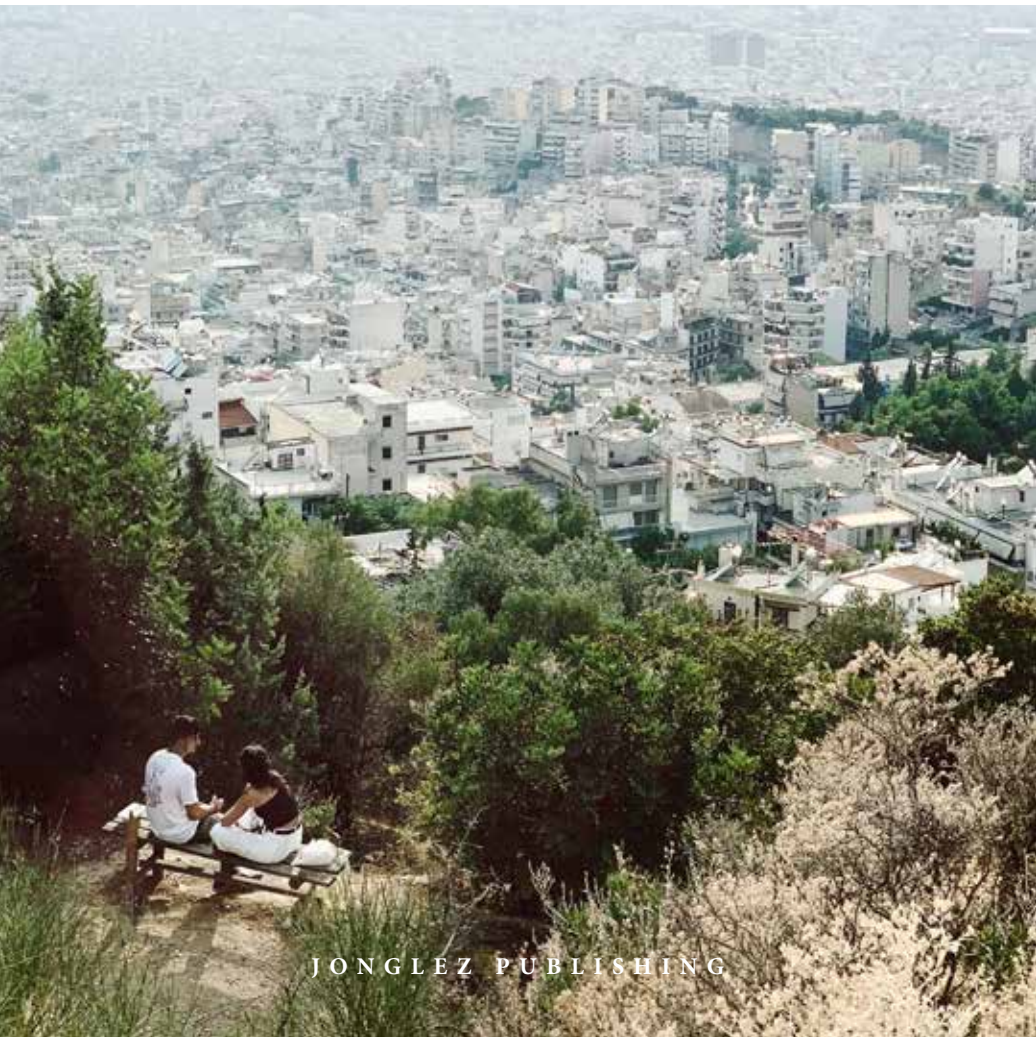


ALEX KING

Soul of Athens

A GUIDE TO 30 EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES



JONGLEZ PUBLISHING



PHOTOGRAPHY: EFTYCHIA VLACHOU

“IT’S AN UNEXPECTED CITY,
A CITY THAT PROVOKES FANTASY
IN A WAY THAT NO OTHER
MAJOR EUROPEAN CITY DOES,
BECAUSE ATHENS IS *UNPREDICTABLE.*”

