

EVRYTANIA

4 seasons, 12 routes
in nature and tradition



EVRYTANIA

4
seasons
twelve
routes
to the nature and
to tradition

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Evrytania: The Heart of alternative tourism in the Heart of Greece!!!

I am particularly pleased to preface the special edition of our tourist guide that presents the entire region of Evrytania through 12 journeys into nature and tradition that can be taken throughout the year.

Evrytania, a dynamic tourist area, with important infrastructure, is located in the mountains of Central Greece. The number and quality of its infrastructure, whether it is luxury hotels, friendly traditional guesthouses or food and entertainment venues, can satisfy even the most discerning visitors.

The tourist infrastructure of the area in conjunction with a particularly beautiful natural environment have ranked it among the most important destinations of our country. Sports tourism, conference tourism, nature tourism, religious tourism and in general alternative forms of tourism along with winter tourism are all very important for the region.

First of all, it has one of the most historic and largest ski resorts in Greece. The Ski Center of Velouhi is located at an altitude of 1840 meters and is only 12 km from the town of Karpenisi. It was established in 1974 and since then it is constantly improving. Apart from Skiing, all mountain sports (Adventure Trekking, River Trekking, Kayak, Rafting, Canoe-Kayak, Canyoning, Jeep safari and horseback riding) are also widely enjoyed by visitors.

Karpenisi is also home to the largest sports center in Greece that can host a number of sporting events. The national football and basketball teams, track and field champions, and Olympians are just a few of those who used its sports facilities to complete their preparation. An important sports infrastructure for the area is also the modern swimming pool located in downtown Karpenisi.

Moreover, Karpenisi also has the most modern Conference Center of the Region of Central Greece. Equipped with state-of-the-art technology and built to the latest standards, it can accommodate up to 600 delegates. In addition, with the conference venues of the large hotel units of the city, it is an ideal solution for those who want to combine knowledge, work and fun with their vacation.

However, one of the biggest comparative advantages of the region is its rich cultural, historical and religious heritage. From end to end throughout Evrytania there are important monuments that testify the area's rich history. I shall only mention the Monastery of Prousos, the Holy Monastery of Tatarna, the Holy Monastery of Panagia in Domianoï, the Holy Monastery of Stanas, the Towers of Karaïskakis, the monument of Markos Botsaris in Kefalovryssos, the historical school in Korischades and Viniani, the archaeological site in Klafsi with the Early Christian Basilica of Agios Leonidis and many more.

Equally important characteristic of our tourism sector is the infinitely beautiful and diverse natural landscape that enchants all visitors. Rivers forming amazing gorges (Gorge Panta Vrehei, Viniani Gorge, Bouzonikou Gorge), but also the Lake of Kremasta that against the background of the dense fir forest creates a unique landscape.

Finally, I should mention the Cultural History Center of Evrytania, our interactive Museum located in Karpenisi that just recently opened its gates to the public, taking visitors to past places and times, projecting in a modern way the history and culture of Evrytania.

I welcome you to an ever enchanting area that has rightly been described as the Heart of Alternative Tourism in Greece.

*Aristeidis Tasios
Deputy Regional Governor of Evrytania*



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Introduction to Evrytania

Our tour will start from Karpenisi and the imposing Velouhi and then following the trail of 12 routes we will tour all the settlements of Evrytania.

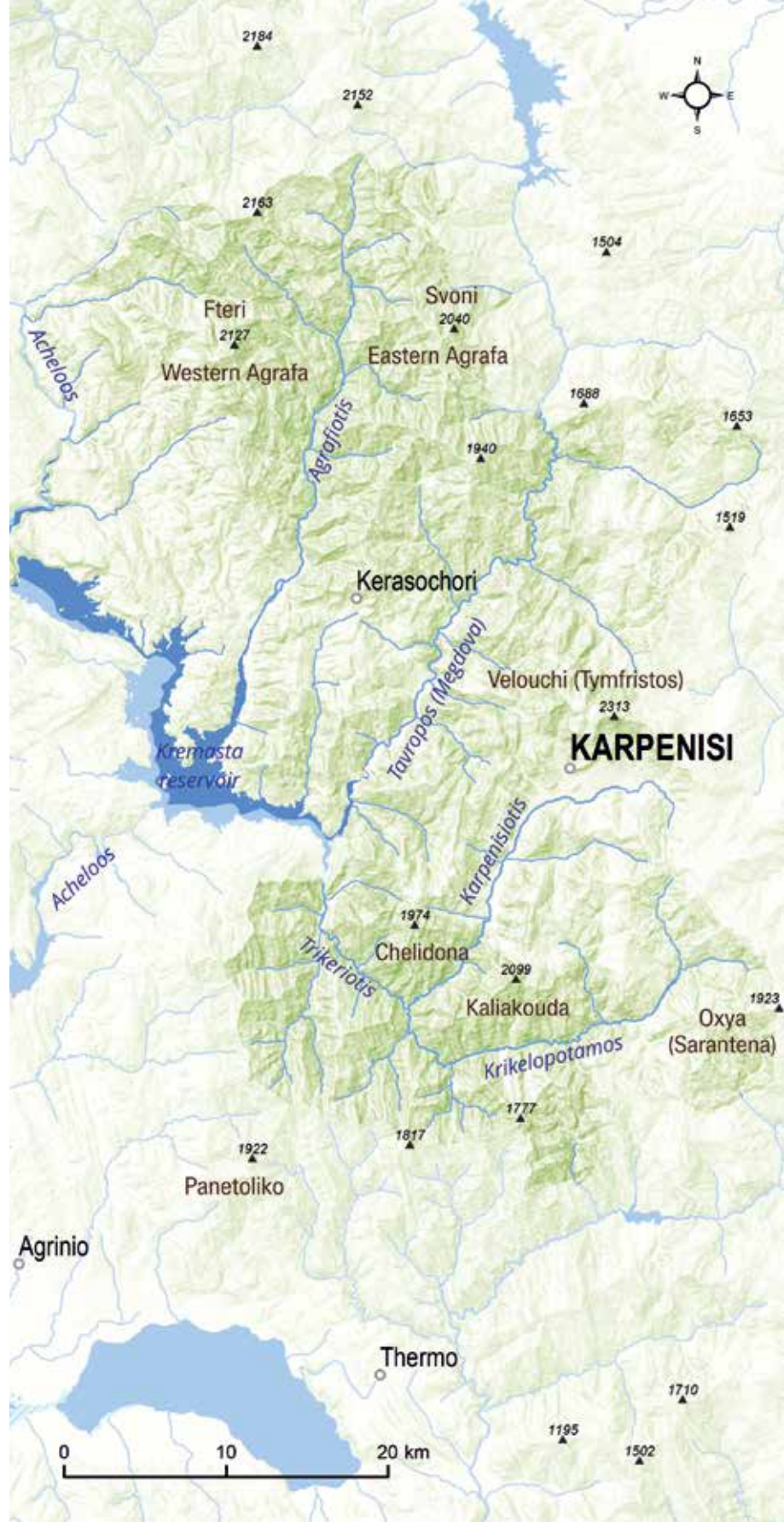
Before starting the trip, it is good to get acquainted with the basic geography of Evrytania, which spreads out in Pindos, and is surrounded by mountains and valleys.

The three large rivers that flow through its northern part delimit two parallel ridges, forming the famous **Agrafa**.

The supra-local and mythical **Acheloos** (or Aspropotamos) that descends from Epirus, meanders at the western border of the area and opens a natural gate to the plains and sea, dragging the other rivers of Evrytania to the plains of Etoloakarnania and the Ionian Sea. **Agrafiotis** meanders between the steep ridges of the complex, while **Tavropos** (better known by its old name Megdova) descends from the Thessalian plateau that is now covered by the artificial lake Plastira.

The southern part of Evrytania is formed by three large mountains, **Velouhi (or Tymfristos)**, **Chelidona** and **Kaliakouda**, which feed two more rivers, **Karpenisiotis** and **Krikellopotamos**. On the border with Aetolia, the mountain of **Panaitolikos** forces the two rivers to turn north and join -through **Trikeriotis**- their three northern brothers, in the vast **artificial lake of Kremasta**.

A few smooth valleys nest in the maze of mountains, with the most characteristic ones being the plateau of Karpenisi, the basins of Fourni, Agia Triada, Prasies, Frangista and Domnista. The locals took advantage of every smooth part of the relief to set up their settlements, and create stepped terraces.





Kaliakouda with the cloak of firs

Evrytania is a paradise of mountain sports: a well-organized ski resort, countless peaks for mountaineering routes, dozens of marked trails for short walks around the settlements, gorges for technical descents (canyoning), foamy rivers and lakes for rafting. All this framed by high quality tourist infrastructure: hotels and guesthouses with character, food in excellent taverns and restaurants.

Before your excursions, visit the Interactive Museum, in Karpenisi, to get an overview of the history and culture of the area.

The main productive resources were and remain logging and animal husbandry, which, however, has decreased significantly after the war, along with agriculture, resulting in the expansion of the forest.

The mountain forest is composed entirely of firs, with plane trees -that mark even the smallest ravines- illuminating its dark mantle. Lower, in the settlements zone, the oak forest, although it has suffered the greatest losses, still covers and colors the autumn landscapes. The dominant element of the vegetation at altitudes below 1,000 meters is oak, which, depending on the local soil and microclimatic conditions, is replaced or supplemented by hornbeam, aria and all the hardwood shrubs of the Mediterranean macchia. Finally, the Jerusalem Sage together with the olive tree point out the few areas with a clear Mediterranean character, on the shores of Lake Kremasta.

Evrytania remains a refuge for large mammals (wild boars, roe deer) and many of the country's medium and smaller mammals. Large birds of prey, vultures, golden eagles and ospreys roaming over the mountains are rare, but there are many forest birds.



