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When I think back to all the places I've traveled and things that I've seen, there are a few places that come to mind when I'm asked which one was my favorite. I think about the times I had in Puerto Rico, staying at the Marriott Hotel and hanging out by the pool or snorkeling around St. Johns, Virgin Islands but the one place that I can say was truly my favorite was the island of Crete, Greece. Crete is the largest island off the coast of Greece and is the fifth largest in the whole Mediterranean. (Explore Crete)

I remember arriving in Crete with four of my best friends and seeing everyone go straight to a hotel room in the new part of town, ready to experience the many restaurants who had ads in the visitors guide along with different popular nightlife spots they could visit during the evening. This was the most popular thing to do but it really didn't interest my friends and I. We wanted to experience more of the history of Crete and we felt the best way to do that was get in a cab and go to the oldest part of Crete that the cabbie could take us. He took us for about a half hour drive, in through an old stone wall community to an old hostel that was getting ready to close for the season. The name of the old town was Chania, the oldest part of Crete that was one of the few places that escaped most civil war destruction along with many post wars that followed. It is the western most old town port city that lies along the Mediterranean. (The Greek Island Specialist)

Onassis was the owner of the hostel who was literally locking the windows and doors as we arrived. We told him it was our first visit to the island and he agreed to stay open for another week just for us. We payed him a little more than he expected and for this he had his house keepers open up the best rooms he had. They had breakfast ready every morning and the small bar that opened up into a stone layed courtyard ready to us at all times.

Every morning as we ate breakfast there were a group of kids just like any kids who played soccer on the courtyard, using small trees and pretend defenders and goals. We joined them about the second day and played with them everyday after. It was nostalgic to see play soccer with kids who had probably never seen americans and we felt like we were playing with the national team. It was great fun.

Every so often we would run into other americans who were visiting the older part of the island to see the sites but they only saw for hours what we experienced the whole time and it made us feel like we were the kings of the island. We saw old woman beating the rugs they had hung up to get the dirt out of them, fisherman throwing octopus against the walls after they caught them to kill them and later package them for sale and people riding rusty old bikes to get from place to place. It was if we were seeing life as if was a hundred years ago and it was great.

I haven't been back since then but when I talk to my friends about that time, we always talk about making another trip. I believe that one day we will but maybe next time we will have our children with us to play with the kids who call that part of the island home. That in itself would be well worth the trip.

## Works cited:

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