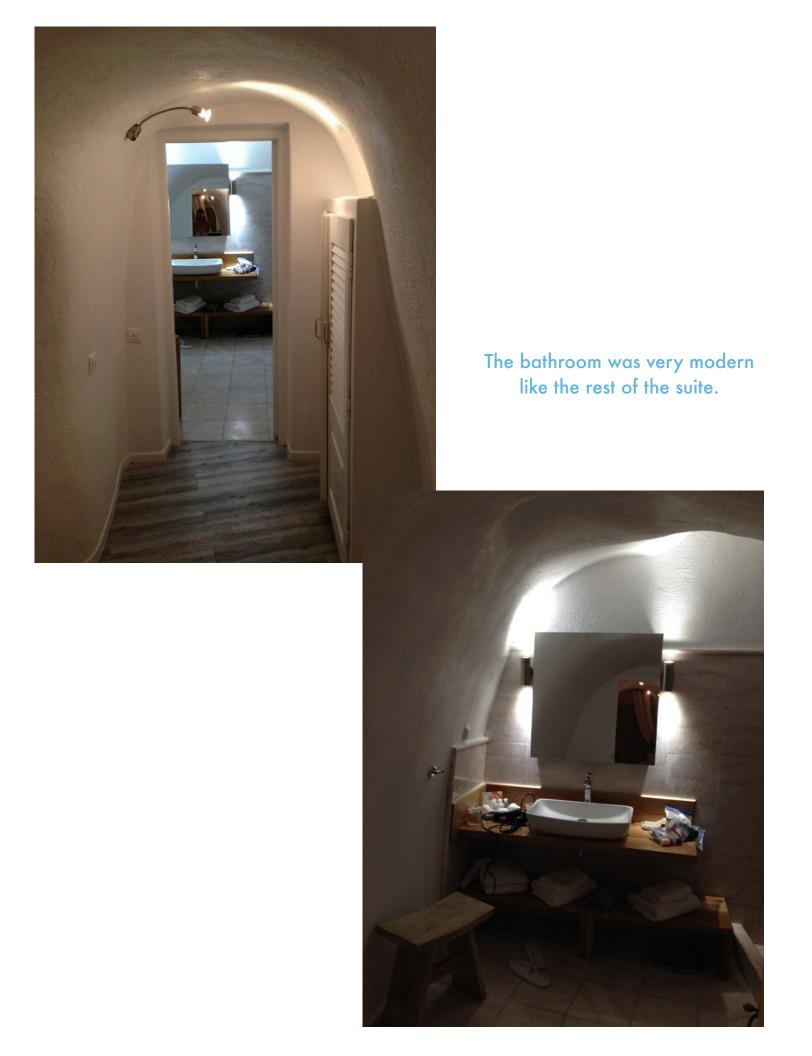
It had an upstairs loft that we didn't even use. It would be great for a family with kids to sleep up there.





The bed had fun sculptures hanging over it like seagulls flying over.







With great Bulgari soaps and shampoo. We settled into bed to rest up for the next day.





June 24, 2015 - We woke up and put on the fluffy white robes they provided to step outside our door and see this fantastic view.

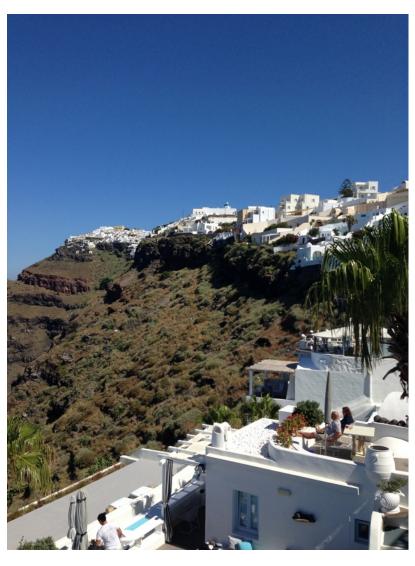








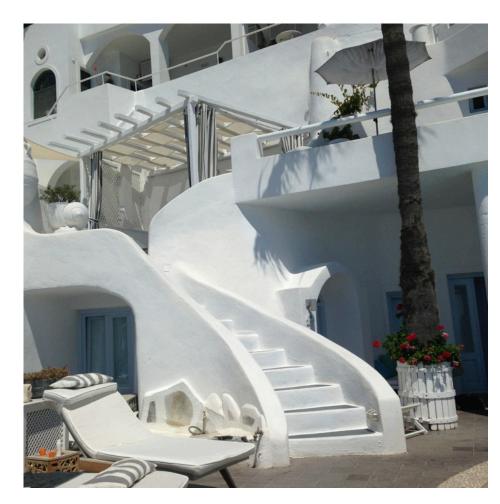
We had put in our order for breakfast the night before, and they delivered it to the table outside our room door. This is where we ate breakfast all 4 mornings sitting and relaxing in our robes while enjoying the view.