First stop at the interactive museum - KIPÉ

Here visitors can get an overview of the entire area in a fascinating way

The Cultural History Center of Evrytania (KIPÉ) is an interactive museum housed in an impressive stone building in Karpenisi. Its founding by the Prefectural Unit of Evrytania is the first attempt at a comprehensive presentation of the great historical and cultural reserve of the wider region of Evrytania. KIPÉ has a permanent collection entitled: «The treasures of Evrytania», which consists of mockups of archaeological findings in Evrytania, archival documents, objects and virtual reality applications that take visitors back to important historical events in the area. It also has a library and educational space and a periodical exhibition room for any event of historical, cultural, and artistic interest. The land of the ancient Evrytians is presented in the rooms of the permanent exhibition, with important information about the excavation activity of the area.



Visitors can get to know the historical route of the area with mockups of the most important exhibits located in great museums in Greece and abroad. The tour continues in the Byzantine, post-Byzantine years and the recent history of Evrytania through important historical landmarks. KIPÉ is a model modern museum that uses new technology and creates a new dynamic museum-visitor relationship. Visitors can activate the touch screens located in the halls of the museum and receive a wealth of information about the area's historical facts. In specially designed rooms, visitors have the opportunity to watch virtual reality movies and augmented reality movies; the latest technology that takes them back to space and time.



KARPENISI



- 1 PARK OF EMIGRANTS OF EVRYTANIA:
(BICYCLE ROAD, PLAYGROUND, FITNESS EQUIPMENT,
SKATEBOARD TRACK, CLIMBING WALL)
- 2 FIREFIGHTING
- 3 TEI OF KARPENISI
- 4 FAIRY PARK: PLAYGROUND, AMPHITHEATER
- 5 REGIONAL UNIT OF EVRYTANIA

- 6 INDOOR PLAYGROUND
- 7 MAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
- 8 KIPE - Interactive Museum
- 9 PAVLOS BAKOGIANNIS PARK
- 10 POLICE STATION
- 11 OLD TOWN HALL: OPEN
- 12 KARPENISI GENERAL HOSPITAL

- 13 CENTRAL SQUARE OF KARPENISI
- 14 KARPENISI CONFERENCE CENTER: TWO VENUES
FOR CONFERENCES AND MUNICIPAL MOVIE THEATER
- 15 MOUNTAIN MUSEUM
- 16 KTEL OF KARPENISI
- 17 INDOOR SWIMMING POOL
- 18 NEW TOWN HALL



The renovated sports center of Karpenisi, as well as the indoor swimming pool promote sports tourism and host large events.

In the first ten days of August, the Municipality of Karpenisi organizes the famous “Botsaria”, a series of events in honor of the hero of the Revolution, Markos Botsaris, who lost his life in the historic battle of Kefalovryso, in August 1823. A monument has been erected in his honor in Kefalovryso. The beautiful location with the plane trees and the abundant waters also functions as a place of recreation.

The “Winter Fests” during the Christmas holidays and the summer “Forest Holidays” organized by the Municipality of Karpenisi have become a tradition and

Karpenisi, the capital, road node and heart of the economic development of Evrytania, was established in the late Ottoman Empire and today is the only urban hub of the prefecture. It has a remarkable hotel and social infrastructure and is home to cultural institutions and organizations.

The parish Church of the Holy Trinity was built in the second half of the 16th century. It was originally a small chapel. In this chapel, around 1645, Evgenios Giannoulis of Aetolia founded the first School in Evrytania for the higher education of Greek children, as well as Schools for lower level education. Later, at his suggestion, it was decided to build a new large and beautiful church on the same site, based on the basilicas of Constantinople. This stavropegial temple was probably destroyed in 1684, when the Turks were defeated in Goliani (Stefani) by Livinis. In the years that followed, the Church of Holy Trinity has suffered repeated disasters. The last renovation took place in 1961 and about twenty years later, the interior was painted.

attract many people.

Built at the foot of the imposing Velouhi, Karpenisi is the base for excursions to the ski resort, the most important attraction of winter tourism.



Karpenisi

The Ski Center of Karpenisi is located on a plateau of Velouhi, at an altitude of 1840 meters, in the location “Diavolotopos”, about 12 km from the town of Karpenisi. It was established in 1974 and since then it is constantly improving. It has 18 slopes of different difficulty levels ranging from 1800-2040m, and 4 off-piste routes, shops selling and renting skis and motorized sleds and a ski school.

There are also chalets, a restaurant, a café, a bar and first aid services provided on the slopes. From the lifts, there is a wonderful view of the town, the mountains of the area, but also of the entire Central Greece.



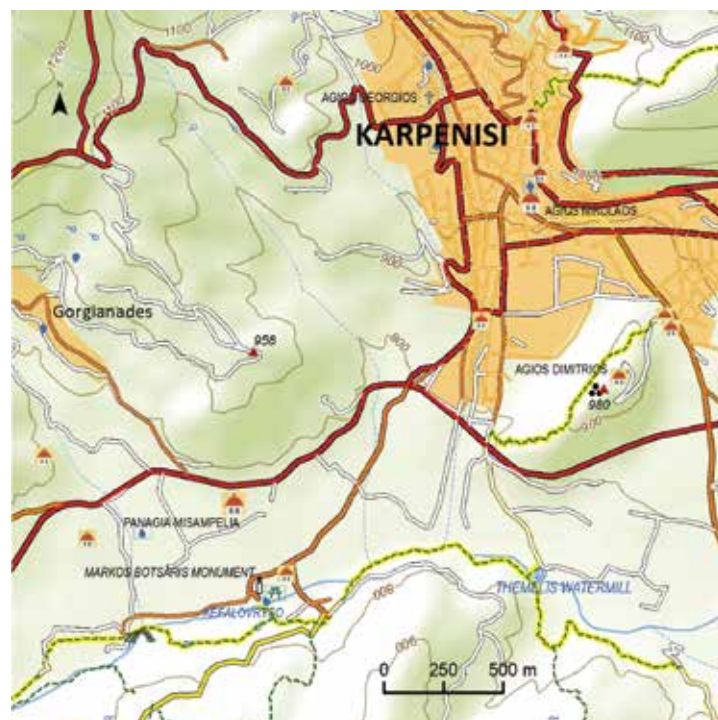
Karpenisi Ski Center

HIKING ROUTE

Karpenisi - Agios Dimitrios - Themelis Mill
(4.5 km, 2 hours).

The path with yellow markings starts from the base of the hill of Agios Dimitrios and leads us through a beautiful pine forest to a junction with a sign to Agios Dimitrios.

It is worth making a short detour to the chapel with the panoramic view to Karpenisi. We return to the junction and follow the path in the direction of Kefalovryso. In a little while we will see the ring road of Karpenisi and pass under it. The rest of the section up to the watermill of Themelis lies on a forest road. The watermill is located next to the Karpenisiotis river which we cross over a concrete bridge. A path with red markings, in the beginning of the fir forest and then plane trees, leads us to Kefalovryso.



route 1

from Karpenisi
to Panagia Prousiotissa



Gorgianades
Koryschades
Voutyro
Nostimo
Mikro Chorio
Megalo Chorio
Gavros
Karitsa
Dermati
Chelidona
Prousos



cil of free Greece that ratified the “Government of the mountain” took place on May 4, 1944 in the stone primary school of the village. Today it functions as a Museum of National Resistance and is celebrated every year in mid-May. Worth seeing sights of the settlement include the church of Agios Athanasios of 1865 and just outside the settlement, in the location “Koumasia”, the monastery of Panagia of the 17th century that was repeatedly destroyed by the Ottomans, during the Revolution, but also in 1944 by Germans. A fortress of unknown date is preserved on a hill outside the settlement, where in 1954 burial monuments were found with bronze and brass offerings.

Route 1 goes southwards, parallel to the Karpenisiotis river, in the valley of Potamia and leads us to the area of Prousos, with the famous monastery of Panagia Prousiotissa.

First on the route is the village of **Gorianades**, which is built amphitheatrically among firs and fruit trees. The settlement has a guesthouse and a restaurant, and consists of stone houses with tiled roofs. Also known as the “village of the mountaineers”, it dates back to the period of Ottoman rule. Before leaving the main road we will stumble upon an agritourism unit with horses, opposite the church of Panagia of Mesabelia.

The famous **Koryschades** are located close by. Built on the fir tree hugged slopes of the peak Psilo Kotroni. The beautiful traditional settlement with its stone mansions and well-kept holiday homes offers many accommodation options. The modern history of the Koryschades is linked to National Resistance. The meeting of the National Coun-

Next stop is **Voutyro**, a well-preserved settlement with nice stone houses, well-manicured guesthouses and beautiful views, especially from the top of the hill where Agios Ioannis is located. The majestic, Byzantine style church of Agia Paraskevi dominates the center of the village. It is also worth visiting (by appointment) the old single-seat primary school that revives and honors the forgotten institution and role of education in the remote mountainous villages.

At the foot of Mount Chelidona, the village **Nostimo** is built amidst a dense fir forest overlooking Kaliakouda. Probably owes its name to the clear running waters that gush out from the mountain. The sights of the village, the bridge and the watermill are related to the water.

route 1

Neo Mikro Horio was built by residents of the old Mikro Horio, in a landscape with lush vegetation. The architecture and design of the settlement is in harmony with nature and the environment and has a rich tourist infrastructure. Just outside the settlement, it is worth visiting the Hermitage of Saint Mary of Egypt, as well as Vromovrisi on the way to Agios Sostis - it is the stone fountain next to which Markos Botsaris died.

Palio Mikro Horio is one of the most beautiful villages in Evrytania, although it hides a sad story, when in the winter of 1963, a landslide swept away half of it. The landslide formed a small lake at the entrance of the settlement. The landslide is depicted on a mural in the church of Agia Kyriaki in Neo Mikro Horio. The old stone school of Palio Mikro Horio houses the folklore museum showcasing documents from the Occupation period, along with landslide material, traditional costumes and ancient finds. There is no better place to rest than the paved square of the village with the 6 stone fountains and taverns.

