



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM KONSTAMONITOU TO KARYES

Distance: 10.2 km Journey Time: 4 – 4½ hours

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

The first part of the route involves a steep climb from **Konstamonitou Monastery** at around 200m to the ridge at 550m altitude. Much of this route is through forest, but there are some excellent views back to *Konstamonitou* and the west coast. Then the route follows the ridge all the way to the *Vatopedi – Karyes* road, partly along minor roads and tracks and partly following the historic *Way of the Bey* which remains *kalderimi* in places. The last section of the original route would entail following the main road, so, instead, the final part of the route described drops down to follow the FP from *Vatopedi* to *Karyes*. 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;
ΒΑΤΟΠΑΙΔΙΟΥ = Vatopedi; ΚΑΡΥΕΣ = Karyes;
ΕΣΦΙΓΜΕΝΟΥ = ESPHIGMENOY; ΧΙΛΑΝΔΑΡΙΟΥ =
HILANDAR; ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ = ZOGRAPHOU;
ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ = PANTOKRATOR

Description of Route:

Walk (m) And then . . .

59 Leave the gate of **Konstamonitou Monastery** and turn L, heading for the gap between the single story building to L and large storehouse to R, to pick up broad track which begins to zig-zag uphill (signed *Karyes*).

380

58 Broad track levels and arrives at open flat area. Turn L here on road that ascends gently, signed *Karyes*.

- 60 **57** Where road bends R, turn L onto overgrown track, uphill, signed *Karyes*.
- 110 **56** As track bears L, KSO/R on narrow FP uphill, signed *Karyes*.
- 380 **55** Path emerges at track. Turn L along track, uphill (signed).
Caution: After about 100m a major landslide 54 has carried the track away. Cross uphill of the landslide with care.
- 170 **53** Track, now overgrown, levels out. Fork R, uphill on remains of severely water-damaged and overgrown former track (signed).
- 430 **52** Rocky section of track ends; telecommunications mast on skyline ahead. Turn R up FP into wood (signed *Karyes*) on FP which has been severely damaged by storm water.
Caution: May be hard to spot. Take great care.
- 400 **51** FP emerges at road on bend, with stone boundary marker beside road to R. KSO/L uphill along road, signed *Karyes*.
(Altitude 535m)
- 75 **50** Road, now concrete, makes sharp bend L. KSO/R on FP (signed *Karyes* and *Vatopedi*) through narrow gully. FP traverses hill (on L) soon descending.
- 560 **28** Reach junction with ridge FP. Turn R, downhill (signed *Karyes*). (Ridge FP is straight on/L, signed *Esphigmenou*, *Hilandar* and *Zographou*.)
- 200 **27** FP ends at road ascending from back R. KSO on road on level, passing large stone plinth with cross inlay on R. (This *stavros*, or cross, marks a crossing point of the ridge.)
- 90 **26** T-junction with track to L which leads to FP down to ***Vatopedi*** (signed). KSO on forest road which continues initially along crest of ridge, ignoring possible paths to R.
- 1200 **25** Where road bends L, KSO/R (signed *Karyes*, back to *Konstamonitou* and *Zographou*).
Note: In March 2017 the remains of an abandoned truck were at this point.
- 250 **24** At fork of tracks, KSO/L. Cell becomes visible ahead.
Note: The track to the R leads to a fountain with running water to the R of the building.

- 40 **23** When level with steps of cell (to R), turn sharp L, uphill, on faint track which soon bends R and levels out, with woods uphill to L. Track becomes FP which crosses open area.
- Caution: The route here is likely to be seasonally very overgrown and may not be obvious – watch out for red and white waymarks and orange marker tape.**
- 250 **22** Bear L into trees on indistinct but marked path (watch out for red and white waymarks and orange tape). Route passes distinctive 8-trunked tree after which it becomes obvious historic FP which climbs gently through woods with hill to L.
- 400 **21** FP emerges from woods onto open hillside with view of sea to R. Bear L on level path following contour of the hill across level scrubby area.
- 60 **20** FP re-enters woods and begins to descend gently, becoming less distinct (follow waymarks and orange tape). Pass below and to R of massive chestnut tree and then bear R . . .
- 200 **19** . . . to cross stream with fountain (dry) to L on further side. FP now begins to climb again. Ignore any possible paths or tracks down to R
- 300 **18** FP reaches open area with stone pillar above to L. **Do not** take track uphill to L. **KSO on level FP** which may be seasonally overgrown. FP follows contour of hill. Telecommunications mast may be visible on summit ahead. FP then bears R, below hill. Track from mast descending hill soon runs parallel to, and to L of, FP.
- 400 **17** FP emerges onto this track just before track joins main *Vatopedi – Karyes* road. Turn R onto track and then R onto main road (towards **Karyes**).
- 100 **15** Arrive at major crossroads with large wooden cross (**Stavros Makrygenous**). Turn L, downhill, on minor road signed to *Karyes, Pantokrator* and the *Kellion of Agios Georgios Phaneromenos*.
- 900 **14** After sharp bends first to R and then to L, FP from **Vatopedi** to **Karyes** crosses road. Turn R along FP, signed *Karyes*, on level. Fine view ahead to **Skete of St Andrew, Karyes** and **Mt Athos** briefly appears.
- 730 **13A** At fork, ignore track to L. KSO on *K*.

- 180 **13** Emerge at road at outside of bend, with track back to R. KSO along road, gently uphill.
- 200 **12** At 3-way junction where main road bends R, KSO/L (signed *Karyes*).
- 400 **11** At T-junction, turn R on track. Track shows evidence of *K*.
- 250 **10** Ignore track up R (signed *I K Marouda*). KSO, signed *Karyes*.
- 100 **9** Fork L off track, downhill onto FP (signed *Karyes*).
Alternatively, or if missed, continue a further 100m to T junction with large ruined building on R, and turn hard L onto concrete track downhill (signed). FP joins track from L in 30m (see next entry).
- 100 **8** FP emerges at track. Turn L onto track, downhill.
- 30 **7** At junction with large metal cross (on L), turn R onto track signed *Karyes*.
- 180 **6** Ignore broad concrete track L (to ***Kellion Pateritsa***). KSO/R.
- 280 **5** Ignore gated track back L to *kellion*. KSO on main track.
- 400 **4** Cross *Karyes-Daphni* road. KSO, now on *K*, signed *Karyes*.
- 300 **3** Ignore FP (*K*) up R.
- 110 **1** Arrive at ***Karyes*** square where the buses arrive.

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.