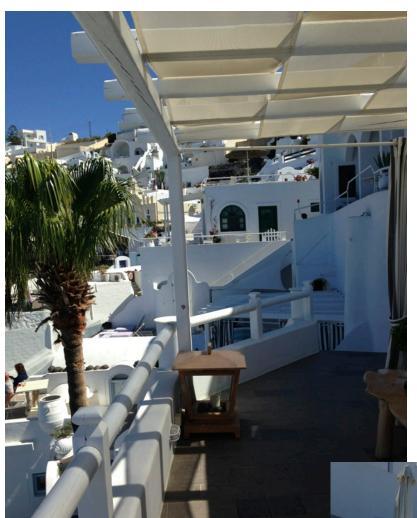






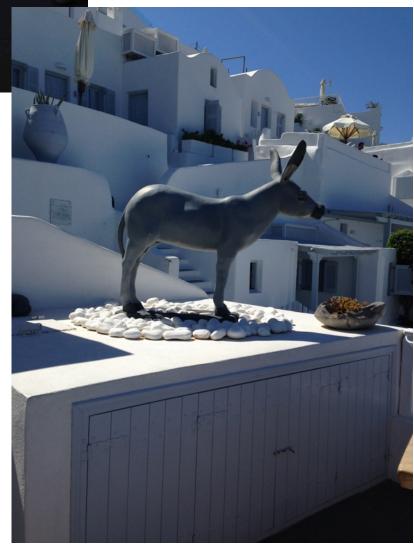
After breakfast we started the climb up the stairs at our level of the pool to head up to the street level and start exploring the town of Firastefani where our hotel was located.

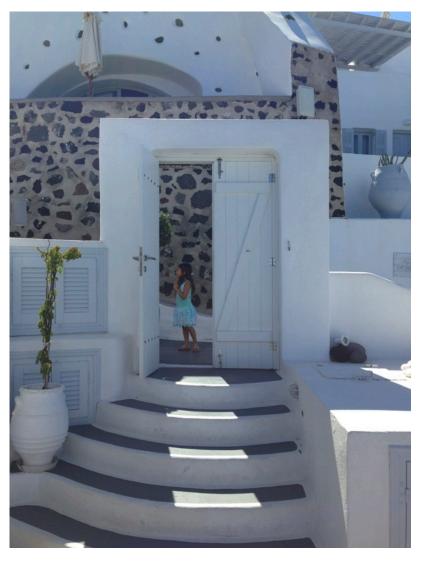




The next level up was where the reception desk of the hotel was located.

Then past the statue of the donkey. They actually have donkey rides up the side of the cliffs for the tourists coming off the cruise ships to get up to the towns.



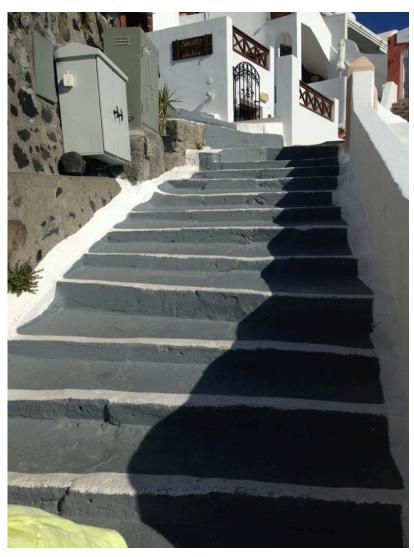


Up these few steps to the door of the hotel that leads put to their hotel sign and more stairs!





Okay...here we go climbing up...