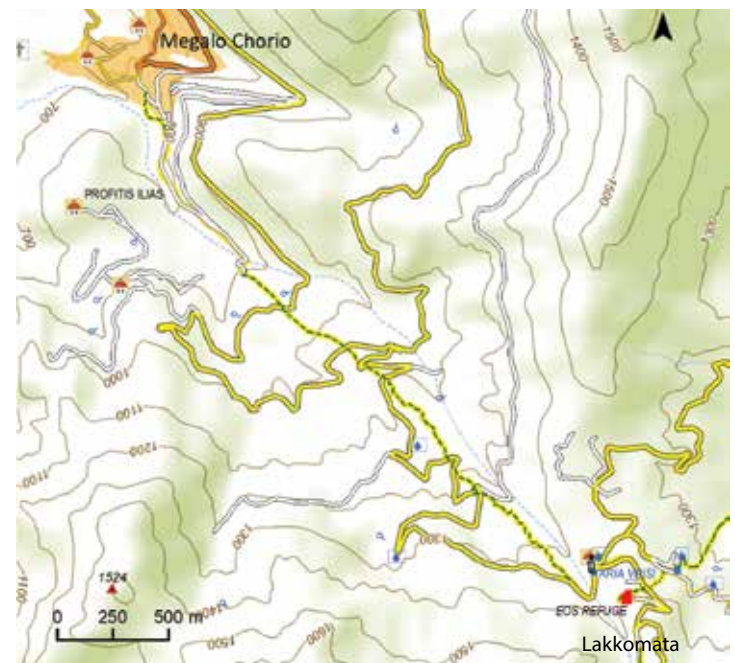
Between Neo and Palio Mikro Horio in the location "Ano Longoves" you will see a simple white monument in honor of 11 Greek fighters who were executed by the Italians in 1942.

Next stop is **Megalo Horio**, located on the east bank of Karpenisiotis, at the foot of Kaliakouda. One of the most picturesque and touristic villages of the prefecture of Evrytania, with its alleys, old traditional houses and mansions, beautiful guesthouses, wooden bridges, small traditional shops and taverns. It is also worth visiting the church of Agia Paraskevi, which dates back to the beginning of the 19th century, and the church of Agios Georgios Megalohorianos, which was martyred in 1812 in Constantinople.



HIKING ROUTE

Megalo Horio - Lakkomata (4 km, 2.5 hours) The red marking route starts from the square of Megalo Horio, follows the alleys of the village and then a narrow dirt road. It enters the fir forest with a path that intersects at many points the forest road which leads to the mountain pass of Kaliakouda. It ends in Lakkomata with the chapel of Panagia, Krya Vrysi and the Shelter of EOS Karpenisi.





Deviating from the central axis we will stumble upon two villages that are nestled high on the slopes of Chelidona. First, **Dermati** which is divided into two settlements, east and west. At the highest point, where they meet, lies the heart of the village with the church of Agia Paraskevi, dating back to the late 19th century, the community office, the school and the café.

Next stop is **Chelidona**, formerly called Lastovo. The school building, where about 100 children attended before the war, is impressive. Today there is a winery in the village and also a vine harvest festival.

Our tour continues in the settlement **Gavros** with the many taverns and the local trout farm, a must stop for tasting.

After Gavros, rocks begin to rise to our right and left and Karpenisiotis enters a gorge. The location **Kleidi**, where the road passes under a rock roof, is characteristic of the area.

Further down the road and above the road, **Karitsa** owes its name to the abundant walnuts found in the area. Attractions near the village include the gorge of Vothonas - for Canyoning lovers - and the single-arched bridge of Karitsa, an arch without pedestals wedged between the vertical rocks of a torrent.

In **Ano Karitsa** it is worth visiting the church of Agios Dimitrios, which dates back to the end of the 19th century. A pilgrim stop worth visiting is the "**Footprints of the Virgin Mary**" (shapes that can be seen on the rock) and the "Print" (through hole) which are related to the passage of the image of the Virgin Mary to the Monastery of Prousos.

Back to **Dipotama**, at the junction of Krikellopotamos with Karpenisiotis, where there is a large stone bridge, next to the road bridge.

In a place that from afar seems inaccessible lies the **Monastery of Prousos**, a top pilgrimage site in the entire region. The Holy Monastery of Prousos was founded around the 12th century. In the 16th century, the catholikon was destroyed by a fire and then re-decorated, although the frescoes we see today date back to the 18th century. The monastery played an important role in 1821, as a shelter and sanatorium for Karaiskakis, but also before the Revolution as a School of Greek Letters. In the treasury of the Monastery there are valuable manuscript codes, icons, sacred utensils, reliquaries and books as well as the weapons of Karaiskakis. Some of them are exhibited in the museum of the monastery. It is worth seeing the small crypt west of the catholikon where 13th century frescoes and an 18th century wooden iconostasis are preserved.

route 1

The settlement of **Prousos** is located between the imposing rocky mountains and fir-covered slopes. Around the traditional square with the centuries-old plane tree you will find accommodation and food. Visit the rich Agathideios Library of 1880 and the Katsampeio high school, which will take you back in time when Prousos was a head village and had many settlements. It is the birthplace of General Kondylis who served twice as prime minister.

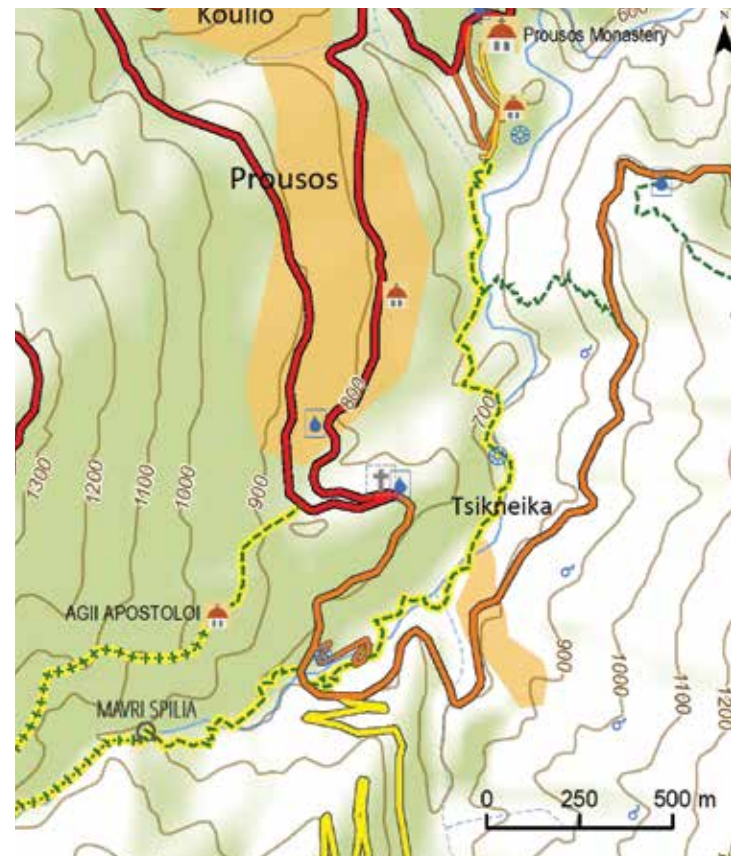


HIKING ROUTE

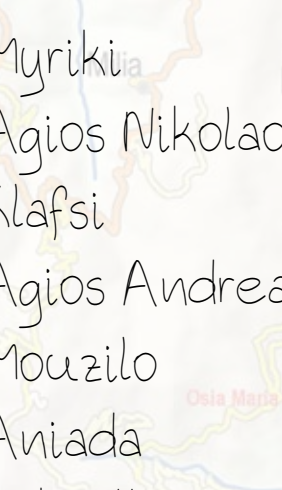
Monastery of Prousos - "Mavri Spilia" (3.5 km, 2 hours)
The path marked in red starts from the parking lot of the Monastery of Prousos and leads through lovely landscapes with plane trees to the water-mill of Passia, crossing the road and passing by a stone fountain. It enters the gorge with the shaped path with wooden bridges and reaches under Mavri Spilia, a refuge for the locals during the Turkish and the German occupation.

HIKING ROUTE

Mavri Spilia - Via Ferrata - Prousos (3 km, 4 hours)
The start of via ferrata is after the third in a row wooden bridge on the path of Mavri Spilia, on our right. It is essential to wear a climbing helmet and non-slip shoes. Crossing via ferrata will take us about 50 minutes. The exit from via ferrata is done with the help of a cable. Then the path leads us to the church of Agios Apostolos and from there back to the road.



on the northern outskirts of Kaliakouda



Kalithea
Myriki
Agios Nikolaos
Klafsi
Agios Andreas
Mouzilo
Aniada
Sykrello





Klafsi, surrounded by fir forest

Route 2 runs at a short distance from Karpenisi to picturesque villages all surrounded by firs.

Agios Nikolaos, a mountain village built between firs and chestnuts, is located very close to the axis of the national road Lamia - Karpenisi. It is the first to welcome visitors entering Evrytania with excellent hospitality infrastructure. The old name of the village was Laspi, a name due to the many running waters and the type of soil.

Kallithea, nestled on the slopes of the Koniskos hill, opposite Karpenisi, has a nice view of the valley of Karpenisiotis. This also suggests the name of the small settlement that was formerly called Biara.

Myriki, on the slopes of the fir-hugged Neraidovouni, was once famous for making traditional costumes. The church of Agia Paraskevi, which dates back to 1816, stands out.

Deviating from the road of Potamia, we will cross Karpenisiotis and visit Klafsi, Mouzilo, Aniada and Syggrello.

Klafsi is located near the lush valley of Karpenisiotis and overlooks the river and Chelidona. In the village there are taverns and a guesthouse. Traces of an old settlement and the church of Agios Leonidis (5th century) have been discovered very close to the settlement, which is the only excavated and visitable monument of the early Christian period in Evrytania.

