



CORFU

GREECE



Corfu Island, an area approximately 18 miles wide and 36 miles long, is the second largest of the Ionian Islands and, with 150,000 inhabitants, it is the most densely populated. Situated in the north Ionian Sea, it is both the most northerly and most westerly point of Greece. The greenest of the Greek Islands with lush vegetation, it is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful.

Over four million olive trees grow on the slopes of the semi-mountainous terrain, and olive oil exportation is one of the Island's largest industries. Figs, citrus fruits and wine are also produced on the Island, which is an international tourist center with tourism a large and growing industry. Corfu is thought to be the Island mentioned in Homer's *Odyssey* where Ulysses was washed ashore by a storm and met the beautiful Princess Nausicaa. Shakespeare used Corfu as a setting for the play "The Tempest".

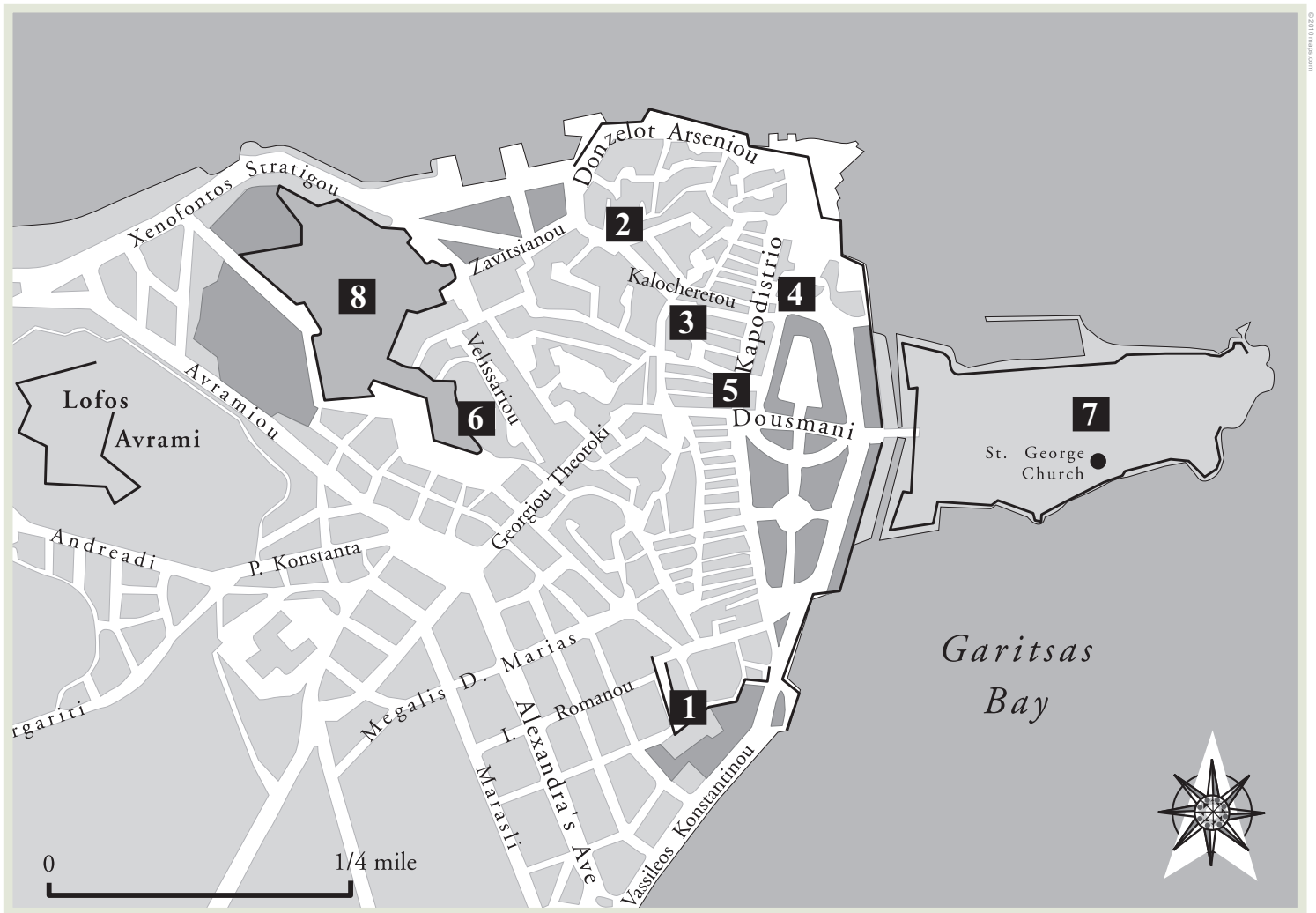
HISTORY

In the 8th century B.C. Corfu became a Corinthian colony. By 229 B.C. Corfu had come under Roman rule and it was only when the Roman Empire split in the 4th century A.D., that Corfu fell under the aegis of Byzantium. It was then occupied by most of the dominant powers of the Mediterranean. The crusaders used it as a staging point and from 1386 to 1797 it became a vital part of the Venetian Empire.

In the 19th century the French and Russians occupied the Island in rapid succession and finally, in 1814, the British held power in Corfu. After 50 years of British protection, Corfu was given back to Greece in 1864 by Queen Victoria. During World War II the Island was occupied, first by the Italians and then by the Germans, at which time Corfu Town suffered extensive damage.