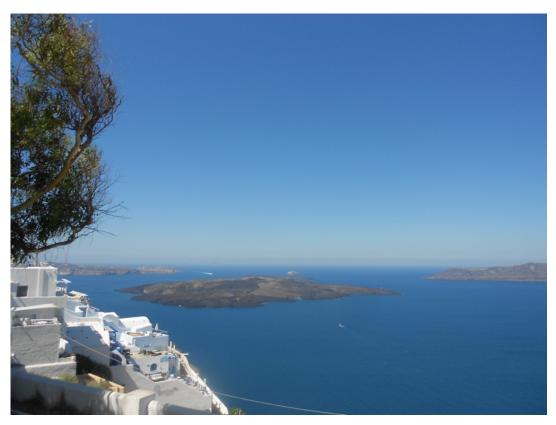




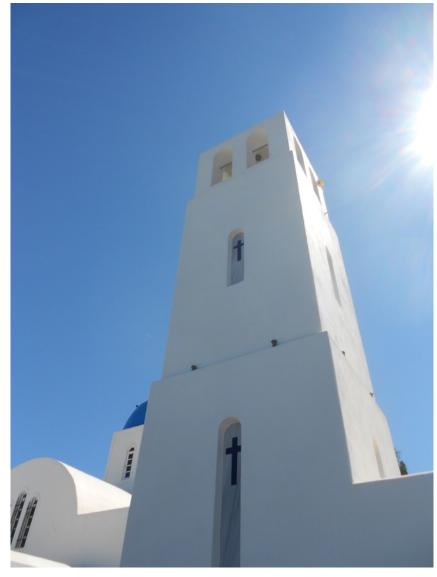


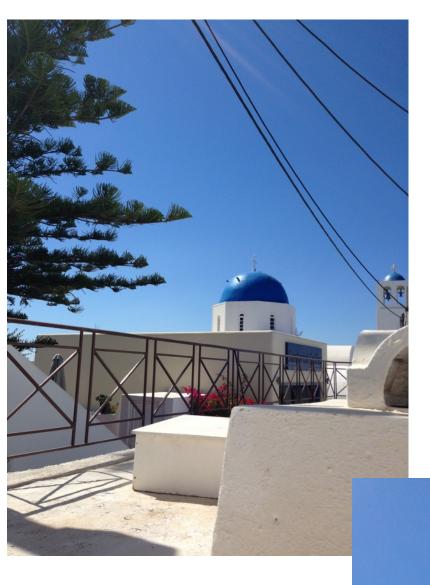
At the top of all those stairs is a cobblestone walkway with shops and restaurants. This was once an old mill now turned into a restaurant called Mylos, which is my guess that may be Greek for "mill." This restaurant is part of our hotel, and that's where the hotel got their name of Mill Houses. We didn't eat here because I didn't see anything on the menu that I would eat. Anna would have tried it.



