

Barefoot Writer – June 2018 Challenge

If you could spend an afternoon writing from anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

While I was not hired to write this copy, it shows the quality of copy you can expect when you hire me.

My afternoon of writing anywhere in the world would be in a country we first visited in 2012...

After a long, damp and freezing British winter and early spring, I craved warmth and sunlight.

My sunshine and heat fixation got me thinking about a holiday we had taken a few years earlier in Kefalonia, an Ionian Island off the coast of Greece.

Our villa sat on a slope that led down a steep, narrow, dirt track, to a small collection of bars and restaurants dotted around a small cove. From the patio of the villa we had a clear view of the neighbouring island of Zakynthos, which looked close enough to swim to, but was actually about 5 miles away.

Behind us, further up the hill was a naturist resort and a field of sheep that appeared to survive on mud, and a few leaves from the low hanging branches of a solitary tree. Both of these we used as clues when we were trying to find our way back to our villa after a trip into town.

The remoteness of the villa meant that it was peaceful, and apart from the occasional sounds of distant laughter from the naturist resort, quiet and calm.

Sitting on the patio after lunch; just my laptop and a beer for company, I enjoyed the peace, the intense heat and the sunlight that forced you to squint, even in sunglasses.

I wrote pages and pages of my first attempt at a novel. Ideas that seemed ridiculous in the gloom of a British winter now seemed obvious and sent the story in directions I had never considered. Characters took on a life of their own and what they had to say was funny and clever. Wow, I'm getting really good at this...

My research to find a way of smuggling cocaine into the UK, the finale of the book, led me down a rabbit hole that I reappeared from hours later, a solution for my anti-hero and her cocaine smuggling problems in hand, along with an unexpected refresher course in high school chemistry.

Perhaps this could have happened writing in the attic of a damp farmhouse in Dorset, but I like to believe that it was the combination of heat, light, and calm on Kefalonia that let my characters take off in unexpected directions and made research a pleasure again.

Now that most of my writing is web copy, sales letters and emails, I'd like to find out if Kefalonia can improve these as much as it improved my novel.

So, my afternoon writing anywhere in the world would be on Kefalonia, in a villa looking towards Zakynthos with a laptop, a beer and the chirping of the crickets for company.