

TO BHMA

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What the 1920s Can Teach Us About Surviving the AI Revolution

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

By George Anders

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

We've been here before. Long before ChatGPT stormed onto the scene—poised to rewrite everything from business plans to wedding vows—a different technology swept through American society like wildfire, thrilling young people and eliciting warnings of declining family values. Long before the rise of YouTube sensations like Mr-Beast (with 480 million followers), a different kind of entertainment technology created a roster of world-famous celebrities, whose obsessed fans ranged from Arkansas to Australia. *Please turn to Page 2*

Americans Will Do Anything to Get Indian Mangoes

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

By Anvee Bhutani

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Every spring, Carfax chief marketing officer Nakul Goyal eagerly awaits his favorite WhatsApp notification. It's a mango alert. "The moment a new shipment gets announced, I literally stop whatever I'm doing," said the self-described "mango fan." Welcome to Indian mango season in America, when a devoted and slightly unhinged community descends into a collective frenzy over a delicacy that most of their neighbors have never tasted. *Please turn to Page 8*



TO BHMA International edition

Kalymnos: From Sponge Diving to Climbing Hub

By Angelos Alexopoulos

For centuries, Kalymnos learned to look down toward the seabed. That's where sponge divers built the island's economy, identity, and collective memory through a job that was grueling, dangerous, almost unreal. By the late 1990s, that gaze began to shift upward, toward the island's towering limestone cliffs, caves, stalactites, and rugged slopes that once seemed like obstacles but gradually turned into a thriving tourist asset.

"Climbing is now the island's heavy industry," adventure tourism professional Michalis Gerakios tells *TO VIMA*. "It's the curse that became a blessing. The rock was the reason locals risked their lives diving for sponges for thousands of years. Suddenly, the rock became what keeps both young and older people on the island."

Ever since Italian climber Andrea Di Bari recognized the potential of Kalymnos' rock formations in 1996, the island has become one of the most recognized climbing destinations in the world. *Please turn to Page 4*

Even if it sounds exaggerated, Kalymnos is a 'mecca' of climbing, as it is the second most popular destination worldwide. Throughout the year—but especially from spring through autumn—thousands of athletes arrive on the island to test themselves on the 5,000 different climbing routes (climbing sectors) that are maintained with the support of the Municipality of Kalymnos.

TO BHMA International edition

The Freddo Espresso: A Modern Greek Cultural Phenomenon

By Angelos Gassenschmidt

The Freddo Espresso, the drink that Greeks order morning, noon, and night. At a rooftop bar, between university lectures, waiting for the ferry. A fisherman hauling in nets, a construction worker on a sunbaked scaffold, and a grandmother at a seaside

café, watching the water. This iced-shaken espresso concoction has become a dominant force in the country's coffee culture, so much so that it is by now quantifiable. "Freddo espresso and freddo cappuccino alone are estimated to account for 70-80% of all cold coffee beverages consumed in Greece," says Panagiotis Konstantinopoulos, Managing Director of Coffee Island, one of the

country's largest coffee chains. Yet the moment you travel out of Greece, the drink is almost unfindable. Its origin traces back to the post-war years, with the simple but brilliant idea to take the shaking technique of the era's instant-coffee staple, and apply it to espresso. The result was something the rest of the world settled without ever knowing it was missing. *Please turn to Page 7*



The ultimate test of the freddo espresso: can it withstand Greek summer heat?

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One with the future

What the 1920s Can Teach Us About Surviving the AI Revolution

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

A century ago, cars and radio upended society just as AI is doing today

Continued from Page One

And long before Elon Musk put his brilliant, unnerving innovator's creed to work, a different industry pioneer dragged the world's entire manufacturing sector into the era of mass production, creating shock waves again and again.

It's easy to assume that today's whirlwind of disruptive tech—robo-cars, AI, brain implants and more—is jolting American society as never before. But don't overlook the 1920s, when the country's rapid embrace of cars, radio, airplanes, full-length movies, in-home electricity, etc., created an equally intense sense of innovation gone wild.

Lessons from that decade abound—and many still have relevance today. In fact, a close look at how U.S. society made peace with the 1920s' innovation frenzy provides some encouraging signals about the ways that society can absorb, empower and control the impact of jarring new technology.

Fast cars and open roads

The most basic echo of the 1920s is the shock that comes from being in an era of profound change. The dawn of the automobile age, in particular, felt over-



Semmes Motor Co. advertising 'Good Used Cars, Price and Terms Right, Buy With Confidence'. In the 1920s the Washington D.C. automotive business was a service station, and offered auto painting.

whelming to millions of Americans. Pioneering sociologists Helen and Robert Lynd spent a chunk of the 1920s in Muncie, Ind. (which they code-named Middletown USA) and took note of

the many ways that fast cars and open roads were annihilating the town's longtime social norms.

So long to the old rule of "A high school boy does not need much spending mon-

ey," they wrote. Goodbye to the credo: "Rain or shine, I never miss a Sunday morning at church." America was rapidly becoming more consumerist—and more secular—as an emerging car cul-

ture took hold, the Lynds found. Among their findings: Weekend automobile rambles were replacing church attendance.

