

Pelion Guided Walking Holiday

Tour Style: European Centre Based
Destinations: Greece & Mediterranean
Trip code: POLCL
2 & 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The ancient stone paths of the Pelion provide a fantastic network of walking between its untouched traditional villages. This relatively unknown corner of Greece is the perfect place to get away from it all and sample their relaxed way of life. Our walks enjoy the region's diversity including its many beaches, cypress groves and green hills with the dramatic backdrops of Mount Pelion, Volos and the islands of the Pagasetic. The countryside is a delight to walk through, with olive orchards and the stone Kalderimi paths, which are old medieval paths that were built by the local population in lieu of non-payment of taxes. Most of our walks offer lovely views down to the Aegean Sea and Pagasetic Gulf. Across the peninsula there is a laid back way of life, you can enjoy this in the local Tavernas. The land of the centaurs, Pelion was home to the famous centaur Chiron, who was the mentor of Jason, and it is believed he lived along with many centaurs in the foothills of Mount Pelion to the north of the peninsula. The pretty village of Horto sits in a stunning location with the beach right on its doorstep and enjoying views of the Pagasetic Gulf. Nearby Argalasti is the main town in the area, and has a local market during the week.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- A full programme of guided walks with 2 options every walking day
- All transport to and from walks

- The services of experienced HF Holidays leaders
- 'With flight' holidays include return flights from the UK and hotel transfers
- 7 nights accommodation in en-suite rooms
- Half Board – buffet breakfast and 3-course evening meal

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- The Pelion Peninsula's charming, untouched villages, each with their welcoming tavernas
- Enjoy magical views across the calm waters of the Pagasetic Gulf dotted with pretty islands
- Discover an area brimming with ancient Greek mythology
- Stepping back in time on the area's kalderimi or stone paths – once the main arteries between villages under Ottoman rule

TRIP SUITABILITY

This is a level 2 and level 3 graded Activity, Easier walks: 5 to 8 miles (8 to 13km) on good paths, with some rocky sections. Up to 1,300 feet (390m) of ascent in a day. Harder walks: 7 to 11 miles (11 to 17½km) on good paths, with some rocky sections. Up to 1,900 feet (570m) of ascent in a day.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Welcome to Leda Village Resort. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2: Pirates, Paths And The Pagasetic Gulf

The village of Milina lies on the coast to the south of Horto. Both of our walks start and finish here.

Option 1 - Tracks From Milina

Distance: 5½ miles (9km)

Total ascent: 1,200 feet (360m)

In summary: Our day begins in the neighbouring village of Milina. We will have time to explore later in the day when we return. The route soon heads inland to the shady hamlet of Piges before a meandering ascent to the platia of Lafkos and its selection of tavernas and village shops for lunch. We descend back to Milina on the shore of the Pagasetic Gulf via the kalderimi.

Highlight: Explore the village of Milina on the Pagasetic Gulf with the opportunity to swim in the warm sea.

Option 2 - Milina Circuit

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Total ascent: 1,500 feet (450m)

In summary: The walk initially follows that of the easier group to search for refreshments in Lafkos we continue on one of its original access kalderimi, passing a forgotten spring that runs throughout the year before gaining a ridge for the descent to Milina through extensive olive groves allowing for far reaching views across the gulf.

Highlight: Lafkos is an interesting town, with several tavernas.

Day 3: The Western Foothills Of Mt Pelion

These walks give chance to enjoy the lower foothills of Mt Pelion, while still having distant sea views. It is not by chance that the villages have developed here. We follow the route of the narrow gauge Pelion Train, pedestrian class.

Option 1 - Trains And Tracks

Distance: 6 miles (9½km)

Total ascent: 1,300 feet (390m)

In summary: After taking time to explore the village of Vizitsa, dating from the 16th Century with its traditional architecture, we descend on kalderimi passing through a variety of land uses with views of the delta region below. On reaching the railway track we follow its route as it climbs gradually to the terminus at Milies, before regaining a shaded kalderimi for the final ascent back to Vizitsa.

Highlight: Views out to the shimmering sea.

Option 2 - Vizitsa Circular

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Total ascent: 1,800 feet (540m)

In summary: We leave Vizitsa below the platia via the spring on a recently recovered kalderimi that was the original route to the western village of Pinakates. The south east spur descent allows for distant views before we find the route of the Pelion Train to join the route back to Vizitsa.

Highlight: Walk the traditional kalderimi.

