



# FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

## FROM KARYES and KOUTLOUMOUSIOU TO PHILOTHEOU

Distance: 9.5 km      Journey Time: 2½ - 3 hours

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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 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 *Karyes*

- 0 From the square in ***Karyes*** where the buses arrive, follow the main street, passing the fountain, bar, ***Epistasia*** and ***Protaton*** on the R. Bear R following main street.
- 200 Ignore lane (K) up R; KSO/L past bakery, down out of town.
- 180 At the outer gates into ***Koutloumousiou Monastery***, take FP on R (signed *Philotheou*), passing above monastery grounds and outbuildings (below on L).
- 320 Arrive at monastery wall and turn R to follow wall. Path from Monastery joins via gate on L.

*Continue at 'Combined Routes' below.*

#### From *Koutloumousiou*

- 0 On leaving the monastery entrance, turn L and L again, with the monastery wall on the L.
- 50 Pass through gate to join FP from ***Karyes*** coming from R. KSO following monastery wall.

## Combined Routes

- 80 Bear R, uphill, away from Monastery.
- 50 After buildings ignore first R, uphill. Take second R (signed *Philotheou* and *Karakalou*) and descend to cross stream.
- 150 Reach road and turn R along it, uphill. Ignore small paths/tracks off road to L.
- 200 Ignore track diagonally down to L.
- 350 Ignore another track diagonally down to L. KSO uphill on road (signed *Philotheou* and *Xeropotamou*). Ignore track back R 10m later.
- 400 Ignore two adjacent tracks off L. KSO uphill on road.
- 150 At junction with track to L signed *Philotheou* (straight on signed *Xeropotamou* and *Simonos Petras*) there is a choice:

### To take FP Route with difficult stream crossing

Turn L down track signed *Philotheou*.

- 40 At clearing, with building to far L, bear R onto FP (K) signed *Philotheou* and *Ivion*. Path continues through trees and across streams.  
**Caution: crossing at one stream is difficult – care needed.**
- 550 Pass Fountain on R.
- 100 At *kellion* gate (on L), turn R and immediately L round building and KSO on track. (Ignore road up to R).
- 30 Take small path (unsigned) diagonally R steeply uphill off track. This soon becomes *kalderimi*.
- 200 Ignore FP downhill ahead (blocked). Bear R on level.
- 400 Emerge at road. Turn R immediately, ignoring track straight ahead, then L at major road within 10 metres.

*Continue at 'Combined Route' below.*

### To take alternative Road Route avoiding difficult crossing

Ignore track L signed *Philotheou*. KSO uphill on road.

- 200 At junction with similar road, turn L.
- 350 Ignore track to cell on L. KSO on road, uphill.
- 250 Pass house on L. KSO on road.
- 200 At road from back R, turn L.
- 50 At top of hill with turning area, ignore track from R. KSO (signed). Descend, ignoring minor track from back R.
- 450 FP route joins via similar road from L (signed *Prodromos*). KSO on road, now following 'Combined Route' below.

## Combined Route

- 650 Ignore minor road L to *kellia*; KSO on road, crossing watercourse.
- 400 After building on L, ignore FP off L signed *Iviron*. KSO on road.
- 1000 Ignore minor road to *kellia* back L.
- 1100 At major junction, take first road up R, signed to *kellia* and *Philotheou*.  
**Caution: NOT second road down R, signed *Iviron*).**
- 300 Ignore track up R and track L; KSO on road.
- 500 Cross watercourse and KSO, now uphill.
- 200 Ignore track up R.
- 650 At junction, fork L off road onto track leading gently downhill.
- 160 Take FP diagonally R off track (signed *Philotheou*). Path contains stretches of *K* and descends into valley.
- 600 Cross bridge with fountain and waterfall, both on R. Path then climbs steeply up other side of valley.
- 250 At top, turn R to arrive at track and buildings; KSO on *K* between buildings towards Monastery ahead, ignoring tracks to L and R.
- 140 Arrive at ***Philotheou Monastery*** entrance.

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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](http://www.athosfriends.org) and in a number of places on or associated with the Holy Mountain.