

Santorini sunlight!

BY RAHILA BASHIR

In the heart of London, Hollywood icon Keanu Reeves attended his inspiring book launch event held at the Royal Festival Hall, later followed by a book signing at Waterstones in Piccadilly, London. Ticket holders included ladies from the Literacy Ladies Book Club who, on the night of the event, walked away with his book titled *the book of elsewhere*. Their next invitation came as a reading retreat in Greece, on the dazzling island of Santorini!

Visiting the picturesque island in April, we were charmed by whitewashed towns and iconic sunsets. Across the blue waves, as far as our eyes could see, an ocean of sparkling waves hurdled below more than 500 churches, tall and stepped across the island with bright blue emblematic domes. The churches are a symbol of the island's soul. On the volcanic Greek island, we experienced extraordinary tours but in extreme ultraviolet (UV) sunlight.

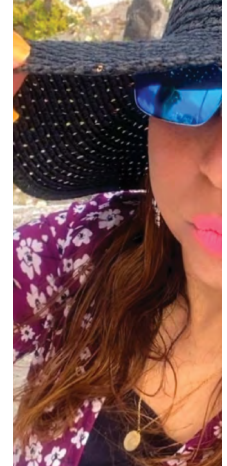
With 10 years of tour guide experience, tourists were privileged to travel through Santorini on a visual reading experience with Milan Manojlovic. His mother a pathologist and father a gynaecologist, Milan too had a background in healthcare studies from San Francisco and India. Now, Milan shares knowledge on prevention of eye conditions whilst in tourism.

Driving through the scenic locations of vineyards and walking along the black sand coast, the sun did not stop beaming – from the bustling paths of Oia to the capital of Santorini Fira (Thira) town, perched on the enormous cliffs of Caldera. Santorini's high UV index and prolong excessive sun exposure, can lead to risks of eye conditions like photokeratitis (corneal sunburn with sore, painful, blurred vision), cataracts, pterygium (a benign growth on the eye's surface) and eye cancer. Eyes are 10 times more sensitive to high UV than skin.

Everyone was seen wearing UV protection sunglasses and many with a sun hat. It's a climate that poses a high risk to sun-related eye health, and so Santorini hospital is fully equipped with a surgical ophthalmology department as well as assisting eyecare professionals at the private polyclinic. Speaking to locals, they said lubricating eye drops were common for Santorini pink eye, dry eyes from dust and Santorini vine polyphenols, which can damage eye surface tissues if left untreated. Milan said sunlight coming



Literacy Ladies Book Club in protective shades.



Santorini blue eyewear.



Peak of Santorini.

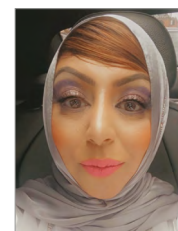


Many thanks to Milan Manojlovic, the founder and guide of Santorini Customized Tours. If you fancy the trip yourself, contact: santorinicustomizedtours@gmail.com or +30 699 924 2002.

directly through eyes activates the glands, producing hormones and enzymes for all metabolic processes, also melanin production for skin protection. Most houses traditionally are painted in white to reject the heat, and to provide pleasant temperatures inside homes, some of which are partly caves carved into the volcanic cliff.

Milan also spoke to us about how UV radiation from natural sunlight is a topic which helps guests on the island understand more about bio-chemical processes in our body and their environmental influences.

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