Aniada, on the outskirts of Kaliakouda, can serve as a base for hiking in Kaliakouda.

Further north, **Syggrello** is also located in a place overgrown with firs. At the top of the village, the chapel of Agia Paraskevi dates back to the mid-19th century.

HIKING ROUTE

Klafsi - Kakouloureika - Agios Leonidis (4 km, 1.5 hours)
A circular path that starts from the village square leads us to the Watermill of Xekarfotos and the arched bridge Magganiari. Then we see the spring of Amblas, the chapel of Agios Nikolaos and finally the Byzantine church of Agios Leonidis before reaching our starting point.



route 3

from the back
to Tymfristos
to Sarantaina

Monument
of the Kokkalia
Battle

Krikelo

Domnista

Stavli

Ambliani





Church of Agios Nikolaos in Krikello

Route 3 runs southeast of Karpenisi, on the slopes of a long ridge called Kokkalia and connects Velouhi with the mountain Oxia or Sarantaina.

Leaving the ridge of Timfristos to the south we will visit the **Monument of the battle of Kokkalia** that takes us back to 279 BC when the united armies of the Aetolians and Evrytanians crushed 40,000 Galatian warriors sent by their leader, Brennus II, for distraction. The name Kokkalia refers to the innumerable bones left behind by the battle.

Built amidst a dense fir forest, **Krikello** is a picturesque settlement with stone houses and beautiful alleys. In the large paved square with the plane trees, the built fountain of 1887 and the exceptional stone-built mansion of Kaltsa - Tsiouni, the stone-built church of Agios Nikolaos stands out for its impressive size and construction of gray hewn stone and many stone carvings. Krikello is famous for its masons, but also for the traditional women's costumes made there. The village has a very good tourist

infrastructure with guesthouses, taverns and shops. In Krikello, in May, there is a mushroom festival. The village is located on the route of the Bike Odyssey Cycling Race, which crosses Pindos, while the 5th stage of the Race is a route around Krikello. Evrytaneios Dromos, a race that starts from the monument of Kokkalia, ends at the village square.

Domnista, the head village of the area, also dates back to the Byzantine era.

In the liberation struggle of 1821, it served as headquarters of the Gioldasai, while here, George Karaiskakis found refuge, persecuted by all, in the summer of 1824. An important part of the history of the village is the declaration of the armed

struggle against the Germans by Aris Velouchiotis, leader of ELAS, in the central square of the village in June 1942. There is a monument that refers to this historic moment. You will get a better picture of the history of the village at the Folklore Museum where photographs, documents and objects are exhibited.

The church of Agios Athanasios with the wood-carved iconostasis is also a remarkable monument.

Go up to the chapel of Prophet Elias to admire the view of the surrounding area.

Do not miss the autumn celebration of Tsipouro in Domnista where a party is set up in the village square.

route 3

If we turn 2 km to the west, before Domnista, we will reach **Stavlos**, at 1250 meters altitude, on the slopes of Sarantaina. The classic plane tree and the built-in fountain adorn the square. In the village there is a folklore museum with an interesting collection of tools of everyday and agricultural life. The church of Agios Charalampos stands out with its carved stones and stone carvings.

Continuing south of Stavlos and after climbing a mountain pass, we enter a large mountain basin that flows towards Evinos. Here, lost in the folds of the relief, the village of **Ambliani** is spread amphitheatrically, with few permanent residents and hundreds of holiday makers in August. The stone church of Agios Nikolaos and few shops are located on the village square.

HIKING ROUTE

Krikello - Arenta - Agios Athanasios - Krikello (55 km, 2.5 hours).

We start from the village square and take the road that passes through the Primary School. We leave the village in a southwesterly direction to the hill that rises above Krikello and ascend to its top. At the descent we pass by the chapel of Agios Athanasios.

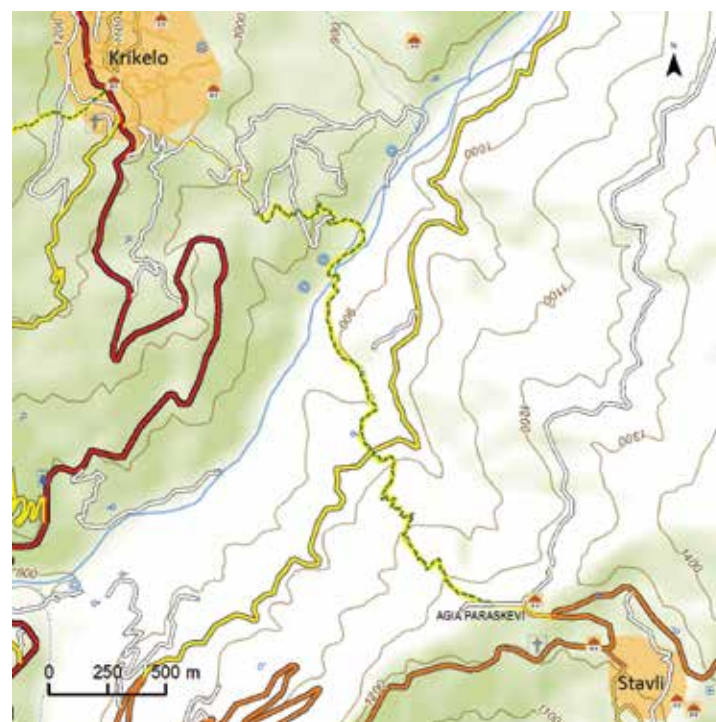


HIKING ROUTE

Stavloi - Krikello (5 km, 2.5 hours) -

Part of the European path E4

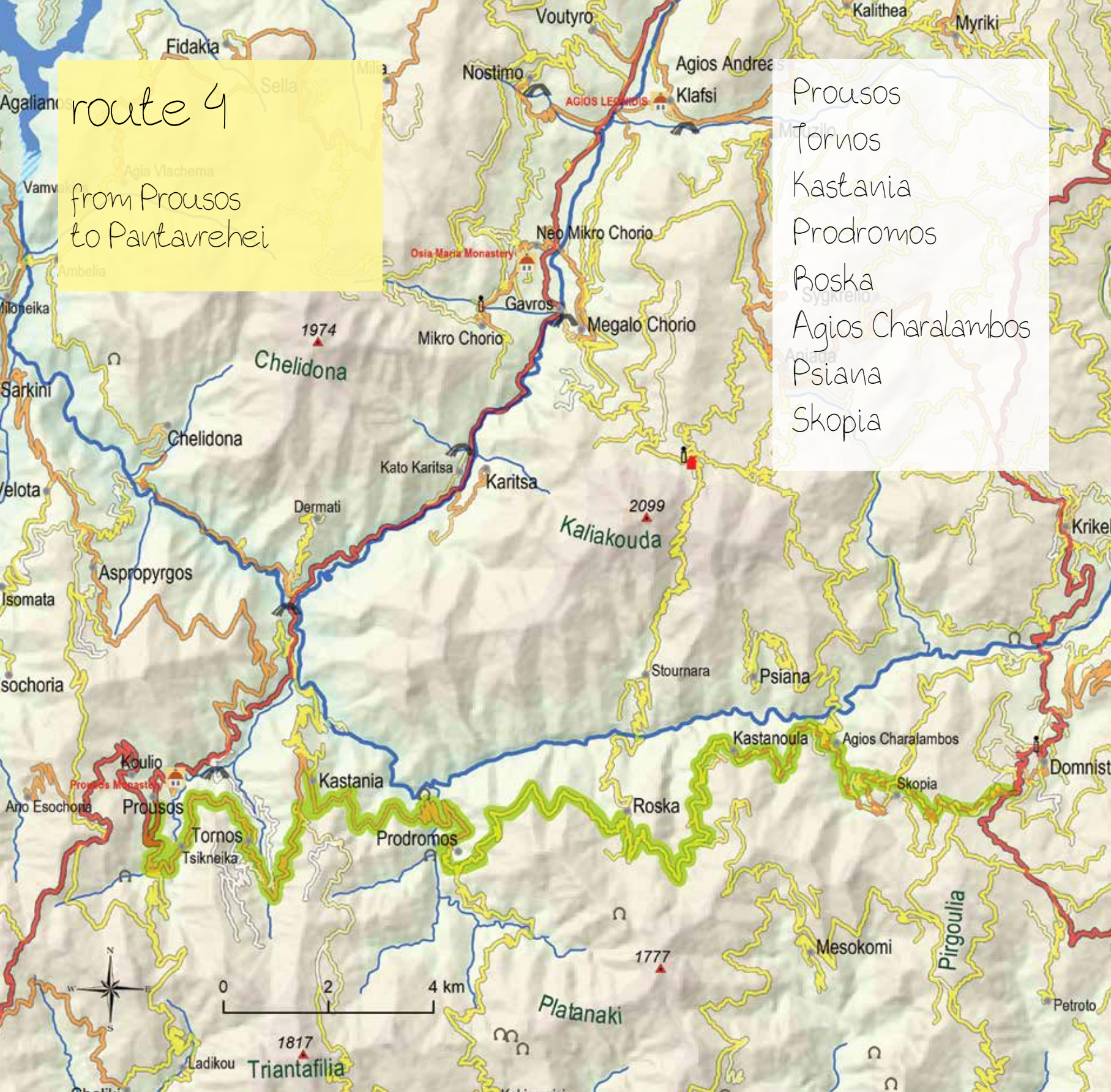
We start from the chapel of Agia Paraskevi, outside Stavloi, and descend to a magical fir forest drowned in moss that in some places forms a thick carpet on the ground. The path is visible for the most part, with the exception of a part after Krikellopotamos where the vegetation has thickened. Using the path and small roads we ascend to Krikello.



route 4

from Prousos
to Pantavrehei

Prousos
Tornos
Kastania
Prodromos
Roska
Agios Charalambos
Psiana
Skopia





Roska is the starting point for a visit to the most impressive natural monument of Evrytania, “Pantavrehei” (means it’s always raining). Here springs gush out from the gorge of Krikellopotamos and create water curtains, between hanging gardens and rocks that look like sculptures. This place inspires a feeling of incessant rain, which is where it got its name.

