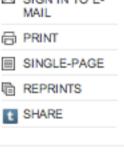
Travel N.Y. / REGION WORLD U.S. BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY SCIENCE HEALTH SPORTS OPINION ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS > BUDGET TRAVEL Escaping the Crowds Published: April 23, 2010 WHAT TO DO Spring on the mainland tends to be gray and rainy, TWITTER so head to the sunnier Greek islands in the south. Watch the LINKEDIN wildflowers bloom from the rustic tavernas, beautiful beaches and SIGN IN TO E-

countless gorges of Crete, Greece's largest island. Or enjoy the rare solitude of Santorini's seaside hamlets, while taking in the spectacular views of the island's volcano at sunset. Ferry schedules are nearly fully operational now.



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dropping their prices. On Santorini, the Astarte Suites

WHERE TO STAY Even the Greek

Islands' most exclusive hotels are

(Kaldera Akrotiri; 30-2286-0833-88; astartesuites.gr), a family-run boutique that overlooks Santorini Volcano, has a pair of junior suites with private verandas and

whirlpool tubs encased in Swarovksi crystals that start at 220 euros, or about \$290 at \$1.32 to the euro (jumps to 330 euros, or \$436, after June 1). In Crete, the Elounda