This new abundance of cars brought even bolder

changes for courtship among the unmarried. Why bother with chaperoned meetings in the family parlor when you and your beau could enjoy an unsupervised car ride. Traditionalists protested that "the home is being endangered," but there was no turning back.

Here's the good news for those worried that adjustment isn't possible: Over time, most of the old guard slowly, grudgingly, got used to the new ways. Novelists throughout the 1920s tended to cast modernity as the villain, most notably in F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby," where a reckless-driving incident brings death and deception. But in everyday life, most people found that innovation brought convenience, joy and efficiency to their lives.

Help wanted

It helped tremendously that rapid innovation in each sector—movies, cars, aviation and electrification—brought many spillover jobs and living-standard improvements in other areas, even as many people in the traditional sectors (think anything to do with horse-drawn transportation) lost theirs. For example, Hollywood's directors, studio owners

The Archaeologist Caught Up in a Prisoner Swap Between Russia and the West

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Alexander Butyagin spent years excavating in Crimea. His case raised a flurry of questions over the fate of historical treasures found on occupied land.

By Karolina Jeznach

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WARSAW—Among the alleged spies, a journalist and a priest included in a prisoner swap on Poland's border with Belarus on Tuesday was a figure less commonly caught up in the standoff between Russia, Ukraine and the West: an archaeologist.

A burly man with a thick shag of graying hair and a beard, Alexander Butyagin, 54, a Russian, had spent his

career leading archaeological digs in the Black Sea region and lecturing about ancient Greece at the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg.

More recently, Butyagin—whose career focus has been excavating the ancient Greek settlement of Myrmekion, founded on the eastern shore of Crimea in the sixth century B.C.—has found himself at the center of a fight between Russia and Ukraine over the peninsula, and a flurry of questions over the fate of historical treasures found on occupied land.

When Butyagin arrived

in Poland late last year as part of a European lecture tour about ancient Pompeii, Polish authorities detained him at Ukraine's request. He spent the spring behind bars, locked up in detention awaiting an extradition hearing that could have led to five to 10 years in a Ukrainian prison for illegal digging in Russian-held territory—unless a deal could be struck to free him.

Crimea's rich history has long been politicized by Moscow to uphold Russian President Vladimir Putin's claims to what is modern-day Ukraine. In his telling, Crimea was a central stage for the birth of the Russian

Empire after Volodymyr the Great converted to Christianity there.

Ukrainian prosecutors say Butyagin was a foot soldier in these attempts to assert Russia's territorial claims and undermine Kyiv's sovereignty. Its prosecutor general, Ruslan Kravchenko, accused him of using his academic research to rewrite history and legitimize the Russian occupation. Ukraine also accuses the archaeologist of abetting the theft of artifacts valued at over \$4 million and damaging the excavation site.

"It is of fundamental importance to us that all

persons involved in crimes against Ukraine be held accountable," Kravchenko said.

Butyagin began working at Myrmekion in 1999, when it was under Ukrainian control, obtaining licenses to dig. After Russia annexed the peninsula in 2014, he continued his work, this time with Moscow's permission.

His case raised a flurry of questions over the stewardship of historical artifacts found on occupied land. The Russian Foreign Ministry called his arrest an absurd and politicized move against a respectable scientist and warned against extraditing him to Ukraine.



Russian archaeologist Alexander Butyagin, who is accused by Ukraine of unauthorized excavation and plundering of historical artifacts in Crimea, is escorted by Polish police as he arrives at a district court in Warsaw, Poland, January 15, 2026.

and big-name actors like Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks weren't the only ones getting rich from the movie-viewing boom. Local entrepreneurs made money, too, opening more than 20,000 movie theaters across America by 1930. Set designers, makeup artists and gossip-minded journalists found new work as well.

Similarly, the car-industry boom created more than just a flurry of assembly-line jobs in Detroit. If millions of Americans wanted cars—and they did—that meant new demand for car mechanics, filling-station operators, road-atlas publishers, driving instructors, roadside cafe operators and road builders. Financiers and corporate leaders didn't monopolize the benefits of big innovations; instead, a sense of social uplift for everyone helped ease misgivings about progress's rapid pace.

By 1930, more than 80,000 people were working as electricians, a profession that hardly existed a decade before. Census data also showed that 168,000 people were working in rubber factories, most of them making tires to accommodate Detroit's booming production of cars, trucks and buses. Another 450,000 people were building roads, bridges and other structures needed by the ever expanding auto industry.

"Are we moving too fast?" automotive pioneer Henry Ford rhetorically asked in a late-career memoir—and then answered his own question with a resounding No. "It is easier to go along with progress than to try to hold things back," Ford wrote. "Only old, out-

worn notions stand in the way of these ideas."

It's too soon to know whether artificial intelligence will ultimately be a job creator or a job killer, as many people fear. But the experience of the 1920s (as well as most new technologies throughout history) offers at least some hope that the past will repeat itself.

Labor savers

It's also useful to compare artificial intelligence in our era with electricity in the 1920s. We are promised all manner of improvements in our lives thanks to AI—whether it's in healthcare or transportation or education or companionship. We're starting to get a sense that at least some of these promises aren't fantasies.

