

**W**HAT'S in a name? In the case of Folegandros, history and holiday heaven in equal measure. Folegandros was a son of the great King Minos of Crete. Somehow, down through the years, he gave his name to a little island in the Cyclades — a gem of an outcrop, north-west of fabled Santorini.

Most people arrive on Folegandros by chance. But it takes only one visit to fall for it. Just 20 miles long, it is an enigmatic, beguiling place which calls to the imaginative traveller.

The ferry from Santorini draws up to Karavostasis, where fishermen are fixing their nets. Behind the rooftops of the town, the landscape has been licked clean by scorching sun and fierce winds. Scrub, wild flowers and cacti cling to rough earth tamed by low stone walls and slate terraces.

The modern design hotel, Anemi, is hewn from this terrain, with a large sea-water pool, 44 deliciously whitewashed bungalow rooms and young welcoming staff. The sophistication of simplicity. Fodis, the barista, teaches me Greek, and tells me about his beautiful old lady at the back of the hotel. This turns out to be a 1955 motorbike.

The breeze in my hair, we speed up vertiginous

# *Santorini's laid-back little sister is quaint and utterly ravishing*

slopes past brilliant white churches standing high above the Aegean. The island has just 650 regular inhabitants, a few thousand in summer. There is no bank, and only one ATM.

It is not long before locals start to recognise and greet me like an old friend — asking where I will eat that night, full of suggestions. Spiros from Sea U Dive Centre (in Chora, a medieval town in the

south-east), takes me on a blissful ride around the island in his boat — to the Chryssospilia cave, and cobalt-blue secluded bays.

I hire a car and park at the side of sweeping roads to explore thyme-scented donkey tracks leading to far-flung beaches with their compelling views and sunsets. You do not need a lot to be happy on this island. Why doesn't everyone live here, I wonder, back at the Anemi hotel? I put this to Demetris, the hotel's chef. He tells me I have not experienced the winter — when everything is closed and people go away.

But he tells me I must come back soon. And with a big smile, he returns to his wonderful cooking.

## TRAVEL FACTS

EASYJET ([easyjet.com](http://easyjet.com)) flies to Santorini from Gatwick from £150 return. Sea Jets ferries ([seajets.gr](http://seajets.gr)) sail from Santorini to Folegandros. Doubles at the Anemi ([anemihotels.com](http://anemihotels.com)) cost from £150, B&B. Car hire at Tomaso ([tomaso.gr](http://tomaso.gr)).

**SHARON FEINSTEIN**



Enigmatic and beguiling: Chora is just one attraction for Sharon, right