HIKING ROUTE

Roska - Pantavrehei (40 minutes)

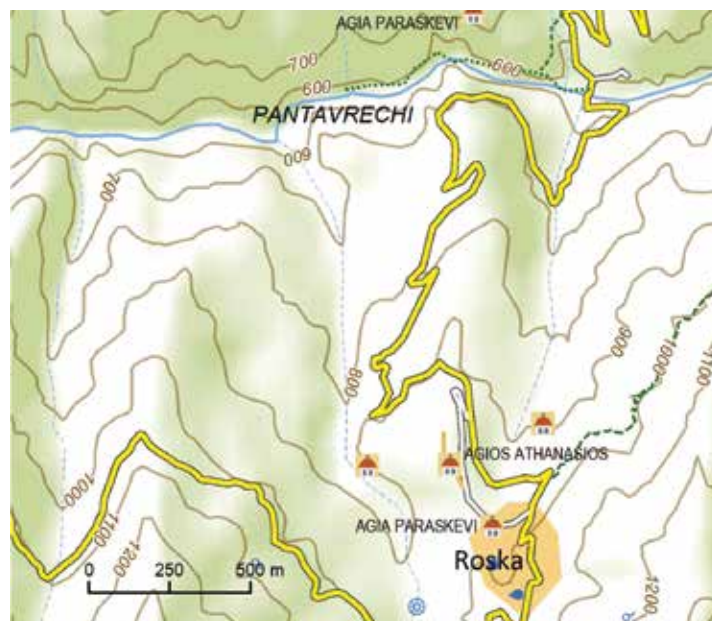
The route starts from the point where the road from Roska to Stour-nara meets Krikellopotamos. Looking in the direction of the river we see an old suspension bridge and the entrance to the gorge. There is no sign for Pantavrehei, but there is no way you can bypass it. The place is marked by its magic.

Route 4 runs south from Kaliakouda to the villages of Krikellopotamos which are perched on steep slopes. The area has some of the most beautiful gorges of Evrytania.

After Prousos, our route turns east to enter the valley of Krikellopotamos. First we meet **Tornos**, a village surrounded by firs, with its stone houses popping up among the vineyards, from which they produced the famous wine of the area. Visitors will have the chance to enjoy nature by following paths.

All routes are marked and on the website of the local Association “Megali Vrysi” you will find detailed descriptions of them. Do not miss the Little Pantavrehei!

After Tornos, we enter an isolated area with a wild and impressive terrain. The villages on our route, Kastania and Prodromos, enjoy a wonderful view of Kaliakouda.



route 5

the tour of Velouhi

Karpenisi

Stenoma

Pavlopoulo

Papadia

Domiani

Agia Triada





Domiani is a beautiful and well-kept village with stone houses, cobbled streets and fountains, characterized as a traditional settlement. Combined with the rich vegetation of firs, chestnuts, walnuts, cherries and plane trees is a real gem of Evrytania. The monastery of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary or **Panagia Domianitissa**, has also been designated a protected monument, as it preserves the architectural elements of the late 18th century and representative works of the hagiographic school of Fournas Evrytania. The monastery had been burned twice: In 1611, because its monks participated in revolutionary movements and in 1770 in the Orlov revolt. Every August 15, the monastery celebrates with a large number of pilgrims pouring in from the surrounding area.

Route 5 surrounds the legendary Velouhi leaning on its rugged, spruce-covered slopes and enjoying wonderful views of the Tavropos valley and the surrounding mountains.

The first settlement on our route, **Stenoma**, is a livestock village on the northwestern slopes of Timfristos, in an area full of firs, oaks, walnuts and plane trees. Near the settlement there is a watermill.

After Stenoma, the next village is **Pavlopoulo**, located in a beautiful mountainous area with many waters, which during the Turkish occupation was a refuge of Greek fighters. In Pavlopoulo we will see the church of Agios Dimitrios, a representative sample of the ecclesiastical architecture of Evrytania, which since 1997 has been designated a historic monument. Above the settlement lies the chapel of Agios Panteleimon overlooking Timfristos, Tavropos and the areas of Frangista and Viniani.

Head village and seat of the former municipality of Ktime-nia, **Agia Triada** is located on the northern slopes of Velouhi. It is the birthplace of Panos Vassilios (1895-1985) historian, writer and activist and of the late MP Chrysostomos Karapiperis (1912-1989). The majestic church of Agia Triada dominates the village from atop. And further above, the church of Prophet Elias of 1790 is what is left of the old monastery that disappeared after 1830, due to lack of monks. A School of Greek Letters (1779) operated in Agia Triada during the Turkish occupation. Archimandrite Joseph from Founa and Vassilis Costopoulos from Rentina were the school principals. Among the students was the later bishop of Litza and Agrafa, Dositheos Panagiotidis (1793-1842). There is a Folklore Museum in the village and the "Foteios Library", which are housed in the Karapiperio Foundation. In mid-November an annual chestnut festival takes place in the area.

route 6

in the vast forests
of Fournia

Agia Triada
Petalona
Chochlia
Vracha
Kliso
Fournia





Route 6 will lead us to the famous forest of Fourná, 40,000 acres with firs, pines and oaks that make up one of the most important forests in Greece, on which the economy of the region was based.

Leaving Agia Triada, we pass by **Petralona** (former Arachovitsa) at an altitude of 900 meters.

Above that, on the fir-covered slopes, **Hochlia** is one of the probable places of ancient Oichalia, which probably then became Hochlia. Among the findings from the area of Gla hill is a statuette of the god Dionysus, of the 2nd century BC, kept in the Archaeological Museum of Athens.

Vraha is a picturesque settlement, at an altitude of 880m, with a centuries-old plane tree in the main square. In an isolated, mountainous area north of the village, in the oak forest, lies the old monastery of the Transfiguration of the Savior, or **Vrahas Monastery**, where the “School of Com-

mon Letters of the Rocks” was housed during the Turkish occupation.

On the way to Fourná, we stumble upon an intersection for **Klitsos**, collective name of the settlements of Platanos, Mouschiades, Mesochori and Koritsa. Koritsa is the biggest one and has traditional stone houses. Here there was a monastery where the relics of evangelist Luke were kept. Today, in the place of the monastery, there is a church of Agios Nikolaos the Younger. The new martyr Agios Kyprianos also comes from Klitsos.

Fourná is built in an open basin between the northern ends of Velouhi and the mountain Voulgara, in a position of strategic importance that has shaped the history of the settlement. The main road to Eastern Thessaly passes through Fourná, via Rentina. The name Fourná dates back to the Late Byzantine years, but traces of an ancient wall and tombs testify to human settlement from antiquity. The settlement we see today was founded during the Turkish occupation and in the pre-revolutionary years was a commercial hub. However, it was also a spiritual center of the area as the monk and painter Dionysios from Fourná founded in 1744, next to the Monastery of Zoodochos Pigi, a school, as well as a workshop of hagiographic art. His work was continued by enlightened teachers of the time. In 1827, the town was set on fire and looted by the Turks. Fourná continued to be a center as an animal fair was organized there. The Holy Church of the Transfiguration of the Savior (Fourná) houses relics of Saints, six icons of the Hagiographer Dionysios from Fourná and many more relics. At the end of July, the traditional pie festival takes place in Fourná.

route 7

in the middle
of Megdova

Viniani
Chryso
Agios Dimitrios
Dafni
Mavrommata
Pavlopoulo
Stenoma
Karpenisi





The bridge of Viniani

This route runs around Tavropos or Megdova and its tributaries. Landmark of the river is the solid bridge of Viniani.

Viniani consists of two settlements, Old and New Viniani. Palia Viniani is a historic settlement built in a naturally panoramic position with running waters and exceptional views. It has two-storey houses with peculiar architecture. There are now very few inhabitants, as after the earthquake that struck the area on February 6, 1966, most of them were transferred to the newest settlement of Nea Viniani.

Viniani was the capital of Free Greece during the National Resistance. The Political Committee for National Liberation, the "Mountain Government", was founded here in March 1944. Today, the school houses the Historical Museum of Viniani, which hosts an exhibition of old photographs, while the busts of the members have been

erected in the courtyard, as well as the monument dedicated to the Government of the Mountain. Every year the National Resistance is celebrated in mid-May. It is worth visiting the stone bridge of Viniani from a dirt road that starts from Nea Viniani. The path that connected Karpenisi with Agrafa passed through this bridge. Now the crossing of the river is done by a Belay type bridge near the Parkio.

At an altitude of about 750 meters and nestled between the fir-covered Kafki and the rock Tourla, Chryso was once one of the largest villages in Evrytania. Apart from its naturally fortified position, **Chryso** has many natural springs, something that favors its lush vegetation. These springs also power the watermill of the village. The village is famous for its 10 churches and 3 monasteries (now destroyed), as well as the old primary school - established by a donation made by Andreas Syggros. Go up to the late Byzantine church of Panagia, whose icons date back to the



The museum of Viniani

16th century and the golden iconostasis to the 18th century. In Chryso, visitors have the opportunity to walk on trails amidst firs and tall shady plane trees on the banks of the two rivers that surround it, Chrysotis and Gavrenitis. At the entrance of the village, in “Souila”, in the gorge of Chrysotis river, nestled in the rock lies the small church of Agios Seraphim at a place his head was kept. In the river that flows below there are two old stone arched bridges: the upper bridge and the lower bridge that leads to the settlement of Mega Horafi. It is worth visiting the old watermill, the seven old stone-built “Vryses” and the “Skepastes Vryses”.

