



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM KONSTAMONITOU TO VATOPEDI VIA CHERA

Distance: 7.6 km Journey Time: 3 hours

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This journey is an attractive alternative to the **Konstamonitou-Vatopedi footpath** (which follows the route to *Karyes* and crosses the ridge significantly to the South of *Chera*). Initially it involves a stiff climb from *Konstamonitou* monastery at around 200m to the ridge at over 400m. Then as far as *Chera* ('The Hand') it follows the historic ridge path, the *Way of the Bey*, (towards *Hilandar*) from which there are fine views down to the East. At *Chera*, it joins the route from *Zographou* which descends to *Vatopedi* through woods. This path is steep and stony in places, especially where the *kalderimi* has been washed away.

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 . . .

- 0 Turn L out of ***Konstamonitou Monastery*** and follow the wall of the monastery around to the left.
- 300 Arrive at empty area at bottom of FP. KSO.
- 20 Climb down bank, cross stream-bed and KSO on FP (signed), now steeply uphill.
- 270 At fork, turn R (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 130 At fork, turn L, uphill.
- 250 Emerge at little-used track. Turn L onto track (signed *Konstamonitou* in the opposite direction).
- 460 10m after a water trough on R (where there is a sign back to *Konstamonitou*) and just before track bends hard L, KSO/R off track onto ascending FP which runs on the right side of stream or in the stream-bed itself.
- 280 Cross stream-bed and continue steep ascent.

- 360 Emerge at ridge path through gap in stone wall. Turn L along ridge path (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 1400 Pass large covered well (disused) on R.
- 120 FP joins another FP coming from back R (signed *Vatopedi*). This is the route eventually to follow. If time allows, however, it is recommended to KSO as far as ***Chera***, in order to see the monument now in view ahead.
- 40 Reach ***Chera*** ('The Hand') – a brownstone monument with directions marking the crossing of the ridge.
Then, **retrace steps** (signed *Vatopedi* and *Karyes*).
- Note:** Beyond ***Chera***, the FP to the L leads to ***Zographou*** while the ridge path bears R to continue towards ***Hilandar*** and ***Esphigmenou***.
- 40 Fork L (signed *Vatopedi*). (R is ridge path towards ***Karyes***.) FP soon begins to descend, gently at first, but later steeply, with remains of K, very rough in places.
- 2000 Cross forest road. KSO on path.
- 200 Cross forest road. KSO on path.
- 100 Ignore FP to R and KSO down.
- 700 Reach open area with olive grove – ***Vatopedi*** visible ahead. Continue on FP downhill through olive grove keeping man-made reservoir on R.
- 500 Come to T-junction of tracks and KSO/L on track towards sea on level.
- 230 Track reaches the sea and turns R along shore.
- 220 Turn R up steep paved road. (Straight on leads to ***Vatopedi Arsanas***.)
- 150 Arrive at ***Vatopedi 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.