NIKOS VATOPOULOS
JOURNALIST, PHOTOGRAPHER AND URBAN EXPLORER



01

THE SCIENCE OF GREAT WINE

For Stergios Tekeridis, the perfect glass is all a matter of science. Tanini Agapi Mou (Tanin, My Love) is equal parts wine bar, laboratory and urban greenhouse. Take your pick from the hand-selected list of over 120 Greek Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) and local natural wines and you'll be served from what looks like a giant chemistry set. It is, in fact, a Coravin, which sucks the wine through a volumetric tube to ensure delivery into your glass at the perfect temperature and prevents air entering to degrade what remains in the bottle. The custom-built storage room behind the bar looks like a mainframe computer from seventies sci-fi, but is designed to keep bottles at a constant 15-17 °C and, ingeniously, at an angle so their corks stay wet. Cheeses and cold cuts from across Greece help catalyse a successful reaction from your taste buds. But if you want to be truly dazzled by the science of wine, ask for a lecture from Super Taninios. That's all I'll say...



TANINI AGAPI MOU
IPPOKRATOUS 91
EXARCHEIA, 106 80



DAILY: 5pm - 1am
MON: closed

+30 211 115 0145

@tanini_agapi_mou
on Instagram





03

SKATE AND CHILL IN AN URBAN OASIS

Take a wrong turn in Kerameikos and you can easily stumble upon a brothel or some very in-your-face drug use. But a skateboarding oasis lies hidden behind tall metal gates on Leonidou Street. Latraac is a skate bowl and experimental social space built by Greek architect and skater Zachos Varfis, which has fast become a mecca for skaters of all stripes — as well as artists, musicians and ex-pats. There’s nothing quite like it — in Greece or anywhere else — where you can just as easily stumble upon avant-garde dance, as far-out music nights or bowl contests for the core skate crew.



LATRAAC SKATE BOWL
LEONIDOU 63-65
KERAMEIKOS, 104 35



TUE-SUN: 5pm - 1am

+30 213 045 3377

latraac.com

**ESSENTIAL
REALITY**



04

SWIM FREE OF
THE CITY

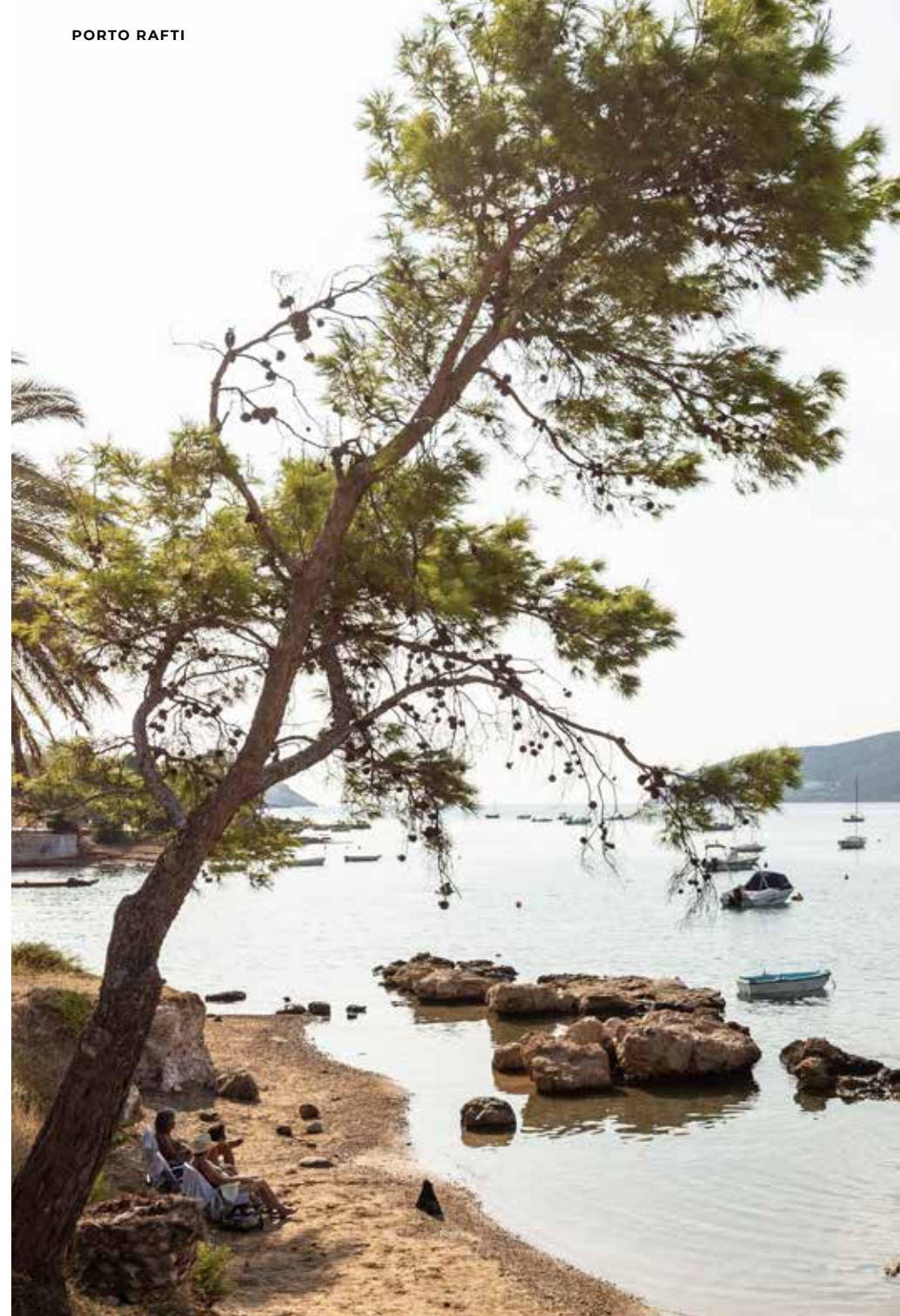
With Greece's enviable selection of islands just a short ferry's ride away, people often forget that Athens has its own beaches. Although many locals still dive from the rocks for a dip, it is probably best to avoid the water close to the boats in Piraeus harbour. The Athenian Riviera begins at Palaio Faliro and the coastline stretches for 60 kilometres, as far south as the magnificent Temple of Poseidon at the tip of Cape Sounion.