Near the springs of the Gavrenitis river, is the settlement of **Agios Dimitrios**, and the smaller settlements of Makrinia and Gavraina. It was founded in the 19th century, along with the central church of Agios Dimitrios, which dates back to 1842. Seeing today the few scattered houses with vegetable gardens one can hardly imagine that once there was a school here with 80 students.

The settlement of **Daphne** dates back to the Ottoman Empire when it was located about 1 hour from its current location and was called Keresova. However, it was destroyed by the Ottomans and its inhabitants moved to Chryso. It was later built on its current location and named Beza, while in 1951 it was renamed Daphne, perhaps from the laurel plant that adorns the courtyard of the Church of the Transfiguration of the Savior, which is the catholicon of a once large monastery complex dating to the 18th century. An inscription of 1850 mentions Nikolaos Drosinis, from the local family of the ancestors of poet Drosinis. The large square with grills and cafés is full of people during the summer. Follow the dirt road to the old church of Agios Taxiarches in a wonderful environment with an old stone fountain.

The settlement of **Mavromata**, formerly called Elsani or El-siani, is rooted on the eastern slope of Kopsi, and was once on an axis of strategic importance, the ancient road that connected Western Thessaly with Viniani.

HIKING ROUTE

Stenoma - Viniani Stone Bridge (E4) (4 km, 1.5 hours)
We leave the road Karpenisi-Stenoma and follow a dirt road and then a path that descends with a gentle slope, cross a dirt road and end at the stone bridge of Viniani, a single-arched bridge built in the mid-17th century.



route 8

around Chelidona
and Trikeriotis



Stefani
Milia
Sella
Fidakia
Agia Vlacherna
Sarkini
Katavothra
Velota
Esochoria
Aspropyrgos
Prousos



The peaks of Chelidona

Route 8 runs southwest of Karpenisi, between Lake Kremasta and Chelidona

Stefani is a beautiful mountain village at an altitude of 950 m. Its old name is Goliani and it is known for the battle that took place near the settlement, on Livini hill. The hill was named after the boatman who defeated the Ottomans in this position in 1684.

Perched at 1060 meters, **Milia** remains almost uninhabited during the winter, among the mountain peaks. It comes to life during the summer when the people of Milia return, culminating in the festival on July 20th. Ruined watermills and springs are located on the verdant slope around the settlement.

Sella (24 km) is a picturesque village with traditional stone houses built in a privileged location at 1030 m on the green slopes of Chelidona and with a dumbfounding view to Lake Kremasta.

The settlement of **Fidakia** or Fthakia, as the locals call it, has an impressive view to the lake. Fidakia is a traditional settlement of Evrytania with flowery alleys, stone guesthouses and a tavern. The church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, with an old wood-carved iconostasis, dominates in the center of the village. At a short distance from the village, in the location "Kastri", there is a fortress complex that has been excavated, around which traces of habitation can be found, perhaps Oichalia, the capital of the ancient Evrytanians.

The rural settlement of **Agia Vlacherna** near the artificial lake of Kremasta, has been inhabited since the early Byzantine years. It was then called Chrysoupoli, and then Erkista. After 1930, it was renamed Agia Vlacherna, when its inhabitants working in Constantinople returned. Ruins of an ancient castle are found near the settlement. Steni gorge is beautiful and definitely is worth a visit. In the location Paliogonia at 1700 m. in the mountainous landscape of Chelidona, the inhabitants of the area meet every July.

Sarkini is a small settlement at an altitude of 440 m, south of the artificial lake Kremasta. It is a handful of stone houses nestled on the steep slope overlooking Chelidona.

South of Sarkini, we enter the most secretive unit of villages of Evrytania. Many valleys descend from the ridge of Panaitolikos, where each settlement has a satellite settlement, close to summer pastures.

Stavrochori, or old Dovitsino, is located in the first valley, and got its name from the stream that descends from the mountain pass, where the livestock settlement of Kinigos nests. On a hill near Dovitsino there is a beautiful stone church of Agios Nikolaos.

Katavothra, formerly Korikista or Sidedron, is located in the adjacent valley. The current name of the settlement comes from the peak Katavothra (1752 m.) of Mount Panaitolikos located in the south of the village. Connected to Katavothra is Arenda, a settlement of summer residence at an altitude of 1460 meters.

Back to the main paved road, on the way to Prousos, we stumble upon the village of **Velota**, the birthplace of Pavlos Bakogiannis. His house, recently donated by the family to the Municipality, has been turned into a museum and Center for Democracy.

From here a dirt road leads to **Esohoria**, a cluster of houses scattered on terraces besieged by fir trees. The village is brought back to life every summer by the natives who, as in other remote villages of Evrytania, remain faithful to the annual rendezvous with their history, but also the colors, scent and waters of their birthplace.

Further north in the same valley, Ano Esohoria is not connected by road with Esohoria, but with Prousos.

Back to the main paved road that connects Prousos with the lake of Kremasta to visit **Aspropyrgos**, the head village of the Trikeriotis valley. A village with a peculiar history of change of administrative affiliation from Etoloakarnania to Evrytania in the late 19th and early 20th century and two name changes from Andranova, to Fegovrisi and then Aspropyrgos. The village is lively, well taken care of, has many permanent residents and an active cultural associa-



The settlement of Fidakia from above

tion, which with the help of expatriates from America set up an impressive folklore museum with objects of popular culture.

Aspropyrgos is the birthplace of Agios Romanos who martyred in 1694 in Constantinople. This village was also the birthplace of Pelagios, the abbot of the Prousos Monastery, who renovated the monastery's catholikon in 1752. In the village there is an old church built in 1771 and in the location "Polemos" there are remains of an old settlement. The landscape has a wild natural beauty.



Church in Aspropyrgos

from Karpenisi
to Episkopi bridge



Karpēnisi
Kalesmeno
Paparousi
Marathia
Anatoliki Frangkista
Dytiki Frangkista
Agios Georgios
Paliochori
Neochori
Episkopi



The bridge of Episkopi on the lake of Kremasta

Route 9 follows the National Road 38 that connects Lamia with Agrinio, through Karpenisi and leaves Evrytania on the bridge of Episkopi.

From Karpenisi we ascend to Bagasaki, a mountain pass between Velouhi and Chelidona.

The first village we see is **Kalesmeno**, which despite its high altitude (1300 m.) is characterized by a mild climate. It consists of many settlements: Monastiraki, Ano Kalesmeno, Kalesmeno, Mesabelia, Roidoula and Aroniada. Agios Ioannis Prodromos is the main attraction of the village. When you visit, try all berry products, such as liqueur, drink and dessert.

Aroniada is of archaeological interest, hosting the remains of an ancient settlement, a mosaic floor of the Byzantine era, burial monuments and wall foundations. You can find more information on hiking and outdoor activities at the tourist booth. Near the iron bridge of Megdova there are rafting facilities.

East of Tavropos, **Paparousi** is located at a 650 meter altitude in a landscape with firs and olive trees. It consists of 2 settlements, the Eastern and Western Paparousi, while the cathedral of Agia Paraskevi of 1885 is definitely worth visiting.

As you continue westwards, you will see **Marathia**, which consists of 4 settlements. Marathias has now few inhabitants, but the traditional stone houses, works of local craftsmen, reveal the old prosperity of the settlement, when locals returned from Constantinople.

The fort-like architectural elements are related to the parameters that led to the establishment of the settlement during the Turkish occupation, when residents

from the surrounding areas wanted to be protected from looting and other raids.

West Frangista, formerly known as Mikri Frangista, owes its name to the Frangista family that first settled in the area during the Turkish occupation. It is located in a green landscape with deciduous fruit trees and conifers.

It is located in a central position in Evrytania and can act as a base for a radial exploration of the prefecture. So take advantage of the location of the settlement and its organized tourist infrastructure. You will find, in addition to basic accommodation, many dining options, as well as agritourism units, rafting and hiking guides.

In addition to the picturesque square with monuments and cafés, visit the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary and the 1898 fountain of Platanos.

Only 4 km from the West Frangista, the **Eastern Frangista**, former Great Frangista, is considered one of the most beautiful villages of Evrytania, with running waters, watermill, forest, and lush gardens. It is probable that it was founded in the 14th century and belongs to the so-called "City Villages" as its inhabitants worked and got rich in

Constantinople. It is the birthplace of many personalities, such as the MP and Prime Minister, Georgios Kafantaris, who is honored every 2 years in the “Kafantaria” fest, the lyric poet Dimitris Papadopoulos, known as “Timfristos” and Giannakis Frangistas, a comrade-in-arms of Katsantonis. The village’s cathedral, the Twelve Apostles, was bombarded during World War II and rebuilt on the same site. South of the village, there is the fountain of “Kosmas”, whose name is probably associated with the Missionary Kosmas of Aetolia, who passed through there.

In the area there are remains of two old Holy Monasteries dating back to the 17th century. In a wonderful location with plane trees and a spring, **Agia Sotira** (Metamorfosi Sotiros) with interesting frescoes and **Panagia** (Assumption of the Virgin Mary) located near the village cemetery. Traditionally, one of the largest bazaars in all of Roumeli was taking place in Agia Sotira. All the Evrytanians and the nomadic cattle breeders of Agraфа went there to sell their agricultural products, but also to party and talk shop. The bazaar has revived, albeit in a different form, and takes place every year on August 17, 18 and 19, attracting a large number of pilgrims and merchants.

If you are looking for the ideal place to see Lake Kremasta from above and admire its lacy shore, it is worth making a detour to Paleochori.

Paleochori consists of 2 smaller settlements, Agios Georgios and Neochori. The view is even more impressive from the chapel of Prophet Elias. There is another old watermill in the area.