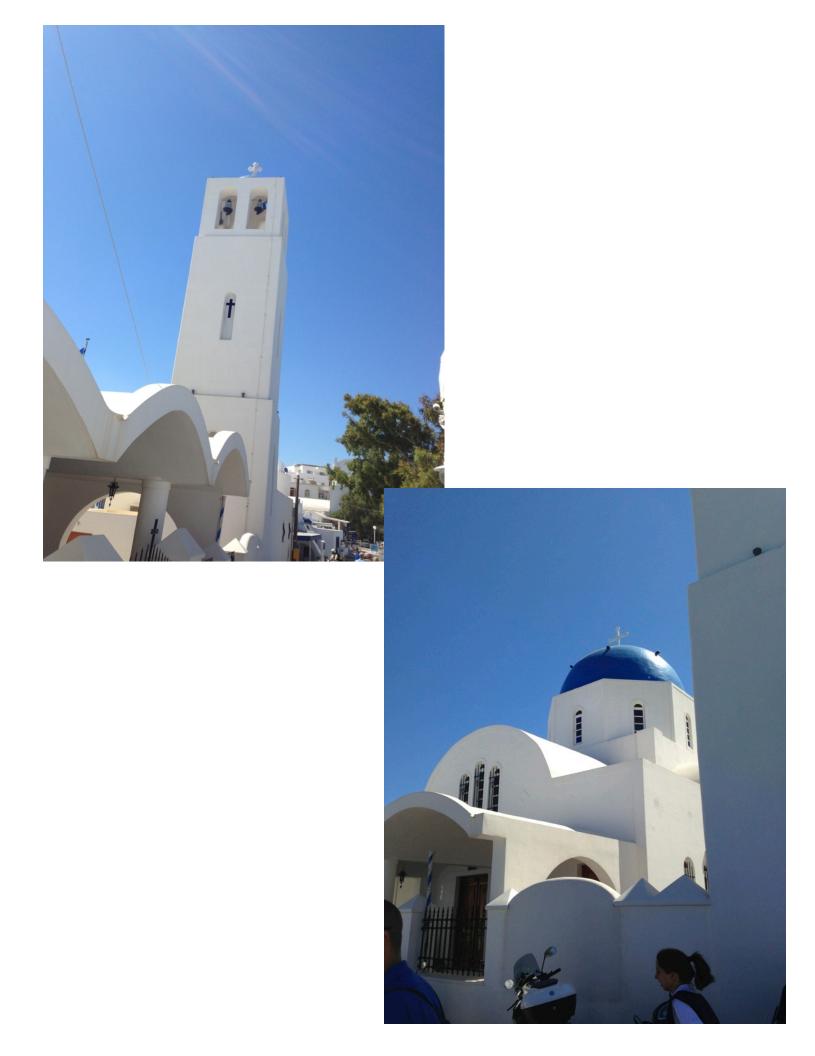


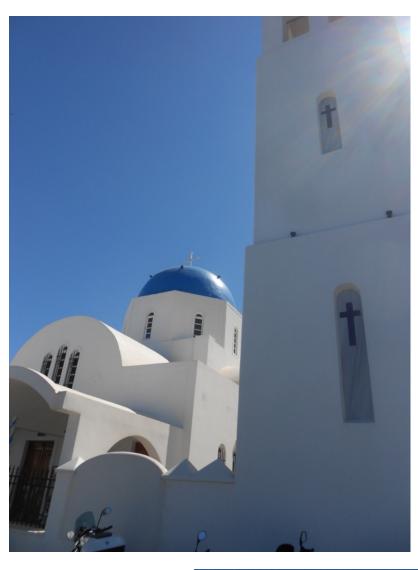
We continued to walk along the cobblestone walk past white churches with blue domes. Santorini is known for the many blue domed churches.





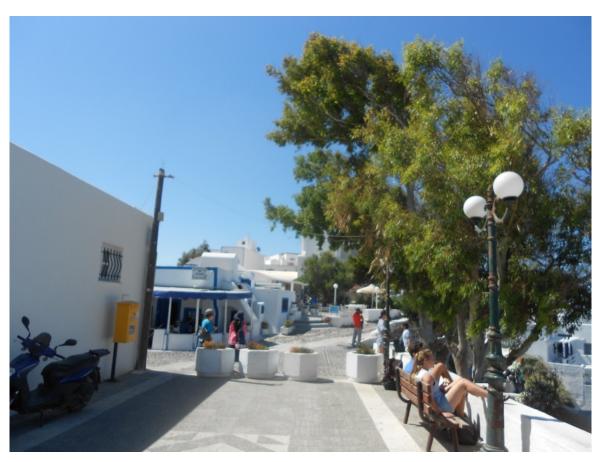






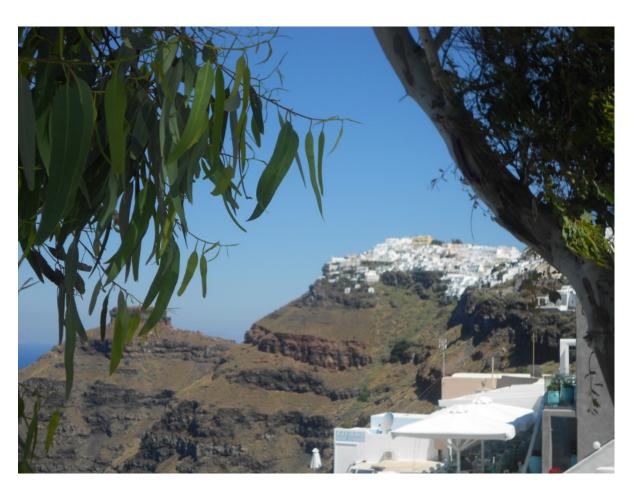
And all along our walk on the cobblestone path was the constant view of the deep blue Aegean Sea.

















Our first sight of some cruise ships docked below. That was the only downfall of our stay on Santorini was all the people coming ashore from the ships. It made the narrow cobblestone walkways jam pack crowded.





Saw this seahorse and it reminded me of Ariya. She was born in March the astrological sign of Pisces, the fish, and the Chinese year of the horse. So we combined the two and came up with "seahorse" and we always find seahorses for decorations or on her clothes.



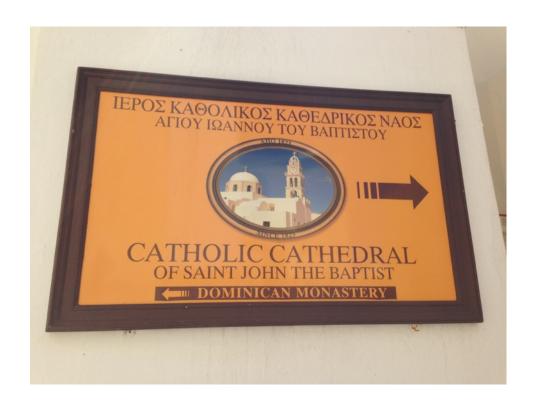
Beautiful pastels on old doors. Somehow I believe this paint effect is really weather worn where in America people work at trying to make furniture look distressed and antique.





