



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM DOCHIARIOU TO VATOPEDI

Distance: 9.7 Km

Journey Time: 3 ½ – 4 hours

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WARNING: *As of September 2017 the first part of the route – the ascent from Dochiariou to the road above the monastery **9** – was partially very overgrown. Although not blocked, anyone walking this route should be very careful and expect to face many difficult stretches. Hence it is recommended only for experienced pilgrims.*

*It is possible to avoid the difficult stretches by following the road from the monastery towards Karyes, joining the described route at WP **9**. That route is 2.5km longer and is less attractive.*

Much of this attractive journey follows historic *kalderimi* (stone-paved paths or tracks), starting with a stiff climb from *Dochiariou Monastery* at sea level. There follows fairly lengthy section along roads the rest of the way to the ridge at over 450m altitude, after which another similar *kalderimi* path descends to *Vatopedi Monastery* near sea level. There are some excellent views on both sides of the ridge. Less obvious parts of the route have been marked with orange tape and/or waymark arrows.

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: ΒΑΤΟΠΑΙΔΙΟΥ = Vatopedi; ΚΑΡΥΕΣ = Karyes;
ΔΟΧΕΙΑΡΙΟΥ = Dochiariou; ΚΩΝΣΤΑΜΟΝΙΤΟΥ =
Konstamonitou; ΕΣΦΙΓΜΕΝΟΥ = Esphigmenou;
ΧΙΛΑΝΔΑΡΙΟΥ = Hilandar; ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ = Zographou;

Description of Route:

Walk (m) And then . . .

1 Leave the gate of *Dochiariou Monastery* and bear L on K.

Caution: *First part of the route (up to WP **9**) may be very overgrown. Please read the Warning at the top of this page.*

70

2 Fork L away from sea, uphill on K with fountain and wall on L.

- 80 **3** At junction at top of rise, turn hard L (signed *Vatopedi* and *Karyes*) onto FP (*K*) which zig-zags up past terraces.
- 370 **4** FP emerges onto rough track with concrete reservoir to L. FP continuation ahead is blocked. Turn L to follow track which climbs hillside with valley to R. (FP is marked with orange tape and reverse direction signed *Dochiariou*.)
- 750 **5** Track passes small concrete hut and bears L, continuing uphill. Turn R off track onto level FP just after hut (signed *Karyes* and *Vatopedi*).
- 75 **6** FP crosses stream-bed at valley bottom and begins to climb, soon zig-zagging up hillside.
- 930 **7** FP emerges at track near top of ridge. Cross track and KSO on FP which continues ahead (marked with orange tape).
- 200 **8** FP emerges onto track. Turn L along the track (signed *Karyes* and *Vatopedi*).
- 100 **9** At T junction with road, turn R along the road, uphill (signed *Karyes* and *Vatopedi*).
- Fine views of **Mount Athos** across valley to R.
Pass yellow iron cross on L.
- 1250 **10** At fork in road at top of rise, bear L, uphill, signed *Vatopedi*.
- Note:** The main road, signed *Karyes*, continues straight on/R, soon downhill. The reverse direction is signed *Konstamonitou*, *Zographou* and *Hilandar*.
- 120 **11** At fork in road, bear R on level/downhill (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 250 **12** Track joins the road from R. KSO uphill on road.
- 900 **13** Reach top of ridge where FP joins the road from L. (This is the ridge path and is signed to *Konstamonitou*, *Esphigmenou* and *Hilandar*.) KSO on road, now level and signed *Karyes*, passing large stone plinth with cross inlay on R. (This *stavros*, or cross, marks a crossing point of the ridge.)
- 90 **14** Turn L (signed) along forest track which may be overgrown. Track initially bears R, uphill, before descending.

- 180 **15** Track narrows to FP which continues downhill, often through trees and may be indistinct or seasonally overgrown in places. Watch out for waymark arrows and orange tape. Views of **Vatopedi** and its bay appear.
- 280 **16** At T junction with another FP, turn L, on level (R may be blocked).
- 60 **17** FP emerges at level road. Cross road to follow track, possibly overgrown, which descends opposite (signed *Vatopedi*). Ignore grassy track slightly to the R. Track crosses scrubland before becoming FP (*K*), which soon descends more steeply into valley. Ignore possible FPs joining from R.
- 700 **18** At valley bottom, cross stream bed below ancient tree and KSO on FP, now level.
- 50 **19** KSO on FP, signed *Vatopedi (monopati)*, which traverses hillside. Ignore descent on R down bank to forest road below.
Note: *monopati (ΜΟΝΟΠΑΤΙ)* is Greek for footpath.
- 450 **20** FP crosses open grassy area (possibly overgrown track). KSO.
- 200 **21** FP bears R and descends to forest road. Cross road and KSO on FP (signed *Vatopedi*), initially across open area. Continue downhill. Remains of *K* evident in places.
- 1050 **22** Reach and cross road. KSO, still downhill, on FP which contains periodic stretches of *K*. On occasions, the waymarked route leaves *K* in one place and joins *K* again later on.
- 550 **23** FP levels out at valley bottom (signed *Vatopedi* and reverse direction *Dochiariou*). Bear slightly R and cross stream. Then turn L and follow R edge of stream bed.
- 80 **24** Bear R out of stream bed to emerge onto road at the outside of a sharp bend in the road. Bear L along road, downhill (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 60 **25** Cross stream at ford.
- 30 **26** Bear R at fork onto lower road (signed *Vatopedi*).
- 200 **27** Cross stream. Then pass orchard on R.
- 240 **28** After end of orchard, KSO/R at fork, uphill with stone wall on R. **Vatopedi Monastery** soon visible ahead. Road becomes *K*.

350

29 Track joins from L and K road joins from R just before covered well on R. KSO.

100

30 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.