The prime beaches with their golden sands and crystal clear waters only really begin from Vouliagmeni onwards, where you have a range from the luxuriously equipped Astir Beach all the way to idyllic rocky coves such as Limanakia or Kape. Even the most distant are reachable in under two hours by bus or car from central Athens. End your day with a decadent fish dinner in Varkiza at NAOBB, a taverna attached to the local nautical club, where the tables spill out on to the beach.

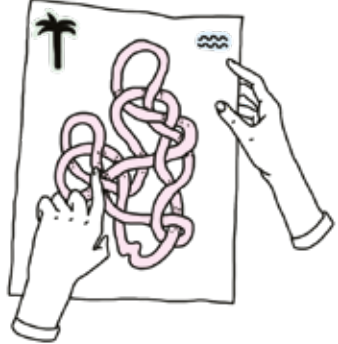
You can also find even more great beaches north of Sounion, up to Porto Rafti, or around Schinias.



VARIOUS LOCATIONS
SOUTH FROM PALAIO FALIRO







07

GET LOST IN AN URBAN LABYRINTH

Exploring the old covered arcades, or stoas, which are hidden across Athens takes you into another world — and another time. The eerie, labyrinthine passageways, illuminated signage and vintage Greek typography feel like being inside a retro-futurist Balkan *Blade Runner*. The only way for outsiders to uncover the treasures of this city-within-a-city is to join Natassa Pappa, graphic designer and publisher of *Desired Landscapes* magazine, on one of her Athens Walkthrough guided walks.

The project grew out of Natassa's efforts to document the city's fading image, focusing on vernacular typography. She used this as a guide to re-energise paths through the commercial centre and encourage wandering in neglected corners of an urban fabric torn apart by crisis. With the help of Natassa's thought-provoking guidance, you'll discover bizarre architecture, craftspeople plying bygone trades and subterranean sections of the city's ancient walls.



