



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM VATOPEDI TO ZOGRAPHOU VIA CHERA

Distance: 6.6 Km Journey Time: 2½ hours

© The Friends of Mount Athos, 2007 - 2018. All rights reserved. – Version 1.5

Passing initially through the olive groves of *Vatopedi*, this walk goes deep into the heart of the Athos woods, far from any sign of human habitation. The ascent, mainly via narrow paths through the woods, leads to *Chera*, an important junction of four paths. After *Chera*, the walk follows wide forest tracks before a steep descent by *kalderimi* to *Zographou*.

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: ΒΑΤΟΠΑΔΙΟΥ = *Vatopedi*; ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ = *Zographou*;
ΧΕΡΑ = *Chera*; ΧΙΛΑΝΔΑΡΙΟΥ = *Hilandar*;
ΕΣΦΙΓΜΕΝΟΥ = *Esphigmenou*; ΚΑΡΥΕΣ = *Karyes*

Description of Route:

Walk (m) And then . . .

- 1** On leaving the gate of ***Vatopedi Monastery*** bear R to pass kiosk on L. KSO down paved road past workshops, etc, ignoring paved road to R (which is the route to the *Arsenas*). Descend steeply on broad paved path to the shore, ignoring routes to L (which lead to garage and cultivated areas).
- 150
- 2** On reaching the shore, turn L along track beside sea (signed *Esphigmenou*, *Hilandar* and *Zographou*). (R leads to the *Arsanas*.)
- 200
- 3** Cross stream using footbridge if necessary.
- 30
- 4** Follow the track where it turns L, inland (signed *Zographou*).

- 200 **5** At junction of tracks, take track on R and turn immediately L onto small FP (signed *Zographou*) steeply uphill through olive grove. FP joins and then leaves local track – KSO always uphill towards top of olive grove. Views appear back L to man-made reservoir and **Vatopedi**.
- 550 **6** At top of olive grove, pass through gap in wall and continue on more distinct FP through trees.
- 700 **7** Cross water course with fountain (dry) ahead. Bear R on FP leaving fountain on L.
- 100 **8** Cross forest road with water tank on R and KSO on FP, signed. Ignore track which soon appears on L parallel to FP.
- 200 **9** Cross forest road and KSO, uphill (signed). FP is steep and rocky in places, with remains of *K*. Follow signs or waymarks uphill, ignoring any lesser paths to L or R.
- 2000 **10** FP flattens out and enters woodland to join ridge FP coming from back L (and signed *Karyes*).
- 40 **11** Arrive at **Chera** ('The Hand') – a brownstone monument marking the crossing of the ridge with directions carved on it (*Altitude 350m*).
- (Approximate time to this point: 1¾ hours.)*
- Follow sign to **Zographou**: straight on/L.
- Note:** The ridge path, bearing R here, continues to **Hilandar** and **Esphigmenou**.
- 250 **12** FP ends at track. Turn L along track (signed).
- 550 **13** Join larger track from back L. KSO/R along track.
- 40 **14** KSO (signed), ignoring minor track from R.
- 400 **15** Turn R onto FP (signed) which descends steeply on *K*.
- 750 **16** FP emerges onto track at sharp bend. Turn R and KSO down track which becomes *K*. Ignore all lesser tracks to L and R.
- 400 **17** Arrive at entrance to **Zographou 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 and in a number of places on or associated with the Holy Mountain.