Similarly, during the Roaring '20s, both cities and rural areas benefited from the nationwide electrification, which surged to 68% of people's homes in 1930, up from just 35% in 1920. Nobody found joy watching the dials turn on their electricity meters. But electricity's ability to power labor-saving appliances in millions of homes was a different story. In the course of the 1920s, electric refrigerators, toasters, vacuum cleaners and mixers made their debuts. Electric lights replaced kerosene lamps. "Every year, people demand better wiring," the Washington Post reported in 1927.

Most significantly, mass-audience radio came of age in the 1920s, connecting America in profound new ways. People across the country could listen to the same comedians, storytellers and politicians.



An antique 1913 Ford T model on display in Malang, East Java, Indonesia.

A new, national culture was being stitched together.

That is the story we tell in retrospect, anyway. Plenty of people in the 1920s thought radio programming was a noisy, idiotic embarrassment. In 1927, H.G. Wells, the British author and intellectual, called radio "inferior" entertainment that should be listened to "only by the sick, the lonely and the suffering."

David Sarnoff, general manager of Radio Corp. of America, shot back that he was trying to improve "the happiness of the nation" by delivering popular music to millions of people.

Nearly a century later, that same argument still flares, though now it is more likely to involve TikTok, Reddit or YouTube, instead of dear old radio. The doubters always have a point; with the passage of time, the innovators usually win out.

Safety measures

The Roaring '20s also provide a path forward when it comes to one of the most troublesome issues facing the country today: questions of safety and product quality.

In the early 1920s, the injury and death rates for both aviation and automobile travel were appalling.

Cars back then didn't have rearview mirrors or four-wheel brakes. Airplane pilots went airborne by themselves (no licenses) after as little as 10 hours of in-flight instruction. Safety data from 1920 shows that car-related death rates were a horrifying 20 times as high as today, when calculated on a per-mile-driven basis.

It didn't take long for safety to become a big issue, attracting both talk and action. Charles Lindbergh, the aviation pioneer, spoke out against the perils of low-cost flight-training schools that graduated poorly prepared pilots. Congress responded by passing the Air Commerce Act of 1926, which set much tougher requirements, at least for interstate flight.

Auto safety got better, too, with both industry and government taking action. Better mirrors, better brakes and shatterproof windshields became standard. Cities such as Los Angeles and Detroit installed red-yellow-green traffic lights that governed drivers' actions on busy streets. New Jersey became the first state to insist on driver's licenses, with the state's motor-vehicle commissioner in 1924

declaring: "It is an absolute necessity to do this in order to conserve human life."

Today's tech giants and regulators have so far been more talk than action in a host of areas, including AI, biomedical implants and especially social media, where there has been plenty of angst about what the internet is doing to children. Tech companies so far have been more concerned with making sure we spend as much time as possible with their products, whatever the consequences. And attempts to write landmark new federal legislation often founder without even a vote.

But much of the technology is still in its infancy, and there's still time to get it right. As AI pioneer and Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei recently wrote: "When put in the darkest circumstances, humanity has a way of gathering, seemingly at the last minute, the strength and wisdom needed to prevail." The turmoil of the 1920s may offer guidance as we move forward.

"USA250: The Story of the World's Greatest Economy" is a yearlong WSJ series examining America's first 250 years. Read more about it from Editor in Chief Emma Tucker.



The archaeologist couldn't be reached for comment, but his lawyer, Adam Domanski, said the dispute centers on a 2022 find of around 30 gold coins, the largest of its kind in Crimea.

"There is a lot of anxiety in Ukraine—especially

about the recent finds, coins from the era of Alexander the Great—that they might end up in Moscow," Domanski said.

Other archaeologists were unhappy with Kyiv's attempts to prosecute Butyagin.

The Committee of Concerned Scientists, an organization that defends human rights and scientific freedoms, wrote a letter to Polish President Karol Nawrocki and U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio defending Butyagin and calling for his release.

"I do not see how digging in an ancient site has anything to do with legitimizing Russia's illegal annexation," said Joel Lebowitz, professor of mathematics and physics at Rutgers University and co-chair of the committee. He added that Ukraine's request was "totally unreasonable and violates basic human rights."

Ukraine had invoked a statute from 1999 known as the Second Protocol to The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, as well as a legal agreement between Ukraine and Poland that dates to the 1990s. The second protocol

states that archaeological excavations on occupied land are prohibited unless required for the preservation or inventory of cultural property.

A Polish judge instead ruled in March that a renowned expert such as Butyagin shouldn't have contravened international agreements and that he would have to be handed over to Ukraine.

Behind the scenes, though, the governments of Belarus, Poland, Romania, Russia, Moldova and Kazakhstan were working with the U.S. on a prisoner swap that would result in a number of prominent figures being freed, including Butyagin. President Trump's envoy to Belarus, John Coale, was a pivotal figure in keeping the proposed deal moving and improving the administration's relations with Belarus, a core Russian ally.

On Tuesday, the talks paid off. Belarus released

a prominent ethnic-Polish journalist, Andrzej Poczobut, along with a Roman Catholic monk and a third unnamed person with ties to Poland, in addition to two alleged intelligence agents from Moldova. Five others were handed over to Belarus at the border with Poland.

Butyagin was among them.

It is unlikely to be the end of the dispute over who can dig where. Crimea in particular has long been considered a valuable prize, with the Myrmekion site first excavated by Polish archaeologists in the 1950s under the watch of renowned Egyptologist Kazimierz Michalowski. Artifacts from that dig are still on display in the Polish capital.