A fun door knocker in the shape of a hand.





We came across this one beautiful church that wasn't painted in the typical white with blue dome.













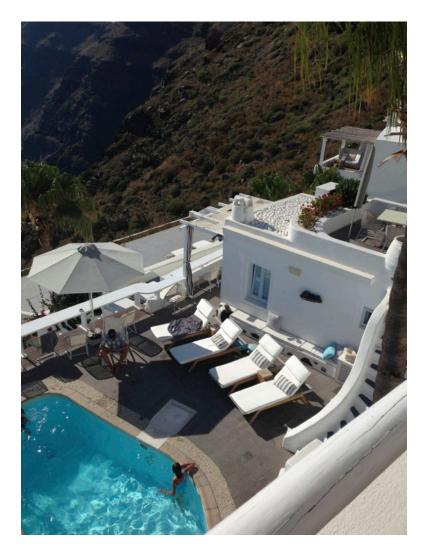


We walked and walked and found the main center of the tourist shops and bought some souvenirs and shopped.





Finally walked back near our hotel and stopped in this restaurant to get some food to go....fried cheese and dip. We had also bought some fresh cherries from a little boy selling them. We decided to take it back and eat sitting around our pool area. The fried cheese was a bit too salty.





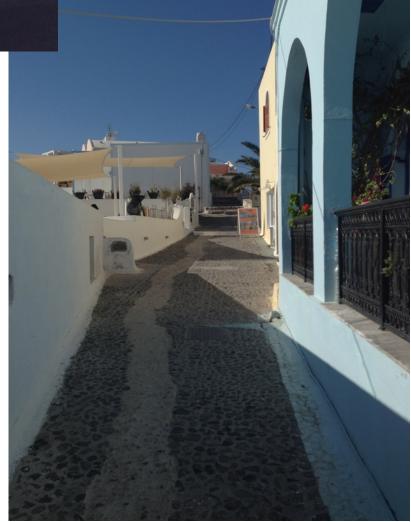


That evening our hotel made dinner reservations for us in another town just around the cove called Oia (pronounced ee-uh). We had to take a bus there....standing room only for 20 minutes with all the cruise ship crowds. When we got there, we arrived too early for our dinner reservation, so we walked around and stopped into this church and walked some more and stopped in shops.



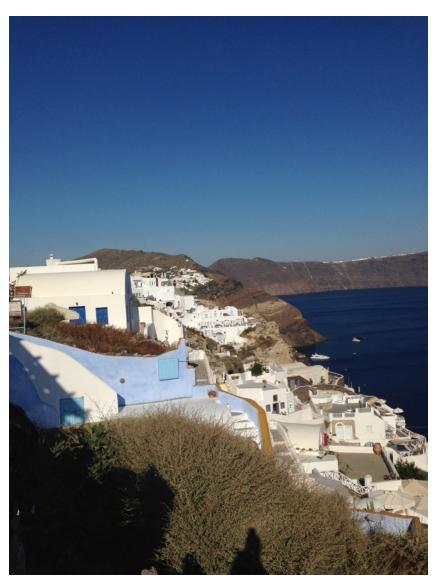


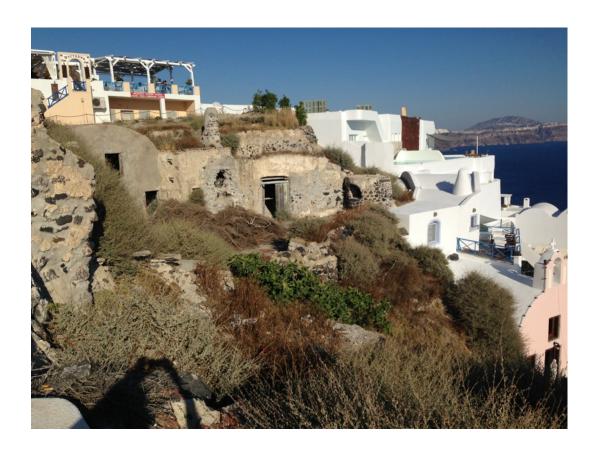
Throughout this whole trip we were trying to be very careful and watch our step because these old countries are full of cobblestone streets and uneven walkways. But sure enough I missed a step in Oia and fell and was lucky to only scrape my elbow and hand rather than breaking a bone or something worse.