ATHENS WALKTHROUGH



MON-SAT: 10am - 4pm

Bookings upon request:
walks@desired-landscapes.com





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COOPER

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ΤΟ ΣΤΕΚΙ

Ανθη
φυτα



ΔΕΛΤΑ
Η Δέλτα
της γειτονιάς

TAR
ΚΑΦΕΣ
Ο φρεσκοκομμένος
καφές σας

Ραϊν
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΙΚΑ

ΠΡΟ-ΠΟ
ΛΟΤΟ
COMPUTER

ΚΑΦΕΝΕΙΟ
ΤΟ ΣΤΕΚΙ

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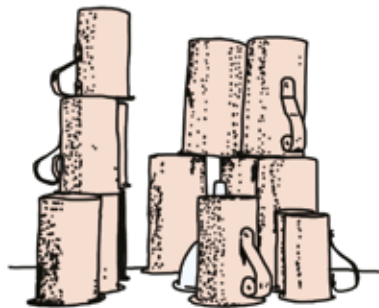
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12



THE TAVERNA THAT DOESN'T WANT TO BE FOUND

Don't be tempted to snack on the technicolour herbs and spices on Eiripidou street or other edible delights displayed around the Varvakios Central Market. Instead, keep your appetite intact and get lunch at central Athens' oldest and most idiosyncratic taverna, Diporto, founded in 1875. Down a trap-door beneath a dilapidated building opposite the vegetable market, you'll find Dimitris, the white-haired master of ceremonies holding court from a tiny open kitchen.

With no menu, you take whatever worker's fare has been prepared each day. A typical spread could be freshly caught fish of the day, chickpeas, potatoes with courgette and crusty bread, washed down with white Moschofilero wine, poured from the enormous wooden barrels stacked along one side of the cellar. This is definitely no-frills dining and if you ask for a knife, you'll be told, "If you want a knife go to (the well-heeled neighbourhood) Kolonaki."

Go early or off-season and you'll catch Diporto full of locals only.



 **DIPORTO**
9 SOKRATOUS
OMONIA, 105 52



MON-SAT: 8am - 7pm





13

GET A HERBAL EDUCATION

Cooking with herbs is a staple of the Mediterranean tradition. Inside the sublime store and laboratory of Daphnis and Chloe in Neos Kosmos, you'll find the very finest herbs and spices, sourced from small, natural producers across Greece. The country's varied geography plays host to an incredible biodiversity, with many isolated parts that have unique climatic conditions, making for some of the best herbs in the world.

Each product is painstakingly researched and the whole process, from harvesting to treatment and packaging, is developed by founder Evangelia Koutsovoulou to ensure every batch conveys the feeling of being freshly picked from the islands or the mountainside. Drop by for a chat at the tasting table, where you'll learn about the flavours and health benefits of each herb, so you can make them sing in your own cooking — whether you grab wild thyme flowers, Aegean Isle oregano or the Ancients' favourite, pennyroyal mint.



 **DAPHNIS AND CHLOE**
MANDROKLEOUS 19
NEOS KOSMOS, 11744



MON-FRI: Noon - 5pm

+30 210 924 1012

daphnisandchloe.com

YOUR GUIDE TO GREECE'S ESSENTIAL HERBS



Daphnis and Chloe founder Evangelia Koutsovoulou selects the staple herbs of Greek gastronomy and explains their health and flavour benefits.

GREEK MOUNTAIN TEA

This delicate tea which grows at altitudes of over 900 metres is the national herbal tea. Rich in precious antioxidants and naturally caffeine-free, it's one of the best infusions for sipping all day long, either hot or chilled. Little known elsewhere, it's omnipresent in Greek kitchens.

GREEK OREGANO

Definitely the most well-used spice in our cuisine and for good reason; Greece grows some of the best oregano in the Mediterranean. There are several different varieties but the whole bunches of mountain oregano are absolute classics.