"That is the goddess Cybele—our most precious object in the Myrmekion collection," said Tomasz Dziurdzik, chief curator of the ancient art collection at the National Museum in

Warsaw, pointing to a terracotta figurine.

Ukraine says it will continue trying to bring Butyagin to trial to defend its cultural heritage, though this is unlikely now that the archaeologist is back in Russia.

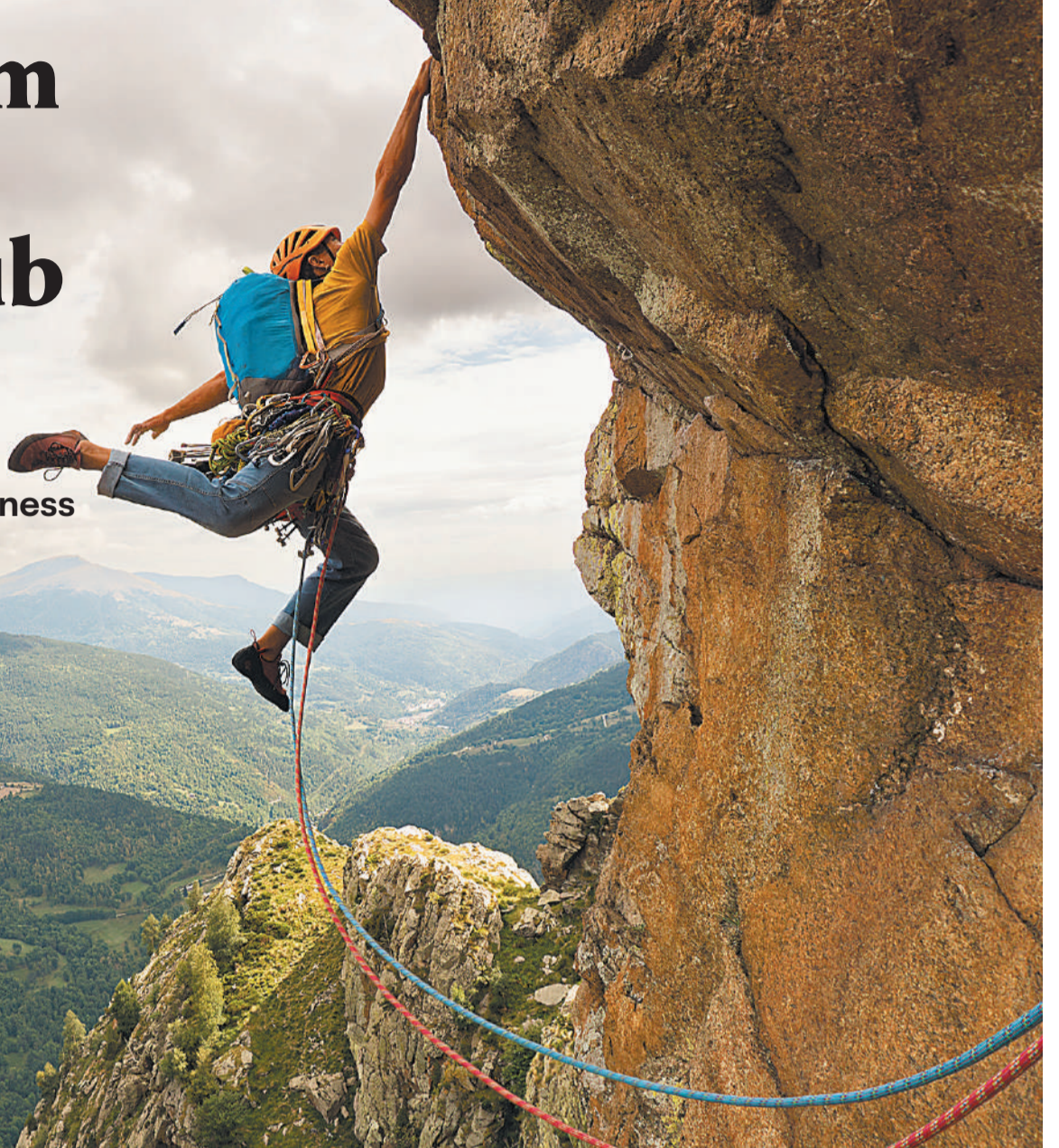
Still, some researchers in Kyiv are hopeful that the Butyagin case will give their Russian counterparts pause. Evelina Kravchenko, from the Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine, said she hoped it would serve as a precedent to deter other Russian scientists from digging in Ukrainian soil.

The court ruled that Butyagin could be extradited, Kravchenko noted, and other figures such as museum directors could also be tried for moving artworks and artifacts from Ukraine to Russia.

"More than a hundred Russian archaeologists are still working in Russian-occupied territories," she said.

Kalymnos: From Sponge Diving to Climbing Hub

The Greek island has reinvented itself as Europe's top climbing destination, but now faces growing concerns over safety, infrastructure, and rescue readiness



Continued from Page One

Deputy Mayor for Diaspora Affairs, Tourism, and Public Relations Kalliopi Koutouzi-Vogelzang describes it as the “number one climbing destination in Europe,” an activity that stretches the tourist season from early spring through late November. Climbing fills thousands of Airbnb rentals, cafés, shops, schools, taxis, and small businesses, bringing life to the months when traditional tourism had faded.

