



FOOTPATHS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

FROM ZOGRAPHOU TO ESPHIGMENOU

Distance: 7.6 km Journey Time: 2½ - 3 hours

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WARNING: *Much of this route is very isolated and without sources of water. It should not be attempted when the stream is in spate.*

This attractive route initially climbs up a long valley from Zographou to the ridge. There it joins the ridge path (the historic *Way of the Bey*) from Karyes from which it descends to Esphigmenou. The walk is well-shaded in places, and involves some walking along a stream bed with rocks and boulders.

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*; ΕΣΦΙΓΜΕΝΟΥ = *Esphigmenou*;
ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ = *Zographou*; ΧΙΛΑΝΔΑΡΙΟΥ = *Hilandar*;

Description of Route:

Walk (m) And then . . .

- 16** Take the direction indicated by the prominent signpost just outside the main entrance of **Zographou Monastery**, following very good *K* path which descends steeply with the monastery walls on the L.
- 280
- 15** At fork KSO (signed) descending (ignoring *K* on the L going to *arsanas*). FP crosses river on stone bridge.
- 170
- 14** After passing shrine on L, FP arrives at main road. Turn R onto road leading back to Monastery, ignoring *Hilandar/Esphigmenou* sign on parallel path beyond (which is the FP to **Hilandar**).

- 30 **17** Turn L onto broad track (signed *Esphigmenou*) just before surface of road turns from earth to concrete. KSO past a field/work area, a stream bed and another field on left.
- 1200 **18** Turn L off track where it bends around to right (signed). Climb loose rock pile on R to find start of FP at crest **19**. KSO along FP.
- 500 **20** Cross stream bed on a diagonal to R. Path leads off stream bed to L, marked by orange tape and waymark.
- 90 **21** Cross stream bed again on a diagonal towards the L. FP leads off stream bed to R, marked by orange tape. Climb through woodland and then along side of an open ravine.
- 500 **22** FP leaves side of ravine and re-enters woodland. KSO on FP, eventually descending.
- 120 **23** Ignore apparent path to R. Stay on FP to L gently downhill (marked with orange tape).
- 130 **24** At bottom of gully, bear L on FP (signed *Esphigmenou*) which leads down to stream bed. Ignore path uphill ahead. Just before reaching the bottom, go L and then R following orange tapes and painted markers on trees.
- 50 **25** Cross stream and climb opposite bank. KSO on FP which then descends gently again to stream bed.
- 80 **26** Follow the stream bed to R (where possible, walk along the banks, parallel to the stream bed). Take care walking on uneven rocks and boulders.
- 630 **28** Where river bed turns R, climb bank ahead towards clearing. On far side of clearing, go through gate (not forgetting to close the gate properly behind you) to the R of fence ahead into field and cross the field towards a gap in the hedge on the opposite side.
- 170 **29** Pass through gap (signed opposite direction) and cross a second field, keeping L.

- 140 **30** Go through gap/gate at end of field, keeping L (do not follow track along bottom of field to R). On further side, KSO along track, passing several fields alternating R and L.
- 1000 **39** Turn L off track onto FP, signed *Esphigmenou*. This is now the ridge path, the *Way of the Bey*. (Do not stay on track, which bears off to R, signed *Karyes*, and leads to the ridge path to the south.)
- 400 **40** At top of hill KSO past large stone monument with marble cross (*Marmarenios Stavros* in Greek) on R and descend hill. (Good views behind monument. 20m to the L, behind woods, there is a stone frontier marker obelisk.)
- 350 **41** Arrive at the point where the paths to **Hilandar** and **Esphigmenou** divide.
- KSO to **Esphigmenou** (signed). Ignore FP to L to **Hilandar**.
- 700 **42** Stone wall on L of FP. KSO. The path (partly *K*) descends through the trees.
- 1000 **44** FP emerges on track – Monastery is now in view. Turn R along track over bridge.
- 110 **46** Arrive at main entrance of **Esphigmenou 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.