



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM KARYES AND KOUTLOUMOUSIOU TO SIMONOPETRA

Distance: 11.8 km Journey Time: 4 – 4½ hours

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The first part of this route follows the historic *kalderimi* from *Karyes* to *Daphni* which ascends steeply to the ridge close to *Stavros* (where it crosses the ridge). It then follows the historic *Way of the Bey (Beylidikos Dromos)* that once ran along the ridge down the spine of the Athonite Peninsula. Now this section of the historic route is a broad road, steeper parts of which are concrete, but it offers occasional good views back to *Karyes* and across the peninsula. The last part makes a fairly lengthy descent along tracks to *Kellion of Agios Dimitrios* from which another *kalderimi* path leads steeply down, with excellent views, until it ends at the main road just before *Simonopetra*.

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: ΚΑΡΥΕΣ = *Karyes*; ΚΟΥΤΛΟΥΜΟΥΣΙΟΥ = *Koutloumousiou*;
ΔΑΦΝΗ = *Daphni*; ΣΙΜΩΝΟΣ ΠΕΤΡΑΣ = *Simonopetra*
ΦΙΛΟΘΕΟΥ = *Philotheou*; ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΥ = *Grigoriou* ;

Description of Route:

Walk (m) And then . . .

- 1** 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 **2** Turn R up lane (K) opposite bakery.
(Continue at Combined Routes below.)

From Koutloumousiou Monastery

- 300 **4** Turn L out of *Koutloumousiou* and follow main path up.
- 3** KSO through gates out of *Koutloumousiou* grounds.

180

2 Turn L up lane (*K*) opposite bakery.

Combined Routes

300

5 Emerge onto rough track and bear R, uphill, along track which contains sections of *K*, passing large kellion on L.

650

6 Ignore lesser track to L. KSO uphill.

200

7 As track bears R, KSO/L up FP (*K*), signed *Xeropotamou* and *Daphni*.

350

8 FP emerges onto track. Turn hard R along track.

70

9 Track joins ridge road coming from back L. Turn hard L here onto ridge road, signed *Simonopetra*.

Note: Continuing straight on here on ridge road leads after 30m to clearing at **Stavros** (cross, marking crossing-point of the ridge) **10** where it joins the main *Karyes - Daphni* road.

(Approx time to this point: 45 mins.)

Ridge road ascends gently for a long distance through a forest of chestnut trees, offering very good views in both directions. It then becomes concrete and descends to ...

1950

11 ... arrive at junction where ridge road meets other forest tracks. KSO on ridge road (signed *Lakkou Skiti*), which continues as concrete and starts to ascend steeply.

520

12 Cross ford, still on ridge road, uphill.

520

13 Pass building at R. KSO still on ridge road, uphill.

420

14 Track joins from back L. KSO, uphill.

950

15 Arrive at major junction. Road to L goes to **Philotheou** (signed). KSO/R (signed *Simonopetra*). Cross metal barrier in 40m.

820

16 Track joins from L (signed *Grigoriou*). KSO/R (signed *Simonopetra* and *Daphni*).

400

17 Arrive at major junction with many tracks. KSO/R, signed *Simonopetra* (not further R signed *Siskos*), descending.

30

18 At fork KSO/L (signed *Simonopetra*). The track descends and *Kellion of Agios Dimitrios* soon appears on R.

- 1000 **19** At junction, just after the corner of the *Kellion* fence, turn hard R onto track towards *Kellion* buildings, with fence on R.
- 50 **20** Turn L off track (signed) onto descending FP (parallel to the fence of *Kellion* gardens).
- 360 **21** Arrive at track. Turn hard R onto track that descends, making a hair pin bend.
- 200 **22** Fork R off track (signed) onto FP. The FP (partly *K*) descends zigzagging.
- 520 **23** FP crosses stream bed with small lake. KSO on FP which ascends for a while but soon descends again.
- 1400 **24** FP ends at track with small telecommunications installation on R. KSO/L onto descending track.
- 90 **25** Track emerges onto main Simonopetra to Daphni road close to construction with semi-circular stone platform on L. Turn L onto main road towards the Monastery. Pass *Osios Simon* cave (with small chapel) on L and kiosk with excellent view of ***Simonopetra*** on R. The road becomes stone-paved, passes over a bridge and between the buildings of the Monastery to reach...
- 750 **26** ***Simonopetra Monastery*** main gate.

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.