FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN
FROM PHILOTHEOU TO KARYES and KOUTLOUMOUSIOU
Distance: 9.7 km  Journey Time: 3 hours

This route mostly follows the contours of the mountain, although there are one or two steep places. While the initial and final sections are mainly along traditional kalderimi paved stone paths, a long middle section follows a road. But there are fine views from the road down to Iviron and along the adjacent coast.

In one section the footpath requires a difficult crossing of a stream, so an alternative route by road to avoid it is also described.

**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:** ΚΑΡΥΕΣ = Karyes; ΚΟΥΤΛΟΥΜΟΥΣΙΟΥ = Koutloumousiou; ΙΒΗΡΩΝ = Iviron; ΦΙΛΟΘΕΟΥ = Philotheou; ΚΑΡΑΚΑΛΟΥ = Karakalou; ΞΗΡΟΠΟΤΑΜΟΥ = Xeropotamou; ΣΙΜΩΝΟΣ ΠΕΤΡΑΣ = Simonos Petras; ΤΙΜΙΟΣ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΣ = Timios Prodromos

**Description of Route:**

**Walk (m)  And then . . .**

1. Turn L out of Philotheou Monastery entrance, with Monastery wall on L. At the end of the wall, bear L on K, passing between buildings ahead.

2. Cross track and KSO across open area, passing cemetery chapel on R to reach stone wall ahead. FP starts at gap near R end of the wall, immediately to the R of an inlaid red brick cross.

FP soon bears L (signed Iviron, Koutloumousiou and Karyes), contains increasing amounts of K and descends into steep valley.
3 Cross bridge with waterfall and fountain on L. Continue on FP (initially K), now climbing steadily up the opposite side of the valley.

4 Emerge at broad track and turn L (signed).

5 Fork R to join road.

6 At next fork, ignore track up L. KSO on road.

7 Cross watercourse and bear R (uphill for a short while).

8 KSO at crossroads (signed Karyes, Iviron and Skiti Iviron), ignoring tracks to L and R.

9 At T-junction, turn L, uphill, signed Karyes and Daphni. (R, downhill, is signed Iviron.)

10 Ignore track to kellia down R.

11 Ignore FP on R before building.

12 Pass recently-built (2016) fountain on L.

13 Ignore track to kellia down R. Ignore minor track to R.

14 At junction with road to R, turn R (signed to Timios Prodromos and other cells). Then turn immediately L onto FP (K) (signed Karyes and Koutloumousiou).

15 At junction of FPs, bear R following waymark. Ignore L fork.

Note: In May 2018, there was a fallen tree c.140m after WP15.

16 Descend steps to join track, turning L along track towards kellion (on R).

17 In front of kellion where track turns L there is a choice:
To take FP Route with difficult stream crossing.

Turn R toward kellion gate and then L downhill in front of gate on FP.

80 18 Pass fountain on L.

80 19 Route turns R to cross stream. FP has been washed away so it is necessary to cross streambed using best route currently available.

Caution: Crossing is difficult and subject to change – great care needed.

350 20 FP emerges at clearing with building to R ahead. Turn L onto track passing between cliffs.

60 21 At road, turn R along road.
Continue at ‘Combined Route’ below.

To take alternative Road Route avoiding difficult crossing

Turn L along track, away from kellion.

50 33 At junction where track joins road, turn R onto road.

400 32 At junction, ignore road ahead, uphill. Bear R, downhill.

200 21 FP route joins via track from R (signed Philotheou). KSO on road, no following ‘Combined Route’ below.

Combined Route

150 22 Ignore two adjacent tracks on R. Ignore further tracks up L and down R. KSO along road.

1050 25 Just before road bends to R, take broad FP (Κ) to L, uphill.

150 26 In front of building 20m after crossing bridge, turn L and bear immediately R, keeping wall of building on R. Reach Koutloumousiou Monastery wall and turn L to follow wall.

100 27 At small gate on R of FP:

For Koutloumousiou Monastery

Go through gate and follow monastery wall.

80 28 Arrive at Koutloumousiou Monastery entrance.
For Karyes

Bear L along K.

29 FP joins the Koutloumousiou–Karyes path, beside gates into Koutloumousiou grounds (on R). KSO away from Monastery.

180 Ignore K lane that goes up L opposite bakery. Bear R along K, with Protaton ahead and, keeping it on L, continue along Karyes main street, past bar and fountain.

200 31 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.