

Notes on Cruising the Inland Sea of the Ionian Islands.

These notes are based on visits during the Summers of 2002 and 2003, while on bareboat charter holidays.



As most of the places seem to have 3 different ways to spell them, I've tried to use the most common spelling used on British Charts.

The following Harbour/Port Reports are based on our notes and personal experiences of the harbours and anchorages visited during our 2002 and 2003 summer bareboat charter holidays. They are intended to be used alongside reputable pilot books and maritime charts. Therefore they do not contain navigational details, but rather focus on other (hopefully) useful information - cost of berthing, provisions, fuel and water, internet availability, etc.

We supply these notes in good faith with no warranties to their accuracy. It is, of course, the responsibility of the Skipper to use navigational aids and information designed for and suitable for that purpose.

Notes on Med Mooring in Harbours.

Most of the harbours mentioned here are no more than concrete quays, walls and moles that run along the shoreline of the harbour. Most have either rings or posts set in the concrete to tie lines ashore. Few harbours have lazylines so an anchor is laid about 3 boat lengths from the quay; we find bows-to to be more private and avoids damaging the rudder on underwater rubble and hardcore which can extend over a meter from the quayside. In fact, beware shallow patches along a quayside and if a full harbour has an empty patch its probably for a reason. We found shallow patches like this in Fiskardho and Sivota and witnessed a couple of scraped rudders as boats tried going stern-to in these areas. Although a number of harbours have Port Police they are only interested in official paperwork and harbour/tax charges, there are no 'marineros' to help with mooring or appointing berths – find a gap and go for it. In our experience, fellow cruisers will help take lines when mooring.

Charges for berthing depend on the presence of Port Police and seem a little 'hit and miss'; for example, we were charged in a particular harbour one year and not the following year. The majority of harbours had no charge and for those that did, we only paid a few Euros.

Notes on Harbours and Anchorages arranged by Island.

Island of Levkas

Sivota

38°36.87'N - 20°41.52'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp76

Nice village, plenty of tavernas and small supermarket/grocery store. Like most Ionian harbours, high hills surround the bay and we experienced strong gusts when berthing. We went bows-to the south quay by dropping our stern kedge with no problems, but there was a shallow patch in the SW corner between S and W quays and should be avoided. Some boats anchored in the centre of the harbour. When we visited there were no port police and no charges.

Island of Meganisi

Vathi

38°39.8'N - 20°47.0'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp80

Very pleasant small village with a rose garden by the quay and a large tree in the SE corner of the harbour that all the locals gather under in the evenings to swap news/gossip. The best taverna that we found during our chartering in the Ionian was just by this tree – "Kiki's Corner" served fantastic pasta and pizza (the best pizza we've ever had!) and offered showers, a book-swap and Internet. There was another nearby taverna called 'The Rose Garden', which shouldn't be confused with "Kiki's Corner". The small grocery store was good

for basic provisions. We have been bows-to and stern-to the E/SE quay at the bottom of the bay, as did most yachts because the S/SW quay was taken up with local fishing boats. Beware depth gets shallower the closer to the SE corner of the harbour you go – we believe the corner was less than the 2m reported in our pilot. Never had a problem finding a berth. Potable water was available for purchase on the quay, controlled by a local 'water attendant' – ask at the grocery store if the attendant isn't around. On the 4 occasions that we have visited, there were no port police and no berthing charges.

Spartakhor (Port Spiglia)

38°39.75'N - 20°45.60'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp79

There were 2 wooden pontoons/docks belonging to the Taverna closest to them. They had slime-lines attached and one of the taverna owners was always around to help yachts in and secure up either bow or stern-to. We found no problems getting a berth the 2 occasions we visited, even at high season, but be aware the Sunsail flotillas did visit here with about 20 boats! There is no charge for using the pontoons/docks but you were expected to patronise the taverna. We found the food enjoyable, in attractive surroundings and good value – this was a place we experienced the '...come and see what we have in the kitchen...' style of Greek taverna menu. The walk up the olive tree lined hill to the village of Spartakhor was worth while - although hard going and steep, it offered great views of the Inland Sea. There was also a supermarket and numerous tavernas in the village. No shore power but potable water available for purchase, via hose controlled by the taverna. We filled our watertanks here for about €5.