Above is a view from Oia of the other side of the cliffs where we were staying in Firastefani.





Below this was once a windmill also.





We went into this shop where a woman made these handmade puppets. They were exquisite and the shop was filled with all different types and very unique.





The goofy look on my face...either blissful at being in such beautiful surroundings or just trying a fake smile even though my feet and body were so sore from so much walking and climbing stairs.

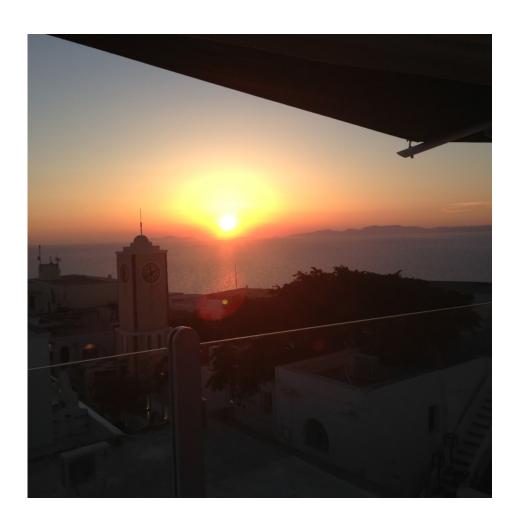




Time for dinner...and guess what? We had to climb up two stories to the top of the restaurant...because we wanted a view of the sunset. Santorini is known to have beautiful sunsets. Oia is known to have the best views of the sunsets in Santorini, and everyone gathers there in the evenings to await the display of the setting sun over the sea.

I had delicious chicken and cheesecake for dessert. Anna had lamb that she said was so tender it fell off the bone.

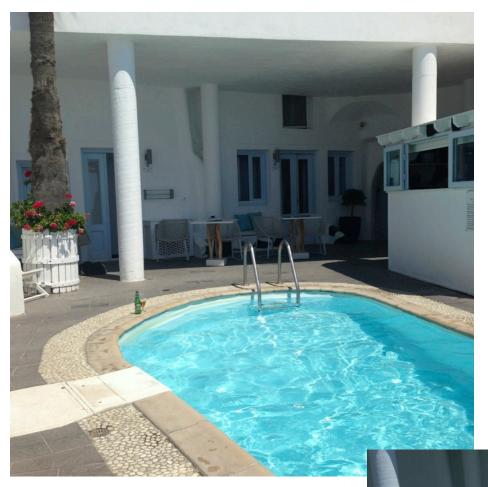




We were so glad the food was great because there were no clouds in the sky, so the sunset was nothing spectacular.

We caught the crowded bus again with standing room only back to Firastefani, and I took this photo of the church near our hotel at night.





June 25, 2015 - We decided to spend the next two days just sunbathing and resting by the pool and avoiding the crowd from the cruise ships.

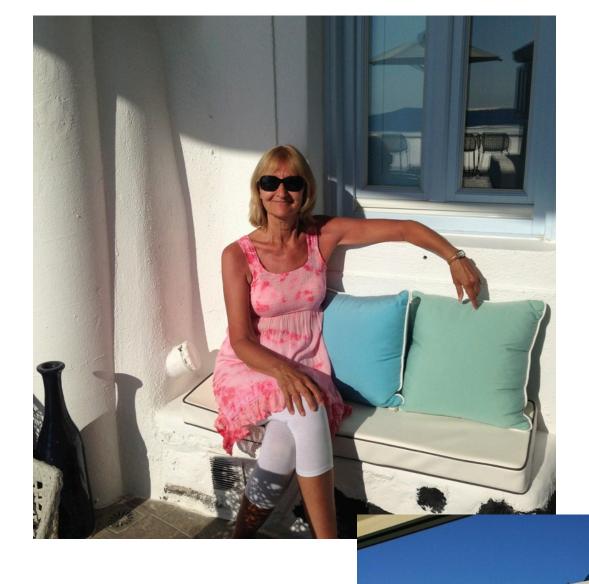
After so much walking throughout Italy and now Santorini, we were in great need of just some R&R.





Laying on the chaise lounge by the pool I looked up and saw this unique umbrella with rows of thin white material flapping in the breeze....so beautiful.