Beyond the accident

The fatal accident of 60-year-old Czech climber Petr Hruban on March 27, 2026, served as a stark reminder that any economic “miracle” built alongside nature requires corresponding institutional support. His death, following a fall at one of the island's climbing areas, was attributed by eyewitnesses and climbing outlets to the failure of permanent safety equipment. The final verdict rests with the authorities. The broader issue, however, goes beyond this single incident. Kalymnos now has more than 5,000 climbing routes.

“The number alone draws people in,” says Gerakios. “Someone could spend a lifetime here and still not climb all of Kalymnos. But there are simply too many routes for how climbing operates on the island and

for the resources we have to maintain them.” That statement captures the essence of the issue. Kalymnos doesn't lack recognition, it struggles with managing it.

A blurred legal framework

The first major issue concerns infrastructure. Climbing has nuances that are difficult for amateurs and outsiders to grasp. Routes are typically opened by climbers themselves, using their own drills and anchors, their own time, and technical judgment. The community's code of ethics is strong. The legal framework, however, remains unclear.

“There is no legal framework,” Gerakios continues. “There's the Tyrol Declaration, a set of ethical guidelines that tell you what's right, but it doesn't enforce them.” Safety still relies heavily on a culture of responsibility, but not much else.

Guidelines from the Hellenic Mountaineering and Climbing Federation on the opening and maintenance of climbing routes aim to fill this gap by setting some best practices. They outline technical and ethical standards, acknowledging that climbing carries risks of injury or death and that route development and maintenance must follow modern safety standards. These standards may need to be stricter when it comes

to materials used in coastal, warm, and corrosive environments such as Greece or Thailand.

The island's deputy mayor acknowledges that the debate over materials is now underway. “There's an ongoing discussion about whether titanium is better than the stainless steel we've been using so far,” she told *TO VIMA*. She added that proximity to the sea makes it necessary to assess “how quickly corrosion develops.” But this is not just an issue on Kalymnos. Other emerging climbing destinations like Leonidio will face the same challenges.

The Municipality of Kalymnos is waiting on a €600,000 European program, the implementation of which has been delayed partly due to the pandemic. The project includes access trails, interventions to facilitate rescues, maintenance, and the creation of new routes.

Gaps in rescue operations

The second major issue is rescue capability. Speaking



Sea sponges.

to *TO VIMA*, Christos Belogiannis, an IFMGA-certified mountain guide (from the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations) and secretary-general of the Association of Greek Mountain Guides, says the March 27 incident represented a worst-case scenario.

“Injury late in the afternoon, difficult terrain, strong winds and rain, darkness, and inability to safely approach by helicopter,” he explains. “This is not a criticism of the Kalymnos Rescue Team or the local Fire Service. It's an acknowledgment that Greece's mountain rescue system—and by extension emergency rescue—remains inadequate due to the lack of a prop-

er helicopter rescue system, known as HEMS.”

A social media post or a news article can easily blur the essential issues that policymakers must address when designing an effective rescue system. Kalymnos has experienced climbers, firefighters, and volunteer rescuers with valuable expertise. But that does not replace the absence of a coordinated state-run helicopter rescue mechanism with trained crews, protocols, rapid deployment, and, crucially, interoperability among agencies with coordinated readiness and communication.

Belogiannis emphasizes that designing an effective helicopter rescue system also requires reliable data. “The classic black hole of data in Greece,” he says. “There's no publicly accessible, reliable database of mountaineering and climbing accidents. How many incidents occur? Where? Under what conditions? With what equipment? How long does it take for access and evacuation? Without these

answers, safety policy operates somewhere between perception and premature judgment.”

An opportunity

Amid these challenges, Kalymnos has more than just a chance to restore its image. From May 1 to May 6, 2026, the island hosted the annual plenary meeting of the Safety Commission of the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation (UIAA), bringing together experts, scientists, and industry representatives from around the world.

Activities included working groups on equipment standards, accident analysis, testing methods, outdoor fieldwork under real conditions, comprehensive inspections of installed anchor materials on the island's climbing routes, and training seminars on route development and equipment for local climbers and stakeholders.

Kalymnos' vertical cliffs changed the island's history. What is needed now is more than introversion, self-interest, and division. The island is calling for the recognition of climbing as a mature form of adventure tourism, not as a patchwork of goodwill, volunteerism, and personal passion. Because when a place becomes a global destination, responsibility extends far beyond its local boundaries.

A Comprehensive Guide to the Athens Epidaurus Festival

Greece's oldest and largest tribute to music theater and the arts readies for another summer season! *TO BHMA International Edition* has some tips to make your Athens Epidaurus Festival experience truly memorable

By Nansy Samaka

In 1955, the first Athens festival took place at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in the shadow of the Acropolis. What started as musical performances accompanying reimagined ancient Greek plays has evolved into a global cultural celebration. Spanning multiple venues, the Athens Epidaurus Festival is now the focal point of the Greek capital's cultural calendar across the arts.

This also means that the schedule is dizzying, with seemingly endless options. Your best bet is to see what you find the most interesting and plan your days, as well as your ticket purchases, accordingly. *TO BHMA International Edition* has prepared a helpful guide to make the Athens Epidaurus Festival less overwhelming for anyone planning to attend this year.