Ormos Kapali and Abelike

38°40.26'N - 20°46.60'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp81

Large bays to the East of Vathi with numerous coves and anchorages inside. Wasn't crowded even at high season. Great for swimming but deep for the hook – we anchored in 10 – 15m close to the shore and took a line ashore to control swing. We had no problems with holding, but had settled conditions.

Island of Kalamos

Port Kalamos

38°37.40'N - 20°55.90'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp99

A nice village with small supermarket/grocery store and a few tavernas but there are nicer in the Ionian. Kalamos left us feeling '...its okay but...' to be honest. Sailing between the Islands was good fun though and great scenery. Again this was a stop for the flotillas, which can fill this harbour – we were there when the flotilla was in and room was tight although we did get a berth with little trouble. When we visited there were no port police and no charge.

Port Leone

38°35.96'N - 20°53.36'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp100

Very interesting deserted village. Village was deserted in 1953 after an earthquake destroyed the local water supply. We anchored in the middle of the bay close to the village in about

10m. We hope it hasn't changed much in the years after we visited, but signs of a taverna/shop starting up on site were in evidence when we visited.

Island of Atoko

One House Bay

38°28.4'N - 20°49.1'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp101

On the SE side of the island is this very picturesque bay. Good swimming/lunch anchorage. Worth a visit, if only for a few hours. Watch out for gusts off the headland cliffs when leaving the shelter of the bay.

Island of Ithaca

Frikes

38°27.60'N - 20°39.91'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp83

Boats moored alongside and rafted out due to a (so we were told by a local sailor) Seahorse sanctuary and boats not wanting to anchor on the bottom because of this. Got quite full but with rafting the harbour took a lot of boats. We rafted alongside another boat and were quite comfortable. When we visited there were no port police and no charge.

Kioni

38°26.84'N - 20°42.17'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp84

One of the prettiest harbours we visited in the Ionian. Small supermarket and numerous tavernas and a great Jazz bar which had a number of tables outside on the best side of the harbour (NW) – sat there watching octopus swimming in the clear shallow water. We went bows-to the NE quay past the small mole that was on the East side of the entrance. This was the only place yachts could berth in the harbour, other than anchoring in the middle and taking a line a shore to the rocks on the West side of the harbour, which we did see boats do. The NW corner was shallow and taken up with small Greek traditional fishing boats and not suitable for yachts. Suggest arriving early. The harbour was small and popular and is one of the few places we had problems finding space to berth. We arrived late afternoon and the harbour was full, so we went up the coast to Frikes for the night and came back next morning when people had moved on and found a spot easily. Good swimming on the seaward side of small mole on the NE quay. When we visited there were no port police and no charge.

Vathi

38°21.95'N - 20°43.14E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp86

Vathi, being the capital of Ithaca, was the largest town we visited in the Ionian and had a lot more shops with a greater range and larger supermarkets. We berthed outside the town itself and walked in – not far and a nice scenic walk at that. On the 2 occasions we visited we found the concrete quays in the NE corner of the bay (approx. 38°22'.4N - 20°43'.0E) the best option – as you enter the narrower channel into the large bay of Vathi, follow the coast around to port and you will find the quays. I think that the quays were part of an unfinished/abandoned marina development. We went bows-to one year and alongside

another. Plenty of room. No port police and no charges for these quays but there were for the ones closer to Vathi town. There was no shore power or water but we did have potable water delivered there by mini-tanker. Also diesel and water was available from the fuel key halfway down the bay on the E side – although we did not use it. There was a man in a little van who offers diesel from jerrycans but we were warned that his fuel was dirty, so never tried him. 'George's' taverna to the east of the quays was very good – great for fish, but be aware that the price on the menu was per Kg. The taverna to the west of the quays should be avoided at all costs! This was the only bad taverna we visited during our visits to Greece and was utterly terrible.