Episkopi is a new settlement that has given its name to the impressive bridge of Episkopi. With the creation of the lake in 1965-1967, the waters reached as far as Episkopi and the old plain and riverside village sank in the waters of the lake. The name Episkopi is due to the church of Panagia Episkopi - one of the most important Byzantine monuments in Greece - which was located in the old village. This historic church was during the Byzantine years the



Metamorfosi Sotiros (Agia Sotira)

seat of the Diocese of Litza and Agraфа and testifies to the importance of the village at that time. It is estimated that it was established during the Iconoclasm (8th - 9th century). When it was decided to build the artificial lake, excavations were carried out in the temple and three layers of frescoes were discovered, of the 8th-9th century, the 11th and the 13th. The frescoes were removed and transferred to the Byzantine and Christian Museum of Athens, where they remain until today.

The historic temple was lost under the waters of the lake. Later, the new church was built, which is located in the current village and celebrates on the 15th of August, with a large number of people flocking to Episkopi.

route 10

around the Lake
of Kremasta

Kerasochori
Krentis
Tsouka
Tripotamos
Tatarna
Monastery
Velaora
Chrisova
Sivista
Paleokatouna
Sychniko





Tripotamos and monastery of Tatarna

This route moves westwards to the artificial lake of Kremasta that was created in 1965, after the construction of the dam of Kremasta, from the waters of the rivers Acheloos, Agrafiotis, Tavropos and Trikeriotis. It is the largest artificial lake in Greece with an area of 80 square kilometers.

Kerasohori -former Kerasovo- is located in a key geographical position and is the first settlement of our route. This mountain village at an altitude of 1140 m. is famous for its healthy climate. Northwest of the settlement is the Karaouli rock, which in the earlier years on the night of the Resurrection was turned into "Fano" as they set fire to piles of wood. The central church of the village of the 18th century is worth a visit. In the village there are many old mansions although some are now abandoned. Traces of an ancient settlement and a wall have been found at Kas-traki near the settlement. The fighter Kostas Vellis raised the banner of the revolution, in May 1821, on the Kerasovitis river. In mid-May, the municipality of Agrafa organizes

festive events in Kerasohori for the proclamation of the 1821 revolution by Chief Kostas Vellis. During the period of the National Resistance, the village served as the headquarters of ELAS, led by Sarandos and Siantos. Political prisoners were deported to Kerasohori during the junta period.

The old settlement of **Krenti** was abandoned due to the devastating earthquake of 1966, leading to the founding of the new settlement we see today. Nea Krenti is a settlement located at a central point, has tourist infrastructure and is the entrance to Agrafa (see route 10).

Tsoukka is a lowland village of Evrytania at an altitude of 440m. Higher, near the settlement of Ano Tsoukka, at the top of Kastro hill, there is an ancient fortress.

Tripotamos, on the western shores of the artificial lake Kremasta at an altitude of 550m., was until 1928 known as Tatarna. Near Tripotamos lies the historic **monastery of Tatarna** that has offered much to Orthodoxy, and the struggle for national independence. It was a refuge for famous fighters, such as the local hero Katsantonis, Diplas and Karaiskakis. The history of the Monastery of Tatarna begins at the beginning of the 12th century with the discovery of the Holy Icon. The first monastery was built on the site where the icon was found, but in the 14th century the monastery was destroyed. However, in 1555 two monks, Methodius and David, rebuilt the Holy Monastery. The treaty of Tsamasio, which had been signed a few years before (1546), and gave a relative independence to Armatoliki of Agrafa, also helped in this. A year later, in 1556, the Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysios proclaimed the monastery Stavropegian and patriarchal with a saved until today sigillion. In this sigillion the monastery is called Pa-

nagia Faneromeni. Katsantonis donated to the monastery a silver candelabra that is kept in the great heirloom of the Monastery. Unfortunately in 1963, due to a large landslide in the area, the monastery suffered great damage and was later rebuilt in a nearby area where it still dominates today, receiving pilgrims from all over Greece.

The new bridge of Tatarna is located on one of the roads that connect Evrytania with Etoloakarnania. Nearby lies the historic **bridge of Tatarna**, where in 1821 the first battle of the Greeks of Roumeli against the Turks took place. The bridge was single-aisled and probably built in the 17th century. At the beginning of the 17th century, the stone single-arched **bridge of Manolis** was built, and for more than 400 years connected the two banks of Agrafiotis. After the creation of the lake, sometimes it sinks and sometimes it emerges due to its location.

Chrysova is a settlement nestled in green landscapes and against the backdrop of Lake Kremasta. The church of Saints Constantine and Helen is located in the center of the village. The cliff “Hole of Tatarna” is located near the settlement.

Sivista was also covered by the artificial lake of Kremasta. The settlement was re-established in Pratoivouni, while most of the inhabitants moved to other areas. The name Sivista has been recorded since the 10th century. Near the settlement, where once there was a hill, an islet named Ai Nikolas was created in the lake of Kremasta, where there are ruins of the castle of Karolos Tokkos of the 15th century. Tombs and other evidence suggest that the castle is founded on an ancient fortress.

Velaora spreads in an area with low vegetation and successive hills. The family of the poet Aristotle Valaoritis came from Velaora before moving to Lefkada. It is worth seeing the panoramic view to Lake Kremasta from the chapel of Prophet Elias and the bridge of Velaora, which is built on Granitsiotis river.

North of Velaora is the **Gorge of Bouzounikos**, which is linked to many beliefs and superstitions of the area and with a wonderful view of Granitsiotis river.

Paleokatouna is a relatively new settlement that was founded after the earthquake of 1966 and the disasters in the old village of Botsiani. The settlements of Eloula,



Metochi, Keramidario, Tsapes, Ampares and Lefka also belong to Paleokatouna. Northwest of Paleokatouna there is a forested hill with the remains of an ancient fortress, at the foot of which there is a spring. Maybe there was an ancient settlement here. Further to the west, in a picturesque location with centuries-old oaks and elms, we see a restored church of the old monastery of Agios Ioannis.

Our route ends in Kefalovryso, **old Sychniko**, a settlement of Agrafa that belongs to the community of Monastiraki, with which it is connected by an inaccessible mountain road, suitable for 4x4s. Near the village is the “Cave of Katsantonis”, where the Turkals caught Kleftis who was “seriously ill and without weapons” in 1809 and led him at the end of August in Ioannina, where he died a martyr.

route 11

to Aperantios
and Acheloos

Krentis
Voulpi
Limeri
Granitsa
Lithochori
Raptopoulo
Prasia
Kedra
Lepania
Topoliana
Neo Argyri





The bridge of Templa in Acheloos

This route runs between western Agrafa and Acheloos, in the territories of the old municipalities of Aspropotamos and Aperantia.

After Krentis and Paleokatouna (see Route 10) we find **Voulpi** already mentioned in documents of 1790. It was then known as Kista. During the Turkish occupation, it suffered severe damage from the Ottomans, as fighters found refuge in the village and had made it their base. Voulpi was the birthplace of the politician and minister under Trikoupis, Dimitrios Voulpiotis. Just outside the settlement, in the location “Agios Thomas”, there are remains of the ancient wall and a settlement that may be identified with the ancient capital of Agrafia.

Limeri or, with its older name, Koniavi is a scenic village at an altitude of 780 meters. Its name is connected with the life and activity of Katsantonis, as near the village in the place “Fourka” is the cave-shelter of the fighter of the pre-revolution period. Limeri has 7 churches, the most famous of which is Agia Varvara.

Granitsa is a mountainous settlement at an altitude of 850 meters in a green landscape, next to the banks of Granitsiotis river. The stone houses and the fountains compose the traditional physiognomy of the settlement. Once the village was so big that it had 17 churches, today only 9 survive. The folklore museum of Granitsa has 3 rooms, the first of which houses exhibits-souvenirs and objects of folk art, while the next two have books and personal items of the scholars of Granitsa, Zacharias Papantoniou and Stefanos Granitsas. On the hill called Aetofolia there are remains of a pre-Christian fortress. In the village every year, in November, there is a tsipouro festival. Granitsa includes many settlements, including

Ano Potamia where there is a unique location “Platanias”, something like “property of the plane trees”. Here each plane tree corresponds to a family. A particularly good location for the festival of the 15th of August, when the locals meet in the church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. Other settlements are Kato Potamia, Armabela and Magganaria.

Lithochori, that was once called Beltsista, is built at an altitude of 910 meters. It includes the settlements of Stavros, Platanos and Panagia. The settlement of Stavros owes its name to the big cross located at the entrance of the village, reminding of Kosmas of Aetolia passing through. In the settlement of Panagia there is the church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, as well as the old chapel of Agios Nikolaos.

Raptopoulo, the head village and commercial hub of the region, between the peaks of Fteri, Tsouka and Kri, consists of many small settlements, mainly livestock. In Vlacheika there is still the old watermill of Vlachos while further north in the stream of Prasia or Potisti there are abandoned watermills. Outside the village, visit Krevatia, the alpine meadows where the herds graze in summer. In mid-August, there is a festival in Raptopoulos, dedicated to the revival of the traditional way of life. From Raptopoulos there are many hiking routes to the surrounding peaks.

Prasia got its name from the stepped terraces, which shape the landscape and allow cultivation on the downhill slopes around the settlement. Prasia consists of many settlements, Fousiana, Vasilesi, Kyparissi, Prodomos and Metaxades. The name Metaxades is related to the cultivation of silk. There are interesting religious monuments of the 17th century in Metaxades, such as the church of the Nativity of Christ, the church of Agios Nikolaos and the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The central settlement is dominated by a centuries-old cypress tree of Kosmas of Aetolia, 35 meters high, with a perimeter of 7 meters, which is considered a natural monument and today is protected. It also has historical and religious significance for Greece, since Kosmas of Aetolia prophesied about the cypress that "if it dries from the top, Greece will be liberated, if it dries from its root, Greece will not be liberated". Even today, its dried top stands out. Near the settlement of Vasilesi, traces of an ancient settlement were found, along with findings that may be related to the capital of the ancient Agraia. Near Vasilesi there are two 17th century chapels, Agios Athanasios and Agios Dimitrios.

Kedra, formerly Horigovo, is located at an altitude of 700 meters, below impressive rock formations. Near Kedra lies the gorge of Parga with plane tree forests. The village is famous for its wine and tsipouro, as well as for the traditional dance, "Mazochtos" or "Kleisto".

