

**D**uring the first week in May 2009 a couple who arrived to stay at one of CV Travel's lovely villas in the north-east of Corfu mentioned to their representative that they first visited the island 33 years ago. They were also guests of **CV Travel** at that time, though the Company was then called Corfu Villas. Whereas today they would have been met at the airport by one of an efficient team of Airport Representatives, back then they were met by the Cooksons, the original owners of the Company, in their jeep, and whisked away to a villa....cont.



Holiday in style with  
CV Travel





Caribbean, North and South Africa, the Middle East, Brazil, Thailand and New Zealand. Sister-company, Ski Verbier, is renowned for the last word in catered chalet sophistication, while CV's newest venture is closer to home with a collection of exceptional properties in the British Isles.

The qualities that made the Company what it was, and always will be, remain unchanged however. Everyone who travels with CV is an individual and will be treated as such from the first tentative enquiry to the final moment of the holiday. There is nothing 'packaged' about the CV service.

In Corfu, this means being able to call upon local staff who live on the island and know it well. They are friendly but never intrusive, and more than willing to share their knowledge. They are adept problem-solvers and always keen to meet a challenge. When the daughter of Russian guests required a piano for her daily practice, CV was able to hire one for her. A nervous lady decided she wanted to learn to scuba dive, and an instructor was found to teach her – in the villa pool. Party-mad guests demanded – and got – a band, extra chairs and glasses, two pretty waitresses and three local butchers to oversee the expert barbecuing of several lambs. No request is ever ignored, whether it is for a massage by the villa pool, private water-ski lessons, a supply of children's books, or – as once happened – the replacement of the coloured sofa cushions with a set of white ones.

Everything was on a smaller scale in those days, not least the airport building itself, which today houses the Corfu Flying Club. Shortly after Corfu Villas began operations, a new airport terminal was opened, the runway was lengthened for the first time, and the first arrivals of large jet aircraft were scheduled. Half the town population turned out to watch the landing of the first big Boeing, convinced that the runway would collapse under the weight, or the aircraft would roll off the end into the lagoon.

When the Company first started operations, there were just a few handmade brochures that would be sent out to prospective clients with a polite request to return them. These were soon followed by slender printed brochures that became collector's items.

Villas were not expected to provide anything but basic, simple accommodation, but then – as now – they were always in the very best locations. Then, a fridge and a gas cooker were the basic items of villa equipment, supplemented by a selection of cooking utensils. Today's brochures, however, list as villa facilities such items as microwaves, air-conditioning, iPods, satellite TV, Internet access and, of course, the ubiquitous swimming pool.

Self-catering in those pioneering days meant making toast under a wonky gas grill and boiling water for tea in a saucepan. Certain villas, however, were able to benefit from the services of a CV cook – British girls, qualified Cordon Bleu cooks, who would spend a season in Corfu working exclusively for CV. (Those were the days of the 'Sloane Rangers' – for whom 'The Official Sloane Ranger Handbook', published in 1982, recommended a Cordon Bleu cookery course as further education, followed by a summer cooking for CV in Corfu as a suitable job.)

In 1983, Corfu Villas Ltd changed its name to CV Travel Ltd to reflect the Company's growing programme of villa rental destinations into Italy, France, Portugal, Spain and the Balearics. Since that time, there have been other changes – notably, changes of ownership resulting in CV Travel becoming part of the prestigious Kuoni Group in 2007.

Over the past 37 years, the Company has grown from a small operation arranging holiday houses in Corfu for friends and family of the owners, to become one of the world's most esteemed villa rental companies. Now there are seven incredibly glamorous brochures and a website, featuring hotels and villas in Europe, the

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The services of a cook or chef are still much in demand, but the days of the Sloane cooks are but a fond memory. Now CV employs Thomas, a kindly and adaptable Corfiot chef, Linda, an Englishwoman with a flair for Italian cooking, and Gary, a Scottish chef with years of experience in Corfu and aboard yachts. CV offers, also, the services of a wedding organizer, finds nannies and babysitters, arranges private boat trips, and has at times assisted in getting dogs and even donkeys back to new homes in the UK. A very comprehensive welcome pack is provided on arrival, containing sufficient supplies to make it possible to create an evening meal for that first evening without having to summon the strength to leave the villa. Smart pool towels with the CV logo are also supplied.

