

# glass

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## COSTA NAVARINO

### *A Greek Hideaway*

Everyone is going to Greece – some 30 million last year – and it is not difficult to understand why: 300 days of sunshine a year, safe and welcoming, a myriad of small islands with perfect beaches, the birthplace of Western civilisation. It doesn't get much better than this.

But Santorini and Mykonos are oversubscribed, and other islands under the warm gaze of an azure Aegean are heaving with sunbathers. The Bay of Navarino, off the mainland of western Greece, beckons as a relative hideaway. The local town of Pylos is quintessentially Greek, right down to a town square where residents sip drinks and nibble meze in the shade of an ancient tree and at such a leisurely pace as to induce envy in city dwellers. There is a castle on a hill, a museum of local antiquities and the splendid resort of Costa Navarino.

Two hotels make up the accommodation at what is called Navarino Dunes: The Westin Resort Costa Navarino and The Romanos, a Luxury Collection Resort. The Westin's low-rise villas are suitable for couples or families; The Romanos has a palatial feel and offers a more private experience. What they share is a public space dotted with restaurants, cafes, and bars.

For beachside lunches, Barbouni is difficult to leave because the sun is relentlessly hot outside its shade, but the Anazoe Spa is only minutes away: a wellness sanctuary with dozens of treatments that include an olive leaf and barberry fig scrub as one of its five signature offerings. Evening meals at the Flame restaurant are a sophisticated affair.

In Homer's epic *The Odyssey*, the son of Odysseus is searching for his father who hasn't returned from Troy and he goes to Pylos hoping that the local king, Nestor, will have some news. The archaeological site, named Nestor's Palace, has a good claim to being the place described by Homer and can easily be visited from Costa Navarino.

Ancient Greek history also records a memorable military engagement between Athenians and Spartans in the Bay of Navarino, and in 1827 there was another battle, one that paved the way for Greek independence. Nowadays, all is peace and light in this lovely hideaway corner of Greece.

By Sean Sheehan

[www.costanavarino.com](http://www.costanavarino.com)

