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GREECE

Tried & tested: Ikos Olivia Greece

This hotel is claiming to have ripped up the rulebook when it comes to all-inclusive family holidays

By Katie Reich-Storer. Published on 6th January 2017



Halkidiki. Credit: Greece



Catch of the day. Credit: Getty

What: October half-term can be dark and gloomy — the days are getting shorter and colder and there are fewer opportunities to get the kids outdoors to burn off energy. So, what could be better than a five-night trip to Greece for some sun, swimming and, of course, a kids' club.

The Ikos Olivia resort is making a bit of a name for itself by claiming to have ripped up the all-inclusive rulebook. From the chauffeur pick-up at the airport to the rooms, food and facilities, everything is included and it's all top quality. There are five restaurants on site serving up menus created by Michelin-starred chefs — four (Asian, Italian, Greek and French) offer a la carte menus. The other offers a buffet for breakfast, lunch and dinner but it's not the usual spread. Here, you'll find a huge range of goodies, from pancakes at breakfast, Greek salads and pulled pork for lunch to Moussaka at dinner — all delicious. And if you grow tired of all these options, you can even swap your meal at the resort for one at a local taverna. Alcohol is also included at no extra cost.

Then there's the 24/7 room service; mini-bar (topped up daily); kids' club run by Brits, sporting activities, including non-motorised watersports, football, basketball, tennis and beach volleyball; plus nightly entertainment. Other touches include being able to leave your kids for half an hour on the beach with qualified staff so you can go for a swim; all-day snacks laid on at the restaurants; and an in-room Nespresso machine.

Apart from the last day, the weather wasn't great, but being typically British we sat by the pool in jeans and jumpers and watched our kids slowly turn blue as they jumped in and out of the water with friends they'd made at kids' club. Then we huddled under towels on the beach so the kids could build a sand city, before taking to the football pitch to warm up. But sunshine or not, Ikos has really provided with the Olivia and it's going to be hard to go back to anything else.

Why: The all-inclusive experience really does live up to the hype.

Suits: All ages — there's a creche for babies 4 months-plus (costs extra), kids' club for 4-11s and one for ages 12 and over.

Did it work?: Despite the bad weather, we all loved it: the great food, our beautiful room, the beach setting and the facilities. There's also a lovely spa — treatments cost extra but adults can use the indoor pool whenever they like.

The details: Western & Oriental has prices from £1,425 per person based on two adults sharing a Superior Double Room Inland View for seven nights, all-inclusive, in June 2017, including British Airways return flights and private transfers.