Start planning your trip

Hotel bookings in the city center fill up quickly as the festival inches closer. Since the program has been announced, we recommend you start booking your travel and hotel stay as soon as possible. The three main venues of the Athens Epi-

daurus Festival are Peiraios 260 and the Odeon of Herodes Atticus (or Herodeion) in Athens and, naturally, the Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus.

While the Odeon of Herodes and Peiraios 260 are easily accessible via public transport in the capital, Epidaurus is about two hours away. It is located within the archaeological site of the Sanctuary of Asklepios, in the Argolis prefecture of the northeast Peloponnese.

We recommend you look for hotels in the broader Acropolis area, as well as Monastiraki. For performances at Epidaurus, you can book shuttle bus daytrips to and from Argolis on performance days.

Picking your program

There are two ways one can go about experiencing the Athens Epidaurus Festival: you can plan ahead, or you can check what's playing on any given day. If you prefer to book all your tickets ahead of time, the official festival website has a handy filter that splits the events by month and category (e.g. music, dance or theatre). John Legend will be bringing the Athens part of this year's Festival to a close on June 30 at the Herodeion, which will then be closing for

The Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus (or "Epidavros") in the Peloponnese, Greece.



at least three years for comprehensive restoration and structural work. The performance, his first in Greece, is one of the most talked about events at this year's Festival.

Theater lovers will be pleased to know that all three main venues provide supertitles in English for most plays. It is recommended you sit

midway up the theatre and not too far forward for easier reading. "Einstein on The Beach" and "Lee Miller in Hitler's Bathtub" are among the most unique performances. You can also enjoy ancient Greek plays like "Lysistrata" and "Medea".

Additionally, there will be periodical art exhibitions

and guided tours of the ancient theatre, Nafplio and the Epidaurus museum.

Beware of age restrictions on performances

One important thing to take note of while booking your tickets with family: not all performances are suitable for kids. Make sure to check the age restrictions noted on the official Athens Epidaurus Festival ticket portal. If you book a ticket for an adults-only performance and show up as a family, you will be denied entry.

No video recording of performances

This is a general rule of thumb for most plays, and it is strictly enforced during the Athens Epidaurus Festival.

Flat shoes are a must

Especially for the historic venues. It is both a matter of safety, as the floors are quite uneven, and of archeological preservation. This is a non-negotiable rule in both the Odeon of Herodes Atticus and at Epidaurus. Showing up with any heeled shoes will result in you being denied entry or, in some more extreme cases, getting banned from the venue.

Protect yourself against the elements

For outdoor venues, it is important to prepare yourself accordingly. Greece is warm in the summer, but nights tend to be on the chillier side. Bring a jacket with you, so you can enjoy the performances in comfort. As summer ramps up, we also recommend you carry mosquito repellent and an after-bite relief product.

Peiraios 260 is an indoor venue but heavily air-conditioned, so bring a shawl or light cardigan.

Make sure you eat ahead of performances

No form of food or drink is allowed in the venues besides bottled water. Thankfully, Athens is very well known for its excellent food and the city center offers many options close to both the Herodeion and Peiraios 260.

If you're planning on going to the Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus, know that it is located in a secluded forest area. There is a small canteen on the path to the theatre, but not many other options close by. Since the travel time from Athens to Epidaurus is about 2 hours, consider snacking on the way.

Every year, the Athens Epidaurus Festival attracts thousands of visitors from all over the world.





Do You Need to Speak Greek When Visiting Greece?

Traveling to Greece? Language won't be a barrier. You can get around easily even without knowing Greek at all

By Maria Paravantes

One of the biggest concerns travelers have when planning a trip to Greece is whether they will be able to communicate. We've all been to places where locals either don't know any English or are unwilling to speak. Well, thankfully,

Greece is not one of those places. On the contrary, Greeks are among the most fluent non-native English speakers in the world! Which will make your life and travels so much easier and more enjoyable.

So yes, the good news is that most travelers

can get around Greece surprisingly easily without knowing Greek. Welcome to "All About Greece", part of "TO BHMA International Edition Travels Greece With You" series. Here we answer your questions and introduce you to this wonderful country we call home and you call vacation!



Do people in Greece speak English?

Yes, they do. Especially in big cities and popular tourist destinations. So this means that most people working in hotels, restaurants, shops, and transport services speak good English. In places like Athens, Thessaloniki, and on popular islands like Crete, Mykonos, Santorini, Corfu and Rhodes, communication is rarely an issue.

You'll also find it easy to navigate the country, whether by car or public transport, as signs and public information are often available in English.

This also applies to menus and services. Just think, Greek islands like Corfu, Rhodes, Santorini and Mykonos, have been offering hospitality to tourists since the early 1960s, so English is practically the second language there.



Where you might need basic Greek

So while English is almost a second language in Greece – most of us learn it at school – there are instances where you might need some basic understanding of Greek or at least a handy translation app to get by.

For example, although people in the large popular resort towns of Crete speak English, those living in remote villages in the mountains may not. The same goes for those working at local bakeries, markets or family-run tavernas. So if you want to buy homemade cheese in a village in southern Crete or chat with older locals, then a bit of Greek or some pointing and using gestures is your best bet. And it will work, because Greeks are always incredibly hospitable, friendly, and eager to communicate in whatever way.