During their stay in Corfu, CV guests have the opportunity to attend the now famous 'CV Drinks Party', a weekly event, held at Damianos Bar in the pretty village of St Stephanos. This provides an opportunity for guests, CV staff and villa owners to meet each other in an informal and congenial setting, and is another example of the unique CV service.

The travel industry is well-known for the movement of staff, from one company to another, but CV has loyal and enthusiastic staff, many of whom have been members of the Corfu team for an impressive number of years. Those who have left and gone their various ways invariably retain a connection of some kind with the Company – often returning as clients themselves. Travelling with CV or working for CV – there is something unique about the experience.

This year the Corfu Team is once again headed by Kate Eales, who has been with the Company for nine years. In her role as Operations Manager for the Ionian Islands, although she is kept very busy here on Corfu and also travels to Paxos, Lefkada & Kefalonia, she still finds time to enjoy the qualities that make Corfu so special, and to spend valuable time with her children. Elaine Conway, with CV for ten years, heads the team of representatives and occasionally finds time to indulge her enjoyment of cooking and reading. In



the office in Kassiope, Julie and Sarah cover every eventuality with great enthusiasm and tact – both are ‘old hands’ in Corfu and have years of experience to call upon. Angela has been with the Company the longest, and reckons she has seen and heard everything that goes on – useful experience when engaged in copywriting for the CV brochures. Julie, Sue, Jo and Anneke cover a great deal of ground as the Company’s representatives, visiting the guests, dispensing advice and recommendations. Long hours for the team don’t leave much time for hobbies apart from a Sunday swim and the occasional meal with friends or family, but winter, when Corfu’s tourist industry is idle, is the time for favourite activities, amongst which walking the dogs and reading feature strongly. Interestingly, members of staff who have pets have almost always given a loving home to one of Corfu’s stray or abandoned animals.

The Team is most ably backed up by Giorgos, the CV handyman, whose gentle smile and perfect English make even his most necessary visits to a villa a pleasure for the guests. Pools and some of the maintenance jobs are covered by Joseph and his team, Roger, Nick, and Apostolis. All of these handy guys have associations with CV that go back many years.

The Kassiope Office is supported by CV’s agent, Eleni Sarakinou, with her staff Eleni and Helen. Richard Cookson, now resident in Corfu, continues to play an important role for CV with the company’s contracting and photography requirements.

The moment of arrival at the airport is when the skill and determination of CV’s Airport Representatives is so appreciated. The airport team – Tish, Lisa and Candy - is headed by Carole, who has been shepherding people through the airport experience for many years.

2009 sees the 37th year of operations in Corfu for CV Travel. From a handful of properties at Nissaki and Kommemo, the programme has expanded to number about 120 carefully selected villas, for the most part along the north-east coast, from Barbati to St Spiridon, in locations that vary between beachfront and mountainside. There are a few stunning villas in the centre of the island, and west coast, and an entire village of restored stone houses is to be found at Rou. From small hideaways for two to spacious villas accommodating one or more families, from cosy stone conversions to modern, spacious and luxurious – all CV properties have one thing in common. They represent 37 years of commitment to providing the best possible holiday for a loyal clientele, nearly 60% of who return again and again.

CV Travel, Greek Islands, also has a collection of hand-picked villas in Paxos, Lefkada, Kefalonia, Crete and Mykonos.

For further information, or to request a brochure please call 00 44 (0) 207 401 1054 or visit our website [www.cvtravel.co.uk](http://www.cvtravel.co.uk)

Alternatively, please visit our Corfu office, CV Travel, Kassiope (next to the petrol station), telephone 00 30 26 63 08 11 00/08 18 00



The Rou Estate



The CV Travel Corfu Team



Angela

