



# FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

## FROM KARYES TO KONSTAMONITOU

Distance: 10.2 km Journey Time: 4 – 4½ hours

© The Friends of Mount Athos, 2007 – 2017. All rights reserved. – Version 1.0

**Warning:** *The route from the ridge to Konstamonitou has been severely damaged by winter rains and in one place has collapsed.*

Since the initial section of the historic route from *Karyes* to the ridge is now the main vehicular road to *Vatopedi*, the route here described follows the *Karyes-to-Vatopedi* footpath before climbing briefly to the point where the *Vatopedi* vehicular road and the ridge path diverge. Then the route follows the ridge, partly along minor roads and tracks and partly following the historic *Way of the Bey* which remains *kalderimi* in places. The last part of the route involves a steep descent from the ridge at 550m to *Konstamonitou* Monastery at around 200m altitude. Much of this route is through forest, but there are some excellent views to *Konstamonitou* and the west coast. Where necessary or helpful, the route is marked with orange tape and/or waymark arrows.

**Note:** All distances given (in metres) should be taken as approximate. The numbers shown in the form **1** are Waypoints to be found in associated GPS tracking. The route described is liable to unpredictable change: for example, forestry work, road or track construction and plant growth may alter the route, or its appearance. Signposts may disappear or new ones appear. The Friends of Mount Athos strives to keep this description correct and up to date but cannot take responsibility for its accuracy.

**Abbreviations:** L = Left; R = Right; KSO = Keep straight on;  
FP = Footpath; K = *Kalderimi* (stone-paved FP or track)

**Transliterations:** ΧΕΡΑ = Chera; ΚΩΝΣΤΑΜΟΝΙΤΟΥ = Konstamonitou;  
ΒΑΤΟΠΑΔΙΟΥ = Vatopedi; ΚΑΡΥΕΣ = Karyes;  
ΕΣΦΙΓΜΕΝΟΥ = Esphigmenou; ΧΙΛΑΝΔΑΡΙΟΥ =  
Hilandar; ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ = Zographou;  
ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ = Pantokrator

### Description of Route:

Walk (m) And then . . .

- 1** From the *Karyes* square where the buses arrive, face down main street towards *Protaton*. At the end of the square, before the street begins, immediately before fountain (on R side of street), turn R, uphill on K, signed WC and *Vatopedi*.  
20
- 2** Pass WC on L. KSO uphill.  
90
- 3** Ignore FP (*Kalderimi*) up L. KSO on K.

- 300 **4** Cross *Daphni-Karyes* road. KSO on track, signed *Vatopedi* & other monasteries, with ***Skete of St Andrew*** on R.
- 400 **5** Ignore gated track R to Kellion. KSO on concrete, now uphill.
- 280 **6** Ignore broad concrete track R (signed to *Kellion Pateritsa*). KSO/L, uphill.
- 180 **7** At junction with large painted metal cross (ahead, L), turn hard L uphill.
- 30 **8** At junction, turn R onto FP (*K*) uphill, signed *Vatopedi* (remains of fountain in wall to L of FP).
- 100 **9** FP joins track coming from back L. KSO/R on track.
- 100 **10** Ignore track up to L (signed *I K Marouda*). KSO on track (now *K* in places).
- 250 **11** At junction, fork L, signed to *Vatopedi* and various kellia.
- 400 **12** At fork in tracks, turn R, downhill.  
**Note:** L, uphill leads to the main road to *Vatopedi*.
- 200 **13** At fork, where main track bends R, downhill, and lesser track bears L, uphill, take narrow FP ahead, between the tracks, signed *Vatopedi*, initially towards white building.  
**Note:** Early sections of this path may become seasonally overgrown, but it becomes *K*.
- 900 **14** FP crosses road. Turn L along road, uphill (FP straight on leads eventually to ***Vatopedi***).
- 900 **15** Arrive at cross-roads with main *Karyes – Vatopedi* road, with large wooden cross (***Stavros Makrygenous***). Turn R along road.
- 80 **16** Fork L onto track which climbs to L.
- 25 **17** Turn L off track up low bank to pick up FP signed *Hilandar*, *Esphigmenou* and *Konstamonitou* (watch for orange tape and waymarks). FP soon curves L following contour of the hill and may become seasonally overgrown.
- 400 **18** Reach and pass to L of stone pillar. Ignore track up to R before pillar. FP enters wood and begins to descend.
- 300 **19** Pass fountain (dry) on R and cross stream. Bear L on level to pass below and to L of large chestnut tree.