Is it easy to get around without Greek?

Absolutely. Greece has been welcoming travelers from across the globe for more than half a century and remains one of the world's most popular travel destinations.

All major transportation systems use English signage with the exception perhaps of local bus routes in lesser known destinations.

Island-bound ferry routes from Piraeus and Rafina are clearly marked in English and staff onboard ferries or at hotels, cafes, bars, car rentals and restaurants speak English.

Information at archaeological sites and museums is also in English and guided tours are widely available.



Greek hospitality: stronger than words

More than 50 years ago, when few Greeks spoke English, it was the country's renowned hospitality that bridged the gap serving as a universal language of sorts. Back then, travelers simply smiled... and Greeks just did their thing. They offered the best they had to offer... food, accommodation, some vegetables from their gardens, a homemade sweet with Greek coffee, and directions by showing or taking them there themselves.

So, do you need to speak Greek to visit Greece? No, you don't. But just for fun you could learn a few words to connect. Start with: "Kalimera" (good morning), "efcharisto" (thank you), "parakalo" (please or you're welcome), "nai" (yes), and "ochi" (no). These might not make you fluent but they will definitely get a warm smile from the locals.



The Freddo Espresso: A Modern Greek Cultural Phenomenon

A drink to wake up with, to lock in and power through work, or to relax. What possible elixir could accomplish all of that?



Continued from Page One

The story of how it came to define a country's daily rhythm began, with a very different drink entirely: the Frappé.

Freddo's spiritual progenitor is an instant-coffee drink made by adding instant coffee granules in water, optionally with sugar and/or milk, and shaking the mix until a thick foam forms at the top.

Originally from Thessaloniki, Greece's northern cultural capital, in 1957, the frappe became the go-to coffee beverage during the postwar Greek hot summer months.

Where does the freddo espresso fit into all of this?

While it may feel timeless today, an ever-present part of modern Greek culture, Freddo espresso's history is surprisingly recent. The most widely accepted account of its origin credits Yiannis Iosifides, founder of the coffee distribution company Kafea Terra, the same company responsible for bringing espresso culture to Greece, first through their exclusive introduction of Italian brand illy in 1988, and later through the launching of their own brand, Dimello. Freddo espresso's breakthrough was quite simple, yet brilliant: apply the frappé's shaking technique to espresso.

The purpose of this new drink was simple: to combat decreasing hot espresso sales during the blazing Greek summers.

The industry also needed to raise a champion to take on the cold frappé head-to-head.

What could explain such dominance?

The meteoric rise of the freddo espresso is quite understandable to those who have sampled it.

It's stimulating, refresh-

ing, and has a smooth taste. If the right brew is chosen and the barista is skilled, those first few sips can even feel "electric".

For many, it's simply a more refined, modern, and

"polished" coffee iteration, compared to its iconic predecessor.

We also can't ignore the rise of Greece's on-the-go coffee culture, defined by plastic takeaway cups with

lids and straws as well as the rise of delivery coffee kiosks. This played a pivotal role in the proliferation of the drink's popularity. This culture has made it easier and faster to consume coffee anywhere and at any time — and by anyone.

From lawyers rushing into court, to skateboarders sipping between sessions, the freddo espresso is Greece's democratic caffeine ritual, a true universal drink.

But how is it made?

The process of crafting this concoction is pretty straightforward.

Begin with two standard espresso shots, but instead of pouring over ice, shake violently with ice in a metal mixer.

Optionally add sugar or any other sweetener at this stage.

This process cools the coffee instantly while creating a dense cream-like foam. The chilled espresso, now a freddo, is then poured over fresh ice, producing a drink that is cold, smooth, and remarkably stable.

For the freddo cappuccino version, milk is also shaken until it becomes thick and frothy and then poured over the iced drink.

Some vital considerations

Greeks are usually very particular about the sweetness levels of their freddos.

The usual three "umbrella" choices are "sketos" (plain, no sugar), "metrios" (semi-sweet, approx. 1-2 teaspoons), "glykos" (sweet, 2+ teaspoons).

This needs to be stated before the coffee is served, as, contrary to hot coffee or lattes, the cold layers of freddos

do settle quickly and won't incorporate sugar stirred in afterwards.

A true freddo espresso has to survive a uniquely Greek kind of stress-test: Will it maintain its consistency after you come back from a quick swim? If the coffee has turned watery, it has failed.

The freddo espresso highlights the importance of mixing and many Greeks will testify how simply pouring hot espresso over ice, leads to a horrendous blend of watered-down bitterness, which is abhorrent to the more coffee-refined taste buds of many a native Greek.

The beverage abroad

Strangely, while dominating Greek cafés, the freddo espresso remains surprisingly absent from the global café repertoire. Only recently has it gained traction, with Coffee Island opening shops in the UK, Switzerland, Romania, Spain, Canada, Egypt, Dubai (UAE), Bulgaria, Hong Kong, France, and India. Another Greek company, Gregory's, has also set up shop in Cyprus, Romania, and Germany.

