



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM KARYES TO VATOPEDI

Distance: 11 km

Journey Time: 3 – 3 ½ hours

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This is an attractive journey, with some fine views and scenery, for the most part along historic *kalderimi* or paved mule tracks. The initial section involves a gradual climb out of *Karyes* to around 450m. The route then roughly follows the contour of the mountain, often with views first back towards *Karyes* and *Mount Athos* and later down to the sea. It then descends from the ridge through forest to *Vatopedi*, near sea level.

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 takes no 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 . . .

- 0 From ***Karyes*** square where the buses arrive, face down main street towards ***Protaton*** and turn R, uphill on *K*, immediately before fountain (on R).
- 20 Pass WC on L. KSO uphill.
- 90 Ignore FP (*kalderimi*) up L. KSO on *K*.
- 300 Cross Daphni-Karyes road; KSO on track, signed *Vatopedi* & other monasteries, with ***Skete of St Andrew*** on R.
- 400 Ignore gated track R to kellion. KSO on concrete, now uphill.
- 300 Ignore track R (signed to *Kellion Pateritsa*).
- 150 At junction with large painted metal cross (ahead, L), turn hard L uphill.
- 30 At junction, turn R onto FP (*K*) uphill (remains of fountain in wall to L of FP).
- 100 FP joins track from back L. KSO on track.
- 100 Ignore track up to L (signed *I K Marouda*). KSO on track (now *K* in places).
- 250 At junction, fork L, signed to *Vatopedi* and various kellia.

- 400 At fork in tracks, turn R, downhill, signed *Vatopedi apo monopati* (*Vatopedi by footpath*).
Caution: not L, uphill, which leads to the main road to Vatopedi.
- 200 Where main track begins to descend steeply to R, ignore track slightly to L ahead. KSO on level onto narrow FP ahead signed *Vatopedi*, just to R of this track, initially towards white building.
Note: Early sections of this path may become seasonally overgrown, but it becomes *K*.
- 1000 Cross road; KSO on *K*.
- 150 Pass ruined fountain on L.
- 450 Bear R at possible fork, away from hillside, towards very large and ancient tree.
Caution: FP may be overgrown & difficult to spot.
- 30 FP turns R at tree, with another fountain (dry) on L.
- 200 Footpath becomes forest track; fine views down R to ***Pantokrator*** and the coast.
- 1200 After passing cement works, emerge at main road and turn R along road.
- 50 Fork L up forest track (in line with track past cement works). Track soon becomes FP (*K*).
- 1150 Turn L onto main road.
- 250 Turn L off road onto FP (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 150 Cross minor road. KSO on FP steeply down bank immediately to R of installation with solar panels (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 1300 FP emerges onto road. Cross over road and follow track opposite (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 40 Turn R off track onto *K* FP, downhill (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 800 FP ends at level track from back L. Turn R along track.
- 200 Track joins main road. KSO/ L along main road, downhill.
- 300 At T-junction bear L. Then KSO, downhill, ignoring 2 turnings to L.
- 200 At junction beside olive grove, fork R onto *K*.
- 150 At T-junction turn R, following *K*, soon passing covered well on R.
- 200 Arrive at the gate of ***Vatopedi 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.