



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM KONSTAMONITOU TO VATOPEDI VIA CHERA

Distance: 7.6 km Journey Time: 3 hours

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This journey is an easier and shorter alternative to the **Konstamonitou-Vatopedi footpath** (which follows the route to *Karyes* and crosses the ridge significantly to the South of *Chera*). Initially it involves a stiff climb from *Konstamonitou* monastery at around 200m to the ridge at over 400m. Then as far as *Chera* ('The Hand') it follows the historic ridge path, the *Way of the Bey*, (towards *Hilandar*) from which there are fine views down to the East. At *Chera*, it joins the route from *Zographou* which descends to *Vatopedi* through woods. This path is steep and stony in places, especially where the *kalderimi* has been washed away.

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: ΒΑΤΟΠΑΙΔΙΟΥ = *Vatopedi*; ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ = *Zographou*;
ΧΕΡΑ = *Chera*; ΧΙΛΑΝΔΑΡΙΟΥ = *Hilandar*; ΕΣΦΙΓΜΕΝΟΥ = *Espigmenou*;
ΚΑΡΥΕΣ = *Karyes*; ΚΩΝΣΤΑΜΟΝΙΤΟΥ = *Konstamonitou*

Description of Route:

Walk (m) And then . . .

- 17** Turn L out of ***Konstamonitou Monastery*** entrance and follow the wall of the monastery around to the left, downhill into valley.
- 320 **16** Reach open area/track near bottom of valley where track sweeps around on a curve to the left. Halfway around the curve take FP on R down bank and into trees (signed).
- Note:** The FP to ***Zographou*** is 70m further down the track to the R, after the curve.
- 30 **15** Cross stream-beds and KSO on water-eroded FP (signed), soon steeply uphill.

- 250 **14** At fork, turn R, uphill (signed *Vatopedi*).
Note: L leads in 100m to a spring with running water.
- 150 **13** At fork, turn L, uphill (waymarked).
- 250 **12** Climb up steep bank onto disused and water-eroded track.
 Turn L onto track, uphill (signed *Chera* and *Vatopedi*).
- 460 **11** 10m after passing a water trough on R (where there is a sign
 back to *Konstamonitou*) and just before track bends hard L,
 KSO/R off track onto ascending FP (signed) which runs on the
 right side of stream or in the stream-bed itself.
Note: Water trough is easy to miss due to vegetation growth.
- 300 **10** Cross stream-bed and continue steep ascent.
- 360 **30** Emerge at ridge path through gap in stone wall. Turn L along
 ridge path (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 1400 **31** Pass large covered well (disused) on R.
- 120 **32** FP joins another FP coming from back R (signed *Vatopedi*).
 Turn hard R to follow this FP towards *Vatopedi*.
Note: If time allows it is recommended to KSO to visit *Chera* **33**,
 in order to see the monument in view 40m ahead. Beyond
Chera, the FP to the L leads to *Zographou* while the ridge path
 bears R to continue towards *Hilandar* and *Esphigmenou*. Then
 return to Waypoint **32** and continue towards *Vatopedi*.
 The FP soon begins to descend, gently at first, but later steeply,
 with remains of *K*, very rough in places. Follow signs or
 waymarks downhill, ignoring any smaller paths to L or R.
- 2000 **9** Cross forest road. KSO on FP ahead (signed *Vatopedi*).
 Ignore track which appears below R and KSO on FP.
- 200 **8** Cross forest road. KSO on FP ahead, to R of water tank.
- 100 **7** Pass fountain on R. FP bears L, crossing watercourse, initially
 slightly uphill.
- 700 **6** Reach open area with olive grove – *Vatopedi* visible ahead.
 Bear L through olive grove on descending FP which joins and
 then leaves local track. Keep man-made reservoir on R.
- 500 **5** At bottom of hill, FP ends at junction of tracks. Turn R onto
 track and bear immediately L, ignoring tracks joining from R.

- 230 **4** Track reaches the sea and turns R along shore. Cross stream using footbridge if necessary.
- 250 **2** Turn R up steep broad paved path between buildings. (Straight on leads to ***Vatopedi Arsanas***.)
- 150 **1** Arrive at ***Vatopedi Monastery*** entrance.
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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 and in a number of places on or associated with the Holy Mountain.