



## FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

### FROM PANTOKRATOR TO VATOPEDI VIA KOLITSOU

Distance: 9.9 km      Journey Time: 3½ hours

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*Note that the footpath between Kolitsou and Vatopedi contains two **very steep ascents** of about 3 metres that the less agile may find very difficult (you can use secure knotted ropes).*

**This alternative to the more usual route to *Vatopedi* avoids the need to climb almost to the top of the ridge and may be closer to the usual historic route, although little is now *kalderimi*. Initially, it follows a track northwards roughly along the coast as far as the shore below *Kolitsou* (or *Kultsum*). From there a combination of path and track leads further up the coast to pick up a historic footpath which traverses the hill to meet the main road above *Vatopedi*.**

**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:** ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ = *Pantokrator*; ΒΑΤΟΠΑΙΔΙΟΥ = *Vatopedi*;  
ΚΟΛΙΤΣΟΥ = *Kolitsou*; ΚΑΡΥΕΣ = *Karyes*

#### Description of Route:

Walk (m)    And then . . .

- 25** Leave ***Pantokrator Monastery*** by main gate (facing the kiosk). Turn immediately R and R again following *K* road.
- 40    **24** Ignore L turn (down to harbour). KSO on level *kalderimi* road.
- 70    **23** Fork R off *K* onto non-*K* road just after building on R.

- 100 **22** Ignore road joining from back R. KSO, now on main road, initially with Monastery behind and soon with remains of aqueduct on R. Road makes a long curve to L until the Monastery is on L.
- 270 **21** At junction, turn hard R onto smaller road, signed *Vatopedi*.  
Pass big water reservoir at L after 350m. KSO on road.
- 1880 **20** At junction, fork R off road onto track, initially downhill (signed *Vatopedi*). This track follows the line of the coast. After passing quarry it becomes less used.
- 2300 **19** Track ends. Turn R down steep bank onto rough FP, marked with orange tape. FP zig-zags steeply down through trees.  
**Caution: Steep descent.**
- 100 **18** FP emerges from trees at bay below *Kolitsou* and meets another FP at T junction. Turn R towards sea.  
**Alternatively:** Turn L here uphill to reach in about 1200m the *Kellion of Agios Georgios* (1050 m to the outer gate of *kellion* **31** where FP ends at road) and the grave of *Elder Dionysios* at *Kolitsou* (follow the track contained in the gpx file). To continue to *Vatopedi*, leave the *Kellion* by the main road to rejoin the route at **‡** below.
- 30 **17** Pass between buildings to reach shore. Turn L along beach.
- 60 **16** Just before reaching building at far end of beach, turn L on faded track and follow level grassy area away from sea.  
**Caution: Do not** follow FP ahead which climbs on rocks towards big cross on cliff.
- 60 **15** Grassy area ends with FP ahead and to L. Continue along FP which soon begins to climb up northern side of valley, roughly towards *Kolitsou* tower. Footpath becomes track and continues climbing passing through olive grove.
- 1150 **13** At fork with track to *kellion* under shelter ahead, bear R, uphill, soon passing above *kellion* with small bell tower on L and then below smaller *kellion* on R.

‡ 270

**12** Shortly after passing second *kellion*, track ends at road with *kellion* ahead (being restored in 2018). Turn hard R along road, uphill.

**Note:** L along road leads to the *Kellion of Agios Georgios* and the grave of *Elder Dionysios* at *Kolitsou*.

250

**11** At junction where main road bears L, uphill (leading to the main *Karyes – Vatopedi* road), turn R onto track, soon descending and curving L until sea is on R.

40

**10** Pass track to R which leads to the *Kolitsou Tower* (after 200m).

**Note:** To visit the Tower, turn R here and then retrace steps.

130

**10A** Pass descending track to R. KSO towards *kellion* ahead.

200

**9** At fork, with *kellion* ahead, bear L, uphill. (R is to *kellion*.) After passing *kellion*, bear L.

320

**8** Track reaches open area with olive trees. KSO with olive trees to R and strange formation of rocks ahead.

50

**26** At corner of olive grove, track bears R, downhill and is blocked. Watch out for and take FP on L, signed *Vatopedi*, into woods.

**Note:** Any ropes (or wires) across the path are to deter animals. Any associated notice means “Do not remove rope”.

In about 80 m, FP becomes more obvious and begins to zigzag uphill.

220

**28** Top of hill, with dramatic viewpoint to R, over rocks to the sea. Bear L, initially downhill into woods. Due to local earth movement, the path then becomes rocky and uneven in places.

In about 110 m, FP arrives at steep and difficult ascent of about 3 m, caused by earth movement. **Take great care using secure knotted rope.**

This is followed 40m later by another steep ascent of about 3 m. **Take great care using secure knotted rope.**

1000

**30** FP ends with steep climb up bank to L to reach main *Karyes – Vatopedi* road. Turn R, downhill along road.

- 700 **7** Pass crossroads with tracks R and back L (signed to *Karyes* and *Pantokrator*). Continue downhill on main road.
- 300 **6** At T-junction bear L. Then KSO, downhill, ignoring two turnings to L.
- 200 **4** At junction beside olive grove, fork R onto *K*.
- 150 **3** At T-junction turn R, following *K*, soon passing covered well on R.
- 200 **1** Arrive at the gate of ***Vatopedi Monastery***.
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