Ormos Pera Pigadhi

38°20.15'N - 20°44.80'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp87

Large open bay with pleasant anchorages around the shore. Can be swelly but good in settled weather. The Island of Pera Pigadhi had a small concrete quay you could berth along, but the Island is known by the charter companies as 'Rat Island' (say no more). We did berth here and although we didn't see any of the large rats that are alleged to live here, we found it very scummy, full of flies, dead seagulls and lots of droppings that could have been left by rats. Therefore it didn't take us long to decide to slip the lines and anchor out in the much more pleasing bay.

Island of Cephalonia

Fiskardho

38°27.53'N - 20°34.94E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp92

Fiskardho is almost the only village on Cephalonia that wasn't destroyed by the 1953 earthquake and as such was very popular, not only with yachts but also land tourists. Therefore it is important to get there early to secure a berth – we arrived before 3pm and the harbour was three-quarters full already. We berthed bows-to on the S quay just to the W of the stone breakwater. Although yachts berth all around the harbour, the sort after place was by the 'Captains Cabin' taverna on the S quay but beware of a small shallow patch that extended out from part of the S quay. Some yachts were anchored out in the centre of the harbour but room for passage of a large ferry needs to be considered. There seemed to be a lot of chaos and commotion during the busy periods of berthing and un-berthing with people pulling up each others anchors etc, but don't let this put you off as it a 'definitely must visit' place and well worth the hassle. There were Port Police here and during early evening they knocked on each boat and summoned the skipper to the port office to inspect the ship's papers. After checking through the paperwork – a serious business for the port police – they then apply the appropriate charge, which for us as a 34ft charter boat was about €3 per night.

Ay Eufimia

38°18.2'N - 20°36.1'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp94

Ay Eufimia is in the NW corner of a large bay that has the town of Sami in the SW corner. Sami is a bigger town than Ay Eufimia and was used as the set for the film 'Captain Corelli's Mandolin'. The harbour at Ay Eufimia was much more inviting than that at Sami, so in our opinion it was better to berth there and then take the short taxi ride to visit Sami. We are lead to believe Ay Eufimia was the area that the cast and crew for the film were based and as

such many of the tavernas were called names such as 'Captain Corelli's' and their walls sported signed photos of Penelope Cruz and Nicolas Cage. The N quay is quite large and will berth a large number of yachts, which is why Sunsail based a charter fleet here. We berthed bows-to the N quay and had it almost to ourselves, until on Wed when it was turn around day for the charterboats and the flotilla fleet arrived in force. The centre of the harbour is large enough for several yachts to anchor and a number were anchored when we visited. Good supermarket on the W side of the harbour. Potable water was available for purchase on the quay – price was a flat fee of €5 per tank, even if you only need a quarter of a tank it is still the same price as a full tank. Diesel was delivered by mini-tanker, good to be around when Sunsail are fuelling the charter boats as a deal might be able to be done! We also took a trip inland from here by taxi to visit the caves and underground lake, which was an enjoyable trip. The taxi drivers knew this excursion well and offered a flat fee and took us to each site, waited and then returned us back to the quay. There was no official Port Police office and the first year we berthed here we didn't see any port police and paid no fee. The second year we were inspected by a port police officer, who used a table in a local taverna as his office – we paid a small fee of about €3.

Poros

38°09.0'N - 20°46.9'E

RCC Greek Waters Pilot (Ninth Ed) pp95

Pleasant, small harbour where we berthed bows-to the SW quay. A very large ferry enters this harbour to load/off-load lorries and cars and just about fits in the port. When the lorries started queuing along the quayside, yachts started to tighten their anchor lines and slacken shorelines to give plenty of room from the quay because of wash. We did find it quite alarming at first but no yachts came to harm. There was free water via taps on the quay. There was a port police office and we paid a small fee of about €3 per night.