- 200 **20** After a gentle climb FP Emerges from trees. KSO across level scrubby area.
- 60 **21** At outcrop with view of sea ahead, bear R to follow FP back into woods and begin gradual descent.
- 400 **22** Towards bottom of slope, FP becomes less distinct. KSO, downhill, following waymarks and orange tape, past distinctive 8-trunked tree to emerge from woods. Bear R to cross open area along narrow FP, which is likely to be seasonally very overgrown. FP becomes indistinct track which descends towards building.
- 250 **23** With building immediately ahead, turn R onto larger track on level.
- 40 **24** Another track joins from back L. KSO.  
**Note:** This track leads to a fountain with running water to the R of the building.
- 250 **25** Track joins road from back R. KSO/L, downhill, along road (signed on to *Konstamonitou* and *Zographou*), ignoring possible paths or tracks to L. Road levels out along crest of ridge.  
**Note:** In March 2017 the remains of an abandoned truck were at this point.
- 1200 **26** At junction, ignore forest track to R. This is the route to **Vatopedi** (signed) from **Dochiarou**. KSO along road with telecommunications mast visible on hill ahead.
- 90 **27** Just after passing large stone plinth with cross inlay on L, KSO/R along ridge path (signed *Konstamonitou*, *Esphigmenou* and *Hilandar*), soon uphill.  
**Note:** Continuing on the road, bearing L, downhill is the route to **Dochiarou** (signed).
- 200 **28** At T junction , bear L, signed *Konstamonitou* and *Dochiarou*. (To R, signed *Esphigmenou*, *Hilandar* and *Zographou*, is continuation of ridge FP.) FP climbs steadily before levelling out, traversing hill (on R).
- 560 **50** Emerge at road at outside of concreted sharp bend. KSO/L downhill on road, signed *Konstamonitou* (uphill leads to telecommunications mast.)

- 75 **51** Where road bends L, before it passes stone marker on R, KSO/R signed *Konstamonitou*, on rocky FP downhill (*Altitude 535m*).
- Caution: FP has been severely damaged by storm water.**
- 400 **52** FP descends to remains of severely water-damaged and overgrown former track. Turn L onto track, downhill, with hillside on L.
- 430 **53** Track joins another overgrown track from back R. Turn L along track (signed), downhill. Monastery soon comes into view below in valley to R.
- Caution: After 70 metres, a major landslip **54** has carried the track away. Cross uphill of the landslip with care.**
- 170 **55** Turn hard R onto FP signed *Konstamonitou*, downhill.
- 380 **56** FP joins overgrown track at bend. KSO/L downhill along track (*Karyes* signed back up FP).
- Note:** This junction is not obvious and may not be noticed.
- 110 **57** Track joins road at outside of hairpin bend. Turn R down road (signed *Konstamonitou*).
- 60 **58** Road reaches open area and bends L. Turn R here on broad track which zig-zags downhill. Then track flattens out and passes to R of building to ...
- 380 **59** ... Arrive at gate of ***Konstamonitou Monastery***.

---

This description has been produced by ***The Friends of Mount Athos***, a charitable organisation which, among other activities, works with monasteries to keep this, and certain other footpaths on the Holy Mountain, open. Copies of this and similar descriptions are available, free, from the Friends website, [www.athosfriends.org](http://www.athosfriends.org) and in a number of places on or associated with the Holy Mountain.