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...with a privileged parking slot to boot

lake, which provides irrigation and powers a hydroelectric power station.

The beautiful region to the west of the lake is rich with forest and mountain tracks – and there are many places to wild-camp in the area. We drive some of the tracks, but the snow that spoiled our fun in the Pelion region again stops us from sampling too many.

Kostas is disappointed, but he changes the itinerary and we set off earlier than planned for his home island of Evia. Located to the east of Athens, Evia is Greece's second largest island (Crete is the biggest), but isn't particularly well-known as a tourist location.

At the south-west it's a mere 30 metres from the mainland, connected by the Chalkida bridge. But we're approaching from the north-west, so we catch a ferry from Arkitsa to Aidipsos over the Gulf of Evia. The crossing over aquamarine water is smooth and almost immediately after we disembark we are greeted with many driveable tracks.

I get behind the wheel of the 130 as we head toward Kostas and Eleni's home in the considerable shadow of the 1750-metre Mount Dirfis, a snow-capped extinct volcano that looks like Japan's Mount Fuji.

The 130 is a pleasure to drive, feeling well sorted and taut on its heavy-duty suspension. Kostas tells me he did have Old Man Emu uprated shocks fitted, but prefers the standard Land Rover ones.

The tracks range from loose gravel to some areas that are decidedly muddy after recent rain. I'm soon reaching to engage the diff lock, but the Td5 just grows and surges forward.

The Greek food odyssey continues that evening as we enjoy another multi-dish feast at the superb Patsolas taverna in the village of Katheni. I'm taken aback when Kostas drives the 130 in among the tables at the front of the tavern, but he assures me that the owner Dimitris Koukouras is a good friend who always lets him park there. Mr Koukouras does indeed welcome us warmly. He is also the local butcher and the predominantly

Temperatures in Greece climb to the upper 20s (°C) between June and August. Although enjoyable for lazy beach or veranda holidays, it can be too hot for driving Land Rovers. Temperatures in October, when the LROAC recce is scheduled, should be a more tolerable 19-20°C. And it'll be cooler still in the mountains.



There are lots of roadside stalls selling local produce

