

Upfront

It's all Greek to me. I've never been here before, but it's an amazing place. At my age, language learning is nearly impossible. I haven't yet memorized "Hello." (Yassou – among friends). "Thank you" seems useful. Googling it, I find Efharisto and Efcharisto and Efkaristo...the manifold options being a Greek alphabet thing, which stubbornly persists for something like 2,800 years now, since it evolved from the Phoenicians; not the Arizonan type. I know some food words: feta (the ubiquitous cheese), dolmades (stuffed grape leaves), fava (which is not the green broad bean that comes to mind, but a yellow split pea puree), tzatziki (a winning scrabble word given its two z's, yet more Turkish than Greek in truth), taramosalata (the six-syllabic – like many Greek words - moniker for cured fish roe spread)...and lamb (which is such a cultural obsession that the English word works fine).

Speaking of the "Greek alphabet," the phrase is, in a way, quaintly peculiar. Alpha-beta. Alpha beta. The first two letters of the Greek alphabet. So, the Greek alphabet is, essentially, a thing named after itself.

If I were a drinker, I would say these ramblings are the ouzo talking. But I'm not, so it's the time change's fault. Rather than force a midnight essay from the mild Peloponnesian breeze, I'll share a few photos from the first few days in the place the locals still call "Hellas."

Opa, indeed!

Scott A Laurer



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