WILD THYME FLOWERS

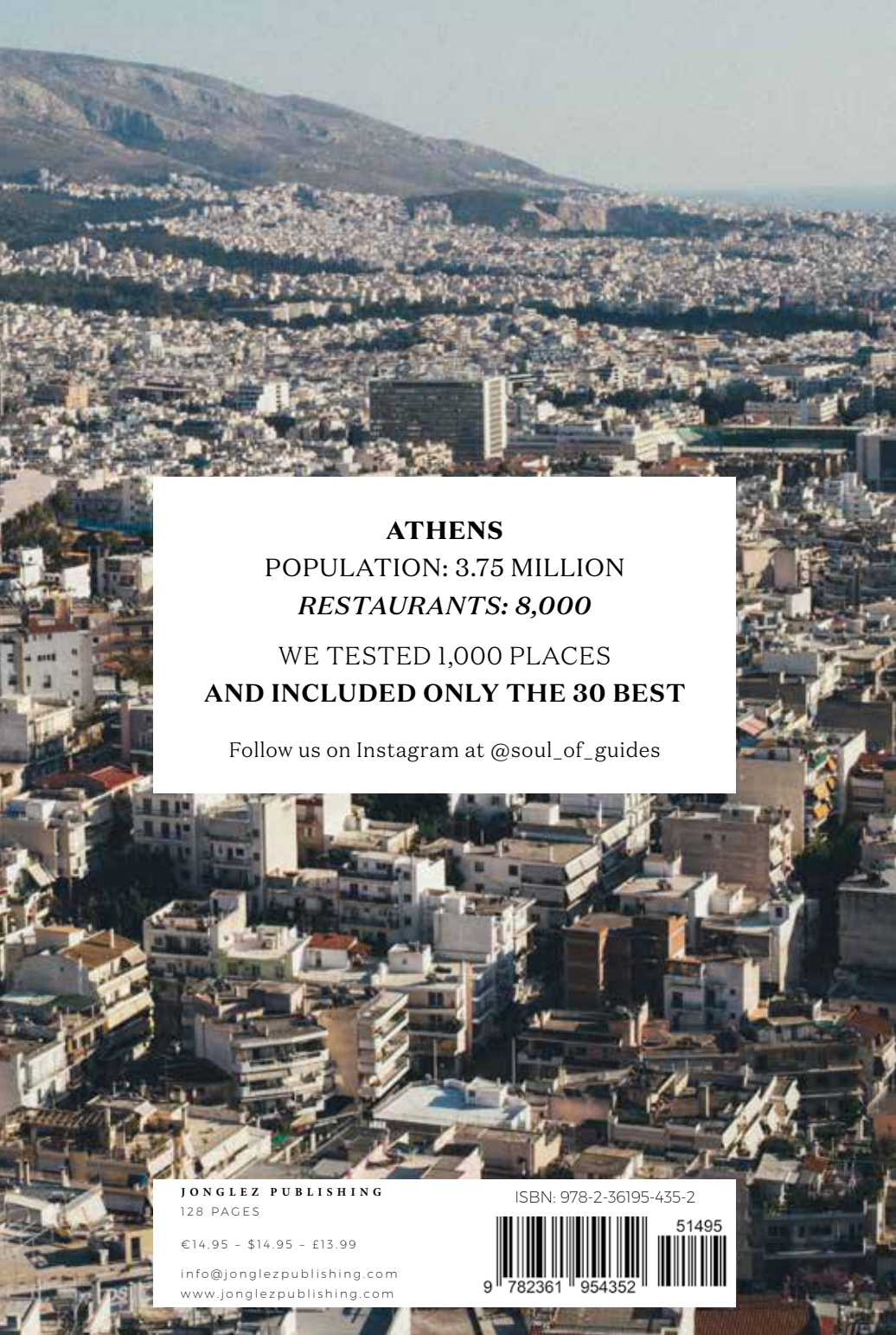
These come from shrubs that blossom by the sea around May. They're totally different to your local grocer's thyme and quite hard to find, due to the laborious harvesting process. Crumble a couple of flowers over grilled zucchini, add olive oil and lemon, and you have the ultimate Greek seasoning.

DITTANY FROM CRETE

Dittany is an endemic plant of Crete, meaning that it grows only there. According to local legend, this is the herb of love — so hard to harvest that one had to be deeply in love to endure the process. It makes a sophisticated herbal tea with characteristic bitter notes.

BAY LEAVES

Essential across the Mediterranean, bay leaves play a special role in Greek cuisine. Many people think they are pointless, but that's because they've never tried any good ones! Here, it's unthinkable to cook a stew or a lentil soup without them. They're also a key ingredient for preserving figs.



ATHENS

POPULATION: 3.75 MILLION

RESTAURANTS: 8,000

**WE TESTED 1,000 PLACES
AND INCLUDED ONLY THE 30 BEST**

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