Lepiana is built on the slopes of Mount Tsouka, at 700 meters, amidst fir and chestnut trees and includes the settlements of Agios Vlasios, Varka, Selista, Piresi and Harvala. The church of Agioi Anargyroi in the center of the village was believed to have housed a miraculous icon of the Saints in whose honor a large festival takes place on November 1st. To the south of the settlement there is an ancient settlement, a castle and an ancient cemetery.

The stone bridge of Templa, on the Acheloos river, was built in 1915 by Italian engineers. It facilitated the villages of the area, as it allowed the communication between the villages of Valtos and those of Evrytania. Its name comes from the previous bridge which was wooden. Near the bridge, there is the chapel of Agios Dimitrios, an old part of the monastery of the same name of the 17th century, which in 1823 was set on fire by the pasha of Skondra.

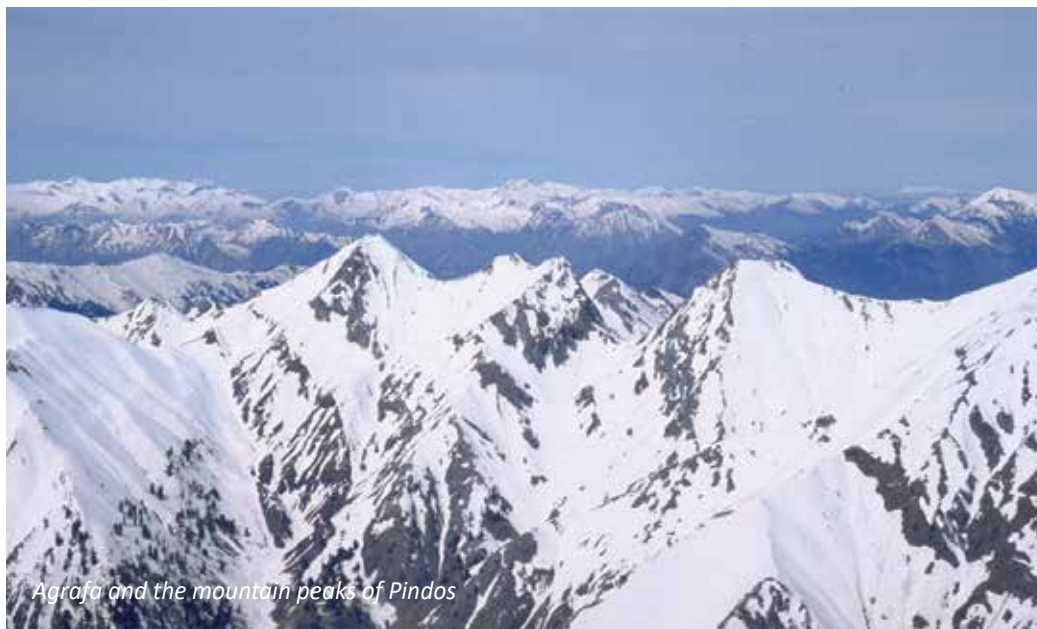
Topoliana is built at an altitude of 480 meters and includes the settlements of Kastraki, Agios Georgios, Paraplati and Virnikos. Near the hill of Agia Paraskevi there are traces of an ancient fortress. Similar traces of a fort exist near the settlement of Kastraki at the junction of Acheloos with Granitsiotis.

Neo Argyri is the last village on the northwestern border of Evrytania. It is built on the east bank of Acheloos, at an altitude of 450 meters. It was established at the end of the 18th century by inhabitants coming from Argyri in Argitheia, who originally spent their winters here. Near the settlement of Dafnoula or Aravia, there are remains of an ancient fortress.

route 12
in the famous Agrafa

Krenti
Monastiraki
Marathos
Agrafa
Epiniana
Tridendro
Vragiana
Trovato





Agrafa and the mountain peaks of Pindos

Route 12 will bring us to the famous Agrafa, a backdrop of airy ridges and deep ravines, with small settlements scattered in the inhospitable relief. A place where people survived thanks to the endurance of the goat, the strength of the donkeys and the courage of their souls.

Roads entered the Agrafiotis valley after 1985 and the road network remains largely dirt. The entrance is from a closed turn of the road shortly after the settlement of Krenti.

The road to **Marathos**, former Myrissi, Katsantonis' birthplace, deviates on the Varvariada bridge. The village with the small houses with the tiled roofs has Taxiartchis as its patron, a church built in 1591 with frescoes. In mid-June every year the "Katsantonia" are celebrated here. In the surrounding area there is a large waterfall called Souda (near the deserted settlement of Paliochori).

Back in the valley of Agrafiotis and a few kilometers to the north, a narrow and winding paved road leads to the beautiful **Monastiraki**, where there are several important churches, the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Agios Georgios in Kastro, Agios Dimitrios and Prophet Elias. A reference point for Monastiraki is the hero Katsantonis. In his honor there is a representation of his arrest by the Turks in the cave of the same name, taking place in the first ten days of August (see Route 10, Sychniko). At the beginning of the road to Sychniko there are ruins of an old watermill, powered by the waters of the torrent, while at a short distance from the village, in the Monastirakioti stream, there is an old stone High Bridge. Near the junction of the Fteri stream with Agrafiotis there is the "Agrafiotis Hole", an underwater gallery with stalactites in the riverbed, 30 m long.

Higher in the valley of Agrafiotis, the road splits. The eastern road ascends to the village of **Agrafa**, the old seat of the Municipality of Agrafa, built on a plateau below the Koukourountzo peak. Agrafa includes the settlements of Kamaria, Niala, Saika, Paramerita, Gavrolisiada, Hontaika, Blo, Varsoi and Mikra. Kamaria and Niala are inhabited in the summer by Sarakatsani cattle breeders, while some others are uninhabited. In the center of the village there is a large paved square with centuries-old plane trees and fountains. The churches of Agios Dimitrios (built in 1900), who is also the patron saint of the village, Agios Georgios of 1610 and the church of Panagia of 1600, at a height of 980 meters, in the village watchtower, are all worth a visit. Agrafa was burned in 1942 by the Italians and the only surviving building is the old Town Hall.

route 12

Following the road to Epiniana, there is a monastery atop the hill that stands out from afar with its yellow dome. It is the **monastery of Panagia Stana**, built in the mid-17th century. Inside the church there is a small, but magnificent wood-carved iconostasis. The icons of both the iconostasis and those of the church are works of local hagiographers of the Byzantine School of Agrafa. The church celebrates on September 7 and 8.

Epiniana (or Pigkiana in the local dialect) is a village of cattle breeders, built at an altitude of 1,050 meters on the slopes of Fteri of Western Agrafa. The village has a guest-house and restaurants. The church of Agios Georgios dominates in the center. Epiniana includes the three smallest settlements, Fteri, Anifora and Asprorema.

Back to Agrafiotis, in the direction of Vraggiana, we pass under **Tridentro** (former Velisdoni), also a village of cattle breeders and the birthplace of Nikos Velisdonitis, a student of Eugenios Giannoulis, who studied medicine in Italy and was the Sultan's doctor in the 17th century.

Further north, the road splits again and leads to the right to **Braggiana**, also known as Megala Braggiana. The history of the village with the "Hellenic Museum", the school of 3,000 students, where Eugenios Giannoulis of Aetolia and

HIKING ROUTE

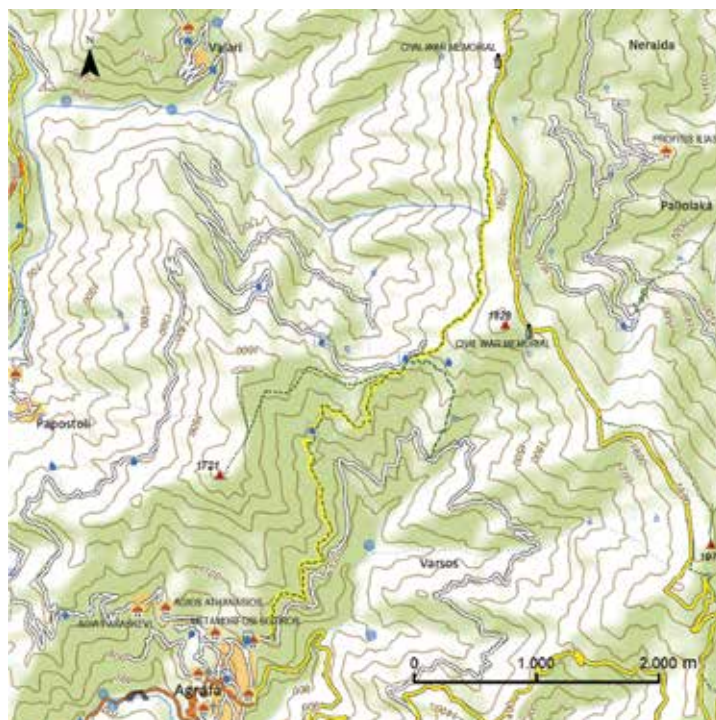
Agrafa - Niala, (7 km, 3 hours)

The route starts from the village of Agrafa. We go up on a dirt road and very soon we see a sign to Agios Nikolaos. Moving on a well-preserved path in a fir forest up to the fountain and then a dirt road, and from there we walk in a bare landscape, with amazing views. The trail is still clear, but caution is required at some points that pass over exposed swamps. We end up on the plateau of Niala, where we see a monument of the civil war.



and Anastasios Gordios taught. Two ecumenical patriarchs and twenty bishops graduated from this school. In the settlements of Braggiana there are several important churches, such as Agia Paraskevi dated back to 1648.

The last village of Agrafa is **Trovato** and is built in a more fertile and mild place. Mountain Delidimi, which is 2163 meters high, is the natural border between Thessalian and Evrytanian Agrafa. In the summer it hosts nomad breeders.



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