A last sip

The freddo espresso is not just a drink, it's a cultural ritual, a modern consumption phenomenon. Whether nursing one through a lazy seaside afternoon or grabbing it on the run between meetings, Greeks have made it their own in a way that feels both modern and strangely traditional. As it slowly finds its footing abroad, the world may be catching on to what Greece has known for decades: that cold, shaken espresso, done right, is hard to beat.



The beloved freddo espresso in its characteristic plastic cup; the perfect companion on a hot day.

Americans Will Do Anything to Get Indian Mangoes

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The faithful are leaving work meetings, stalking WhatsApp groups and paying lobster prices to get their fix of the sweet delicacy



AJIT SOUKHAIYAP

India recognizes mango as its national fruit and is the world's largest mango producer with about 13 million tons each year, far exceeding all other countries.

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They track flight arrivals like anxious parents. They drive to warehouses and parking lots at odd hours. They flash IDs and walk away clutching crates like they've just collected treasure from a Swiss vault.

Importers field calls around the clock during this short but sweet season. "The problem is that the mango boxes come and they get sold out," said Sameer Phanase, who runs a Virginia-based Indian mango import business.

But the selling itself isn't an issue. Even his FedEx delivery driver, originally from Mexico, has traded his Mexican mango for Indian, Phanase said.

"Mango sells itself," said Bhaskar Savani, who has been importing Indian mangoes since the day a U.S. ban was lifted and the first fruit arrived in 2007. "It's the fruit of God."

Walk into any American grocery store and the mango on offer is almost certainly from Mexico. At around \$10 a box, it's affordable and available year-round. But Indian mango devotees swear it's essentially a different fruit.

"South American mango basically screwed up the mango," says Savani. "It tastes like a raw potato."

Indian mango—Alphonso from Maharashtra's Ratnagiri coast, Kesar from Gujarat, Chausa and Langra from the north, Banganapalli from the south—is richer, sweeter and fiercely seasonal.

It's priced accordingly. A box, usually holding 10-12 mangoes, runs \$50 to \$60 this season. That's up from \$40 to \$45 last year, a jump importers attribute largely to tariff uncertainty and rising airfreight costs due to the Iran war.

India produces more than 20 million metric tons of the fruit annually, roughly half the world's supply, during the 12-week peak spring season. Yet for decades, the fruit was locked out of the U.S. market.

The mangoes were banned because of a practical problem: the hot-water treatment used to clear pests from South American fruit before it entered the U.S. destroyed the more delicate Indian varieties. A solution existed—gamma radiation, the same technique used on onions to keep them from sprouting—but getting it approved took years. A strong South American agriculture lobby didn't make it any easier.

Savani, a dentist with no background in trade policy, craved the sweet fruit of his childhood after immigrating

to the U.S. When his father was caught bringing a mango into the country, Savani thought there had to be a better way. He spent the early 2000s reading old congressional bills. He even visited a nuclear research facility in India to learn more about the irradiation process. He and others eventually convinced officials on both sides to raise the issue at the highest levels.

In 2006, President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh agreed to work toward lifting the ban. When Bush tasted a mango during his visit to India, he reportedly told Singh, "This is a hell of a fruit!"—a line importers still love to repeat.

Nearly two decades later, the fruit maintains a recurring cameo in U.S.-India diplomacy, including when President Trump hosted Prime Minister Narendra Modi last year.

But getting the mangoes into the U.S. is still an ordeal.

The fruit, after being harvested, must be irradiated at one of a handful of certified government facilities in India, inspected by a U.S. Agriculture Department officer stationed there, loaded onto passenger jets and cleared by U.S. Customs and Border Protection before being placed in customers'

hands—hopefully all within about seven days, which is roughly how long the fruit stays at peak ripeness.

Margins hover around 10%. But a single bad day anywhere in that chain can mean tens of thousands of dollars lost in rotten produce. "The fruit will behave how it wants to behave," said Jaidev Sharma, a Chicago-based importer. "You can pay top dollar and get fruit that spoils on arrival."

Phanase once absorbed a \$40,000 loss when USDA inspectors ordered an entire shipment destroyed on the spot after paperwork didn't match up.

In south India, there is exactly one irradiation center, in Bengaluru, creating a bottleneck every spring. Cargo space is an eternal constraint.

Most fruit travels in the bellies of passenger jets on routes flown by Emirates and Qatar Airways, competing with pharmaceuticals and electronics. This year the Iran war has complicated things further, with the first shipments delayed or canceled and batches spoiling because of fewer flights and higher oil prices.

None of this has dampened demand. Multiple importers said they have spoken with Costco about a trial run—though executives reportedly noted that, at five times the price of a regular mango, the Indian variety costs as much as the retailer's well-known lobster tails. Other importers said they are in talks with Walmart. Costco didn't respond to a request for comment. Walmart declined to comment.

Preorders for this sea-

son sold out before the first mango left India in April. For the truly devoted, Sharma's company ZZ Mango now offers a mango season pass—a weekly box delivered to your door for the duration of the season for those willing to fork out close to \$1,000.

The most surprising thing about the orders has been who's actually buying. "Our most loyal customers are Americans," said Sharma. Indian expats, he said, tend to complain about the price.



MAHESH KUMAR A. AP

Mangoes start arriving in Indian markets in April, providing a juicy, delicious respite from summer temperatures and humidity as they start climbing to oppressive levels.