Corfu Town (Kerkira) is the seaport capital of the island, situated on the east coast on a promontory that projects into the sea. In the town you can see remnants of the civilizations that have been a part of its history; Byzantine churches, Venetian fortresses and monuments, houses built in the French style and others in English Georgian architectural style. It even has an English cricket field which is still in use.

In the modern section of town, the busy commercial sector has wide avenues and large squares, but the old town, situated between the two forts, is a fascinating maze of narrow streets, tall houses, small squares and old churches.



CORFU TOWN PLACES OF INTEREST

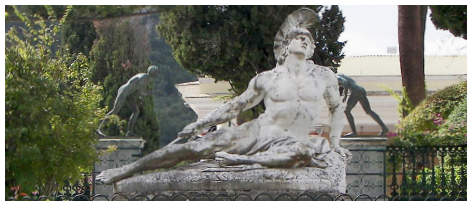
- 1** **Archaeological Museum**, 5 Vraila Street, houses finds from local archaeological excavations.
- 2** **Cathedral of Corfu** is a magnificent Greek Orthodox building in the old part of town. It dates from the 16th century and houses the remains of Saint Theodora Augusta.
- 3** **Church of Saint Spyridon** is named after the town's patron saint. This 16th century church is located in the center of old town and inside are many valuable icons as well as the remains of Saint Spyridon.
- 4** **Museum of Asiatic Art** is located at the top of the Esplanade. This imposing building, the Regency Royal Palace (1819), housed the British High Commissioners and later the Greek Royal Family. Inside the Museum is a rich collection of some ten thousand items of Chinese, Japanese origin and other oriental arts.
- 5** **Esplanade or Spianada** is the main square and social center of Corfu. It is here that the cricket field is located. Running along the side of the field is the Liston Facade, an arcaded row of French buildings with many outdoor cafes.

- 6** The **Synagogue**, on Velissariou Street was constructed in 1537. It was from this area that 5000 Jews were moved to the Spianada and subsequently sent to Auschwitz.
- 7** The **Old Fort** is a Venetian fortress, cut off from the town by an artificial defensive moat. Built to protect the town from invaders from the sea, it once held the Palace of Venetian Governors, their Naval Command and the Latin Cathedral.
- 8** The **New Fort** was constructed between 1576 and 1588 on the landward side of the town, to protect it from the menace of the Turkish fleet and Ottoman Empire.

Beyond Corfu Town

Kanoni is 2 miles south of Corfu Town, a very beautiful and popular resort area. A narrow causeway leads to the Monastery of Vlaherna. Nearby is another small island, Pondikonissi (Mouse Island) which has a tiny 13th century chapel on it. Not far away is a villa, built in 1831, called 'Mon Repos' which was the birthplace of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Achilleion Palace at Gastouni, 5 miles south of Corfu, was the summer home of the Empress Elizabeth of Austria. Built in 1891, it was purchased in 1907 by Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and, since 1962, has become a Casino, opening in the evenings. There is a small museum, filled with mementos of the life of the Empress, and an extensive garden with sweeping views.



Paleokastritsa, 16 miles west of Corfu, is considered by some to be the loveliest spot on the coastline of Corfu Island. It is a small bay with clear blue-green water surrounded by hills. Nearby, perched on a rock over-looking the sea, lies the historic Byzantine Monastery of Theotokos.

SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Corfu and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of the organized Shore Excursions. For Information concerning tour content and pricing, consult azamarclubcruises.com or contact the onboard Shore Excursion Desk. Please be advised to take only necessary items ashore and secure any valuables onboard.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

Bargaining: It is considered normal to barter with merchants and storekeepers in Corfu, it's part of the fun.

Tippling: If services are enjoyed, a 10-15% tip is a good guideline.

LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

Tzatziki is a yoghurt and cucumber dip, flavored with garlic. Taramosalata is another dip, pink in color, made from fish roe, generally served with crusty bread. Calamari (squid deep-fried in batter) is popular through-out the Islands and coastal resorts of Greece. Another well-known Greek dish is Moussaka; minced lamb, layered with egg-plant and bechamel sauce. For dessert, the specialty is Baklava, a very sweet phyllo pastry filled with walnut and honey.

Drink Specialties: Retsina is the best known of Greek white wines. They have a slightly bitter taste that is soon acquired. Ouzo is the local liqueur, aniseed flavored, sometimes drunk with water. Bottled water is recommended.

SHOPPING

The main shopping areas include G. Theotoki, E. Voulgareos and Kapodistrio Streets, behind the Esplanade.

Items of particular interest include; jewelry, especially silver, leather goods, ceramics, woven rugs, carved olive-wood and embroidered cotton or hand-woven lace.

Some tourist orientated stores may accept U.S. Dollars, most accept major credit cards.

Value Added Tax (VAT), is added to most purchases. Visitors who spend over a certain amount may be entitled to re-claim some or all of the tax paid, however, regulations and conditions governing the refund of VAT are subject to change and RCCL cannot guarantee the cooperation of local authorities.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The unit of currency in this port of call is the euro. There are 8 euro coins and all have a common European face. On the obverse, each Member State decorates the coins with their own motifs. No matter which motif is on the coins they can be used anywhere inside the Member States. There are 7 euro notes and they are uniform throughout the euro area. All euro notes are legal tender in all countries of the euro area.

POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE

The main Post Office is located on Alexandra's Avenue.

International calls may be placed from the "OTE" (phone company). It is possible to use local phone cards which are available from a number of outlets, including the "OTE". Calls with a personal calling card can be placed using the following access numbers:

AT&T: 00.800.1311

MCI: 00.800.1211

