Sometimes we manage to sail!

We spent four nights at Monemvasia visiting the lovely Fortress Town and waiting for strong winds to blow themselves out, so it was a relief once again to be on our way and sailing north along the eastern coast of the Peloponnese. Our first port of call was Kyparissa, a large bay with a choice of anchorages or moorings. We chose the northern part of the bay where we could anchor and moor stern to on the small quay. Unfortunately, the swell sweeping into the bay made this untenable and we left to anchor off the beach which was much more comfortable. The swell decreased later and we had a pleasant night before an early start the next day for passage to Ermione.

We had now entered a busy cruising area where charter boats dominate the scene, quite different to the remote anchorages of the previous two weeks. Thick clouds built up during the day and as we berthed on the quay the first spots of rain began to fall which turned into a torrent. Luckily there were several berths available but by early evening there was no room at the inn and boats were having to anchor in the bay.

Ermioni in the rain!  Looks different in the sun

Decided to stay here two nights so the second day we took the bikes ashore to explore the local area. A very pretty peninsular overlooking the bay and inland we found fields of pomegranates which I had never before seen on the tree.
Before we left we visited the local open-air market for fresh produce, and bought salmon steaks from one of several fish stalls, then slipped our berth, weighed anchor and headed north for the island of Dohkos. Here we anchored in a large bay for a lunch stop before heading onward to Hydra where we ended up secured by lines to the outside of the harbour wall as this was the only space available – which is what comes of arriving late in the day! Hydra is a charming little port very busy with ferries, water-taxi’s, vessels bringing supplies and even a small cruise ship. There are virtually no vehicles and everything that needs to be carried is done by hand-cart or donkey.

After spending the morning exploring Hydra and with help slipping our lines from the rocks we continued our journey north, rounding the headland of Ak Skillion through the channel east of Spathi to anchor in the bay beyond. I would like to say we spent a peaceful night but unfortunately the wind dropped, we were beam onto the swell and it was rolly!

Poros by contrast was very sheltered but busy with charter boats, we anchored in Navy Bay out of their way and had a pleasant couple of days. In fact, we stayed an extra day in order to see Mamma Mia in a rooftop open air cinema.
On the island of Aegina, we met up with friends Sue and Alan on their boat Ticketeeboo, a 55ft Discovery, also in company with them were Sue and Brian onboard Darraway. We had drinks onboard Ticketeeboo and the second night drinks and curry onboard Captain Ginger. Brian has an inflatable Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP) and spent time teaching us how to use it. I only fell off once, and very tempted to invest in one!

Time was starting to run out on us as we had a lift out booked. So, it was time for a longer passage across the Gulf to round the headland (Cape Sounion) into the mouth of the Evia channel. Atop the headland, which is quite dramatic, there is an iconic Greek temple dedicated to the sea god Poseidon. Seafarers would drink a toast to Poseidon when rounding the Cape, pouring a measure of wine into the sea for the god, to ensure fair winds and safe passage. So, of course we followed the age-old tradition,

There was no wind and we motored all the way to Porto Rafti, a charming enclosed bay where we chose to spend the night at anchor in the south, sheltered by a natural mole extending from the peninsular. We had the company of a couple of other boats and swimmers from the beach. The following day we moved up to the main harbour in view of expected strong winds plus we also needed a supermarket as supplies were running low. An unpretentious little harbour, full of local boats no
room for the likes of us, so we had to anchor off. It was a hot afternoon and the fifteen-minute walk to a large Carrefour seemed to take forever. On our return we stopped for a drink at a quay-side taverna. Perhaps not a good thing to do as we watched dark clouds building up over the hilltops – oh! it will pass over and be nothing!!! The squall hit us with ferocity, the wind shrieking through the harbour lifting the sun-brollies and the heavens then opened with a vengeance. We ended up with soggy crisps, watered down beer and with a new bedraggled look. In fifteen-minutes it was all over and the sun shone again.

After a further day here, experiencing winds of 35 knots, calm descended once again and it was time to move on.

We were now nearing our final destination, Petros Boat Club in the Evia Channel so after a night at anchor in the lovely bay at Eretria we motored the short distance across the channel to Petros Boat Club.

Lift out was an interesting experience as the trailer is below the water and the only guidance is a man standing on a platform indicating left or right, then you stay on the boat whist it is transported into the yard and propped up.

After a busy three days packing up the boat for the winter and arranging work to be done we are now back in UK where the temperature is decidedly cooler!

Until next year………..

Map of our journey below:
Kalamata to Monemvasia