It’s hard to imagine that just four years ago the only accommodation on offer was a handful of bedsits and B&Bs. Now, there’s the resplendent, eco-friendly Costa Navarino destination. It’s split into the ultra luxurious Romanos and the Westin, which is more family focused but equally classy. Book a seaview room; most come with a personal infinity pool and the sound of waves breaking (plus heavenly mattress) is guaranteed to result in a good night’s sleep. It’s a big complex done very well, featuring everything you could desire – rock climbing, diving, tennis courts, gym, pools, spa, beach – without feeling busy, impersonal or, most crucially, crass.
VISIT
If naval history’s your thing, visit Neokastro. Despite meaning ‘new castle’, it’s an old 16th-century Ottoman fort with bus-wide walls. Climb the crumbling buttresses (there’s no health and safety here) to gaze out onto the waters of Navarino Bay, where, in 1827, a decisive battle would lead to Greece’s victory in the Greek War of Independence. It was the last naval battle in the world to be fought with sailing ships, in case you were wondering. It’s worth taking proper shoes as the timeworn stones don’t mix with flip-flops. For a more light-hearted afternoon, take a towel down to Voidokilia beach. It’s shaped like the letter omega with a semicircular strip of sand dunes. Sheltered, with oh-so-blue waters, it’s considered to be one of the best beaches in the Med.

BUY
Olive oil, obviously, but it’s worth investing in good brands like Lia (liaoliveoil.com). And, of course, you’ll want to take home the fruits of your labour (see do). Thankfully, the hotel has its own top-notch locally produced food range called Navarino Icons. The oil is delicious, but the olive spoon sweets are extra special, soaked in herby syrup and stuffed with almonds. If you run out of room in your suitcase, don’t panic, the range is on sale in Harrods and M&S too.

EAT
There’s so much more to Greek food than feta and greasy gyros, with each region producing distinct specialties. The close proximity to the sea naturally means that the fish and seafood is superb, cooked simply with lashings of local olive oil. Swap the lunchtime salad for Trahanas Xinos, a delicious gloopy combination of tomato, cheese and bulgur wheat. Local sweet treats are syrupy and sticky. Try Diples, honey curls that are folded, deep-fried then drizzled with honey, cinnamon and crushed walnuts. It’s traditionally served at weddings to symbolise that the couple will have a sweet life together, but is equally good with a powerful Greek coffee after dinner.

DO
Greece produces the finest olive oil in the world, at least according to the Greeks. Messinia is thought to be one of the best growing regions thanks to high levels of polyphenols (the stuff that extends your life-expectancy), low acidity and for being hand-picked, which you can do yourself at Costa Navarino’s olive groves. It’s wonderfully therapeutic to spend an hour thwacking at the laden branches with a pitchfork. If you over exert yourself, pull up a chair in Pylos town square for a spot of people-watching over an iced coffee. Once recharged, grab a bike and skirt the coast till you reach Voidokilia beach.

BOOKIT: The Westin Costa Navarino, from £180 and The Romanos Costa Navarino, from £250; costanavarino.com. Easyjet flies from Gatwick to Kalamata from £21.99 per person; easyjet.com