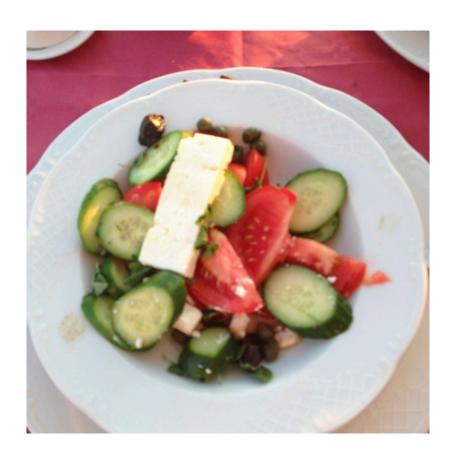


Relaxed and rested...we still had to head up all those stairs if we wanted to get to any restaurant for dinner! We found a good restaurant not far and up on the garden rooftop to watch our second sunset on this beautiful island.

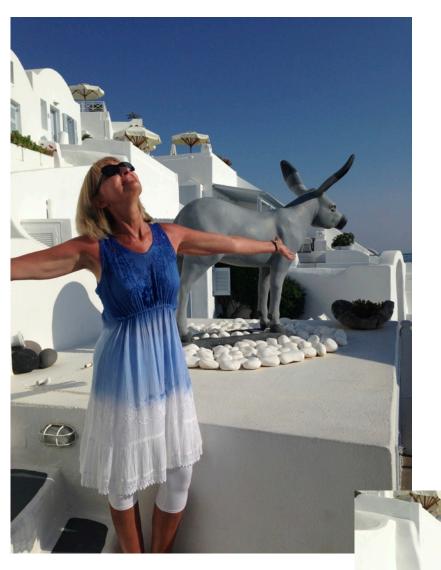


I decided I couldn't leave
Greece without having a Greek
salad. So, Anna and I both got
a salad along with fried cheese
balls and baked pita bread.

These cheese balls were delicious and better than the fried cheese we had the day before. The pita bread was grilled toasted just perfect, and we finished our meal off by sharing a chocolate mousse. The Greek salad was very good except they don't put lettuce in like we do. It's just cucumber, tomato, capers and feta cheese, and I ordered it without onions.







June 26, 2015 - We spent our last full day on Santorini getting a massage in our room and once again just hanging out at the pool. Showered and dressed for dinner we climbed up the hotel stairs to the donkey and had our photo taken there by the hotel clerk. Yes, I bought that sundress before I left for my travels just knowing it was the colors of Santorini, and I envisioned myself wearing it to match the blue and white buildings everywhere on the island.



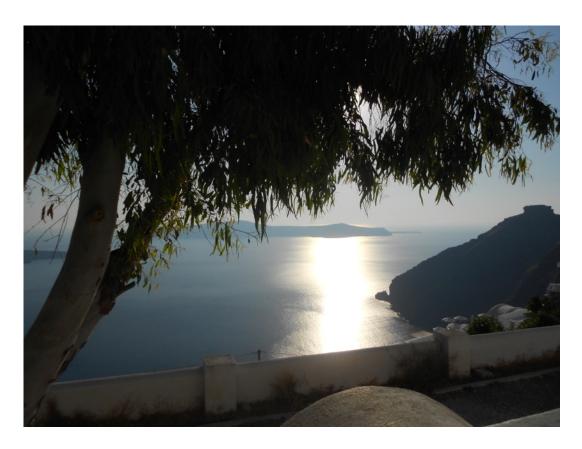


After checking out menus at a few restaurants we decided on this one on the cobblestone walkway not far from our hotel.

