

FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM SKETE OF BOGORODITSA TO PANTOKRATOR



Distance: 4.2 or 4.7 km

Journey time: 1½ hours

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There are two routes from the *Skete of Bogoroditsa* to *Pantokrator*.

The most direct route follows a side path which connects the footpath leading to the *Skete of Profitis Ilias* with the attractive historic footpath from *Vatopedi to Pantokrator*, latterly with fine views down to the Monastery and along the coast, with *Mount Athos* in the background.

The second route, about 500m longer, initially follows the historic footpath to the *Skete of Profitis Ilias* which descends through woods with occasional views across the valley to the Skete. It then takes a forest track that winds its way down the side of a beautiful valley before joining the main road to *Pantokrator*, with views of the Monastery and the sea.

From the second route, an extension can easily be made to reach *Pantokrator* via the large and handsome *Skete of Profitis Ilias* (see separate descriptions for *Bogoroditsa to Profitis Ilias* and *Profitis Ilias to Pantokrator*).

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: *ΒΟΓΟΡΟΔΙΤΣΑ* = *Bogoroditsa*; *ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΗΛΙΑΣ* = *Profitis Ilias*; *ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ* = *Pantokrator*;
ΒΑΤΟΠΑΙΔΙΟΥ = *Vatopedi*

Description of Routes:

Walk (m) *And then . . .*

43 Leave the gate of *Skete of Bogoroditsa* and head uphill along main track (which leads to the main *Vatopedi* – *Karyes* road).

90 **42** Turn R along FP signed *Profitis Ilias*. Cross stream passing remains of water system/mill.

240 **41** Arrive at fork where the path to the ***Skete of Profitis Ilias*** and the connector to the historic Vatopedi – Pantokrator footpath diverge (signed).

Note: Straight on/R, downhill, continues towards the ***Skete of Profitis Ilias***; L onto FP uphill connects to the Vatopedi – Pantokrator footpath.

For more direct route via FP from *Vatopedi*:

Bear L onto FP, signed *Vatopedi*, uphill, ignoring any barrier across the path.

350 **45** Emerge at rocky track, roughly along crest of ridge. KSO to pick up FP on further side, soon descending.

320 **44** Arrive at clearing. FP bends L downhill (signed *Pantokrator* and *Vatopedi*).

40 **16** FP joins FP from *Vatopedi* to ***Pantokrator*** at T junction. Turn hard R, signed *Pantokrator*. (L is to ***Vatopedi***, signed.)

600 **17** Pass remains of circular building (possible cell) beside FP on L.

Note: May be difficult to spot.

850 **18** KSO, ignoring faint level track to L. KSO downhill on remains of *K*. Fine views to ***Pantokrator***, ***Stavronikita***, ***Mount Athos*** and the coast.

700 **19** FP emerges from trees and continues to descend across rocky hillside.

350 **20** FP descends steeply onto main road with ***Pantokrator*** ahead (care needed). This is where the two routes recombine. Turn L onto main road, ignoring track down to R.

Note: The historic route goes straight ahead here. To follow it, cross road and scramble down very steep bank to reach open area. Cross open area to pick up *K* track to R of building ahead and continue along *K* in direction of the monastery, ignoring paths or tracks joining from L or R. Rejoin described 'Combined Route' at waypoint **23** below.

Continue at 'Combined Route' below

For longer route via FP to *Skete of Profitis Ilias*:

KSO/R downhill on main FP, towards *Skete of Profitis Ilias*, signed.

900

40 FP narrows and becomes less steep. Pass rocky viewpoint across valley to the *Skete of Profitis Ilias* opposite.

FP then becomes broader and steeper on *K*.

600

39 FP descends to track. Turn L onto track which descends side of valley.

55

38 FP to the *Skete of Profitis Ilias* diverges to the R steeply down the bank of the track. For *Pantokrator*, KSO on track.

Note: Diverging FP may be difficult to spot.

1000

47 Track joins main Karyes – Pantokrator road at a corner near a bridge (to R). Turn L along road, uphill.

980

46 At junction with road down to R (which leads to *Pantokrator* Arsanas and cultivated land), KSO/L still on main road.

180

20 FP signed *Vatopedi*, joins road down steep bank on L. This is the FP from *Vatopedi* to *Pantokrator* and is where the two routes recombine. KSO on main road, ignoring track down to R.

Combined Route:

200

21 Ignore road joining from L, signed *Vatopedi*. KSO/R on major road which curves round to R towards Monastery, passing aqueduct on L.

270

22 At fork in road bear R, following direction indicated by arrow.

100

23 Road joins *K* road from back R. KSO/L along *K*, ignoring *K* tracks up to L and to R down to harbour.

110

25 Pass kiosk to arrive at *Pantokrator Monastery* 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.