



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM MEGISTI LAVRA AND SKITI TIMIOU PRODOMOU TO SKITI AGIA ANNA

Distance: From Megisti Lavra 12.7 km, From Timiou Prodomou 10.4 km

Journey Time: 5 - 6 hours

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Note: The path from *Megisti Lavra* and *Skiti Timiou Prodomou* to *Skiti Agia Anna* is challenging. Pilgrims need to be careful, especially if not physically fit. Much of this route is very isolated, but there are many sources of water.

This magnificent route offers spectacular views and has special importance as it is the main part of the SW route from *Megisti Lavra* to *Simonopetra*. It follows the southern slopes of the *Athos* ‘massif’ and crosses the ‘desert’ (*erimos* in Greek) which is the heart of *Athonite* asceticism, an area that lacks any type of road or track. Although the route lies outside the main settlements of the area, there are plenty of paths leading off it towards them (the most important paths can be found in the [gpx file](#) of the “The Far South” entry in the List of Mount Athos Footpaths).

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)

Description of Route:

Walk (m) And then . . .

From *Megisti Lavra Monastery*:

- 0 **30** Turn L out of *Megisti Lavra Monastery* main entrance and follow the *K* up to the L, around the side of the Monastery. Continue on FP (signed) past police station and ossuary on R and gardens on L towards the sea.
- 360 **29** At the end of the garden area, ignore track to the L. KSO, now on *K* (signed).

- 90 **28** Ignore FP to the R (signed to cave of Koukouzelis, the famous chanter) and KSO.
- 390 **27** FP joins road just before it becomes concrete. Turn L, along road.
- Note:** Ignore the old route which continues off and above the road to R.
- 460 **26** Bear R (signed) off road onto FP which climbs steadily. Where *K* has collapsed, follow 'improvised' pathway.
- 820 **25** Rejoin *K* and continue, climbing steadily.
- 380 **24** At fork KSO/R uphill (signed).
- Note:** Bearing L here on the FP leads in 50m to a nice fountain with water trough and thence to ***Skiti Timiou Prodromou*** (after 2.3Km), mainly on tracks (signed).
- 1400 **23** Ignore FP coming up from back L from ***Skiti Timiou Prodromou***. KSO along FP, which bears round to the R.
Continue at 'Combined Routes' below.

From *Skiti Timiou Prodromou*:

- 0 **33** From ***Skiti Timiou Prodromou*** entrance walk straight ahead on main road.
- 60 **32** Fork L off main road onto FP. A wall on the L of the FP supports water pipes and follows an old aqueduct.
- 180 **31** At fork KSO/L uphill (signed *Sk. Kafsokalyvia, Sk. Ag. Anna, Athos summit and Ag. Nilos*). FP climbs steadily, zigzagging in places.
- 1300 **23** Emerge at FP coming from ***Megisti Lavra*** from back R. KSO/L along FP.
Continue at 'Combined Routes' below.

Combined Routes:

Pass wooden cross on L at large rocky outcrop with ruined building on R. This is ***Chairi Pass*** (altitude 500m). Magnificent views of ***Skiti Timiou Prodromou, Megisti Lavra*** and SE corner of ***Athonite peninsula***. KSO and pass through gate.

- 90 **22** At fork KSO/R uphill (signed *Kerasia, Stavros and Sk.Ag.Annas*).

Note: Bearing L on the descending FP (signed *Sk. Kafsokalyvia and Ag. Nilos*) leads to ***Megali Sara*** ('big

- scree' in Greek - after 1.1Km), **Agios Nilos** cells (after 2.1Km) and **Skiti Kafsokalyvia** (after 4.1Km).
- 230 **21** At fork KSO/R uphill on rocky FP (signed).
Note: Bearing L on the descending FP leads to **Agios Petros** cells (after 500m).
- 970 **20** Bench on L and a water pipe and tap. KSO.
- 550 **19** FP crosses stream bed over fine small stone bridge and continues ascending on the other side of the valley.
- 230 **18** Arrive at junction with bench. Several trees contain (accurate) direction signs. Ignore FP to L that leads to **Agios Nilos** cells (after 1.7Km) and **Skiti Kafsokalivia (Skiti Agias Triados)** (after 3.8Km). KSO/R (signed).
- 700 **17** Arrive at "rest area" with table and benches on R, fenced water tank on L and running water crossing the FP. KSO.
- 350 **16** Water trough on R. FP passes through scree after 550m.
- 1200 **15** Ignore path coming up from the L, with red wooden cross fixed to a tree at the fork. KSO still on main FP.
- 500 **14** At fork Ignore FP to the L, which leads to **Kerasia** cells (signed). KSO (signed).
- 120 **13** At junction with wooden fence at R, ignore FP to the L, which leads to **Kerasia** cells. KSO.
- 750 **12** Ignore FP from **Skiti Kafsokalyvia** and **Agios Nilos** cells coming from back L (signed). KSO still on main FP.
- 250 **11** Ignore FP on L signed to **Kerasia** cells and **Kleftiko (Kerasia's arsanas)** (after 3.5Km). KSO still on main FP (signed).
- 450 **10** At fork with tap at R, KSO/R, on main FP.
Note (1): This tap is the last source of fresh water for those aiming to climb **Athos summit**. There is a well with rain water at **Panagia** chapel/refuge at 1510m after 3.2Km (well dries out at the end summer).
Note (2): Turning L here on the FP (signed) leads to **Agios Vasilios** (after 1.0Km), **Katounakia** (after 3.1Km) and **Mikra Agia Anna** (after 3.8Km).
- 25 **9** Arrive at clearing at **Stavros** ('cross' in Greek) **Pass** (altitude 760 m). KSO/L on main FP, now starting to descend (signed).

Note: FPs from **Stavros** lead on R (signed) to **Athos summit** (altitude 2033 m after 5.2Km), and on L (meeting the FP starting at WP **10** in a few metres, signed) to **Agios Vasilios, Katounakia** and **Mikra Agia Anna**.

- 25 **8** Ignore FP on L (signed) to **Katounakia** (after 2.2Km) and **Mikra Agia Anna** (after 2.9 Km) (easy to miss).

Note: This path is more direct (it does not pass through **Agios Vasilios**), but steeper than the one that starts from Stavros at few meters behind (WP **9** or **10**).

KSO on main FP.

- 650 **7** Pass view point with large wooden cross on L. Spectacular views of *Agia Anna*, the western coast of *Athonite peninsula* and nearby *Sithonia*.

FP starts to descend steeply.

- 220 **6** At fork with small bench, ignore minor FP to R that leads to *kellion*. Turn L still on main FP which continues to descend.

- 170 **5** At fork, ignore minor FP to R (which leads to *agiasma* – spring/fountain). Bear L still on main FP which continues to descend.

- 150 **4** Pass stone/concrete shelter (with old disused well and benches inside) on R. The FP continues to descend zigzagging (partly *K*) with steps in places and passes through scree.

- 900 **3** Pass water tank on L. Continue downhill on descending concrete FP with steps, between the buildings (cells) of the *Skiti*.

- 260 **2** Arrive at the junction at the bell tower of the *Kyriakon*. KSO here descending steps, and go through iron gate.

Note: Turning R here on the FP leads to **Nea Skiti** and **Agiou Pavlou Monastery**.

- 20 **1** Arrive at **Agia Anna Kyriakon** main entrance.

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.