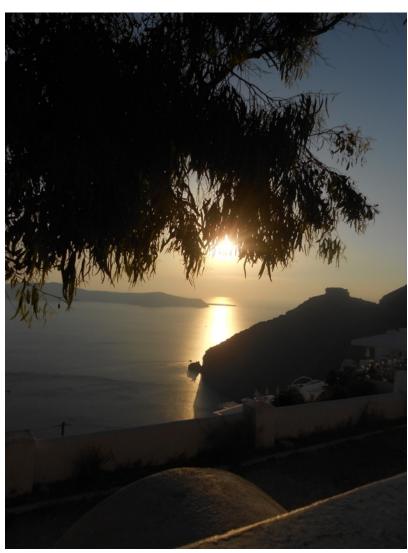


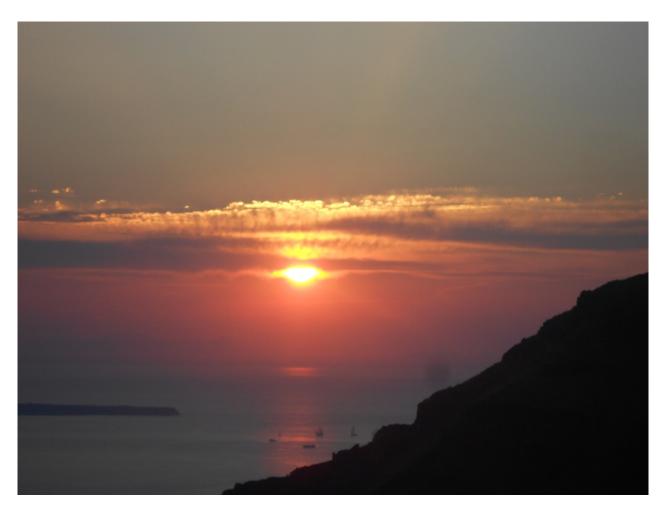


The restaurant had outdoor seating right by the wall overlooking the cliffs and water. Anna and I both ordered the chicken, and it came with a baked potato. It was pretty good.

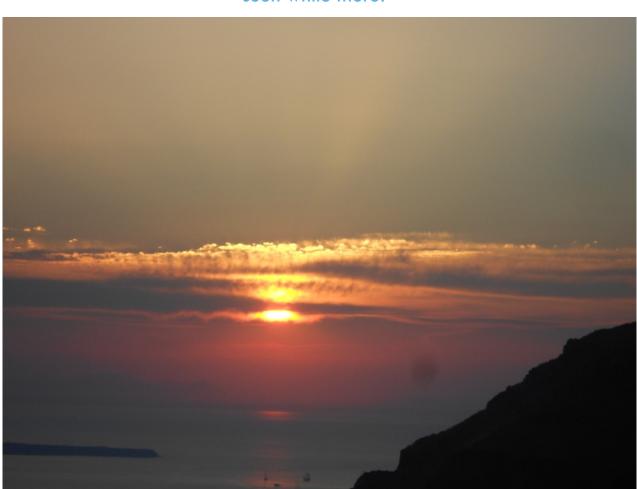


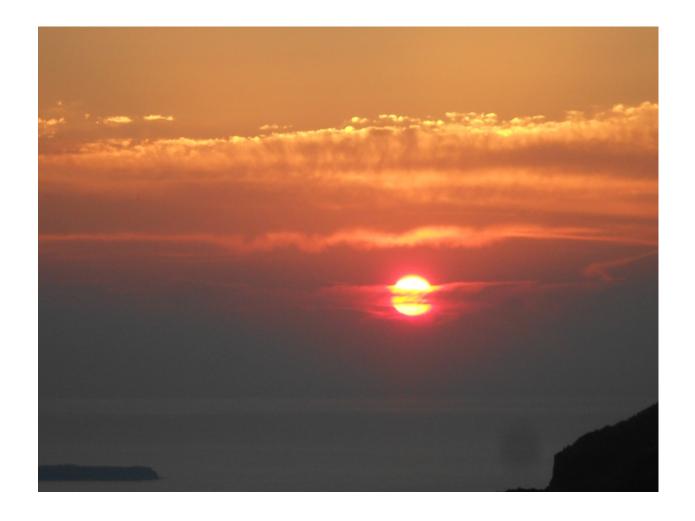
And it was a great place to watch the sunset on our last night in Santorini.

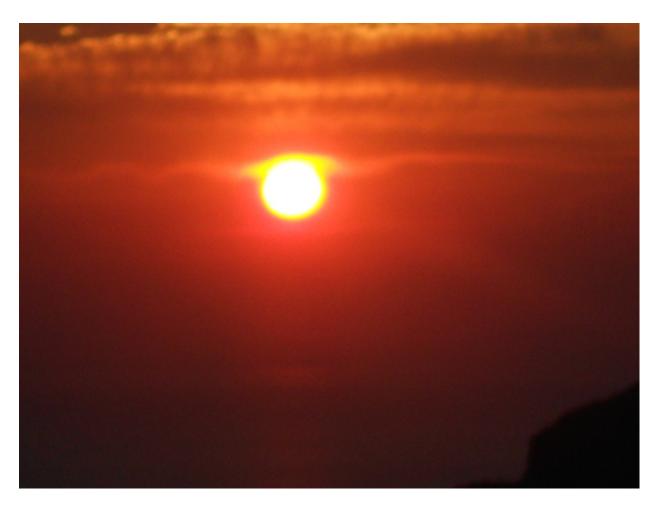




There was finally some clouds in the sky making the sunset the best one we had seen while there.









Walking back to our hotel we went past the old mill turned into the Mylos restaurant and saw the moon hovering high above. We had a very early flight to catch in the morning to Athens, so we packed and went to bed early. At the Athens airport Anna caught her flight home to the U.S., and after a 5 hour wait between flights I caught my plane to Paris, France to continue my travels.

