

VILLA ASTERAS in PAROS

A Private Oasis

We are happy to share with you our little dream... a private retreat in a beautiful island.



Villa Asteras in Paros consists of the residence (one house, 185 sq. meters or 2000 sq. feet) and the surrounding land (7500 sq. meters or 80000 sq. feet). We take pride from the fact that we deliberately used only a fraction of the building allowance provided by the construction laws with respect to the size of the land, in order to conserve the greatest part of the land for the sake of the natural environment and our peace of soul :-)



The location – a rural quiet area, yet just a few minutes drive close to most of the picturesque and lively villages of the island – is part of the experience that **Villa Asteras in Paros** has to offer.

(View from south patio ... the sea lies 700m to the East).

The House:

Designed and executed by Petros Metaxas, the famous architect of the island and eminent citizen of Paros (Moraitis winery and the bridge of Naoussa are examples of his work), is exhibiting all the main features of the traditional Cycladic architecture. The thick stone-built external walls, the arch and the wooden ceilings, the roof extending on various levels and the internal window shutters are some of the typical characteristics of a traditional Cycladic manor.



Presenting a clean-cut yet functional design, with comfortable spaces, allowing plenty of sunlight to enter and merging smoothly with the surroundings, the house was built by local artisans.



The materials used were also of Cycladic origin: ● *Parian marble stones* for the external walls ● *Naxian marble* for the floors and *Parian marble* for the kitchen benches ● *Parian stones* for the patios' floors ● *Cycladic cedar* for the ceilings ● *Naxian marble* for the windows and door frames.

Apart from the design, special care was given to making the structure both luxurious – by using materials of the highest quality possible, as mentioned above – and environment friendly, by ensuring the lowest possible CO₂ profile. This was achieved by very meticulous insulation of the roof, by the traditional thick stone walls which act as thermal capacitors and insulators and by the innovative heating/cooling system which is operated by a heat pump and circulates hot/cold water under the marble floor.



(The heat pump's housing harmoniously incorporated to the ground and in able distance from the house to ensure zero noise).

The Internal Decoration and Furniture:

Designed and executed by Marianna, provides a minimal yet pleasant interior which does not overwhelm the feeling of freedom and tranquility which the villa seeks to offer.



Various antique and artistic pieces have been used in a discrete, harmonious manner.

- ● an old iron baby cradle (from 1920's) is now serving as a flowerpot holder in the entrance patio
- ● an antique lamp from the 1850's, which used to burn oil is now transformed to work with electricity and illuminates the entrance of the house



- ● underneath there is an extendable dinning table of the 1940's
- ● two old traditional chests (of 1820's and 1760's) add their exquisite touch to the lounge; on top of one, some gears of the sulfur mines dating back to 1920's add a more recent note



- ● various original paintings of contemporary artists hang from the walls along with replicas of ships, handmade artistically out of pieces of wood and other materials brought ashore by the waves
- ● a closet which was in use back to 1930's and a lavomano of the 1890's find their way in the main bedroom



- ● a statue of Athena made by Goumas, the famous sculptor, adds a pleasant note
- ● two Viennese Josef Hoffman armchairs of 1915's add the necessary inter-European touch



All the above items are family heirlooms and possessions.

The Garden and surroundings:

Nature and environment are of great importance to us; as a matter of fact, in many ways, they matter more than the house itself.

Apart from the importance of the natural environment as such and our commitment to respect the fauna and flora of the island, we believe that being in harmony with the natural environment is an intimate part of everyone's well being.

We started with a totally barren land a few years ago and, since then, every year we create tile by tile a small healthy ecosystem.



Insecticides, synthetic fertilizers or any other chemicals have never been used. All plants are treated with ecological permaculture methods. We most strictly use only sterilized manure and natural poseidonia (sea weed) compost as fertilizer. The rest of the field is left in its own natural condition.



Apart from the usual indigenous flora, rare plants of nearly extinguished species were spotted and being observed regularly (*Eryngium Maritimum*, *Atractylis Gummifera* etc.). Due to tourism, intense agriculture etc., these species are not often found these days.



An impressive larva of *Daphni Nerii* is the only creature which can feed on oleander leaves. When it grows into a beautiful moth, it feeds on the nectar of the honeysuckle's flowers, ensuring its pollination.

A spectacular *Saturnia Pyri* is resting on a patio.

(The keys were carefully and slowly placed next to it, to demonstrate the size).



A good part of the land is deliberately left in its original wild condition, thus being a good shelter for all the beneficial living beings like ladybugs and hedgehogs. After all, it is their rightful home! ... Theirs, not ours...



Two ladybugs are having a good time among the flowers of a *Solanum Nigrum*.



An *Ampelopsis* [*Glandulosa* var. *Brevipedunculata*] has found its way to cover beautifully our southern patio's pergola pillar.



Our herbal garden is growing nicely just in front of the northern patio, which is often used also for sun bathing and star gazing.

A current project is to cultivate part of the land with native productive trees for the production of small quantities of high quality organic products both for us and our guests!

Olive trees for extra virgin olive oil – Fig trees for tasteful marmalades and dried figs – Prickly Pears for fresh juice – Carob trees for flour and “chocolate” syrup – various herbs like oregano and rosemary.



Our olive trees will soon give their golden juice!

... and we shall all taste it :-)



Fresh and dried figs will soon enrich our meals!

Life may be short but it is an amazing gift...after all we are part of the self conscience of the amazing universe that we live in.

The best thing we can do is to live it by being creative, benevolent and with love to everyone and everything around us. So, let's taste the fruit!

Be well and CARPE DIEM!!!



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