Day 4: The Trikeri Peninsula

At the south western tip of the peninsula, lies Trikeri. It is remarkably undeveloped outside of the single village perched on the high point. Both walks will meet for lunch in one of the Tavernas to enjoying outstanding views. After lunch a choice of a longer or shorter descent to the fishing village of Agia Kyriaki is offered.

Option 1 - Trikeri Peninsula

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Total ascent: 1,100 feet (330m)

In summary: Initially, our walk takes us to Kottas, situated on Trikeri Bay. Home to a number of small fishing boats, often seen later in the day casting their nets inshore. We leave by the ancient route to Trikeri, perhaps having to share it with the odd tortoise. Arriving at Trikeri, there is time to wander the myriad of small passageways. After lunch we descend to the southern village of Agia Kyriaki along a delightful coastal path and finish on one of the most scenic waterfronts of the week.

Highlight: Agia Kyriaki was the 2nd most important port in Greece and our route passes a surprisingly large shipyard with a fascinating array of boats undergoing repairs.

Option 2 - A Route Through Trikeri

Distance: 9 miles (14½km)

Total ascent: 1,500 feet (450m)

In summary: From the north a coastal track offers views of the little island of Palia Trikeri, home to the Monastery of Panagia before following a little used, shady path that edges up the side of a deep cut gorge offering a sense of isolation. Soon to emerge to 360° views as we head to Trikeri for lunch. The afternoon shorter, but steeper route takes on the kalderimi to Agia Kyriaki zig-zagging its way down the southern slope direct to the fishing village.

Highlight: Choose to have lunch in a traditional taverna in Trikeri village.

Day 5: Free Day

Each week there is a free day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently or visit local places of interest. The more popular options for your free day include:

Volos: The nearest city to Horto, Volos is the capital of the region, and has a lot of local interest from culture to history.

Horto: Visit the local village of Horto, or just relax around the hotel, with a range of facilities to enjoy and the Pagasetic Gulf, tempting for a swim.

Day 6: Ancient Paths And Hidden Beaches From Argalasti

Argalasti was a former municipality. It remains the hub of the area while somewhat sleepy during the week, but becomes lively during the weekly market. After enjoying the sights and sounds of the market bustle the walks take key kalderimi to the coast to explore the picture postcard bays.

Option 1 - Around Argalasti

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 1,300 feet (390m)

In summary: Leaving on a kalderimi, heading west towards the coastal hamlet of Kalamos, which is popular with visitors in high season and is almost deserted as we walk along the shore. We can enjoy the isolation of olive groves and sea views visiting a number of hidden beaches. There may be an opportunity for a swim during lunch, before heading inland through citrus groves via Pauo Monastery (now a conference centre) to the calm of Argalasti now the market has finished.

Highlight: Beautiful beaches and amazing coastal views.

Option 2 - Argalasti Loop

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Total ascent: 1,700 feet (510m)

In summary: Leaving Argolasti via the north westerly Kalderimi to Lefokastro. The descent offers a rich mix of landscapes and vegetation to the Rodias packhorse bridge before continuing to the coast. The coastal path undulates its way, offering the chance to paddle on deserted beaches. The shady afternoon ascent is also enjoyed by the easier party earlier in the day, to the now quiet platia of Argalasti.

Highlight: This peaceful walk on stone kalderimi offers superb views.

Day 7: In The Footsteps Of The Argonauts

Today we walk to Platanias, situated on the site of Afetes where the Argonauts stopped to resupply on their journey to Colhis. Here, we have the chance to swim from the nearby sandy Mikro beach. It is a lovely spot to reflect on the week.

Option 1 - Promyri To Platanias

Distance: 6 miles (9½km)

Total ascent: 300 feet (90m)

In summary: Our easier walk starts at the inland hillside village of Promiri, with a chance to enjoy views of Skiathos Island. This lovely route meanders along kalderimi linking Promiri to the coastal village of Platanias. This particular kalderimi was built to connect the two villages for the harbour at platanias to be easily reached.

Highlight: Enjoy a swim in the sea at the end of this walk.

Option 2 - Lyri To Platanias

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 1,300 feet (390m)

In summary: Starting at the most easterly point of the week at Lyri, an old inland settlement with close access to the sea. With views to Skiathos and further afield we follow a track leading to Mt Mavro (422m). Skirting the peak we join the shaded kalderimi from Promiri to Plantanias and an opportunity to extend on the coastal path to Mikro beach (1 mile return).

Highlight: Extend your walk to Mikro beach for stunning views.

Day 8: Departure Day

We hope to see you again soon.

ACCOMMODATION

Leda Village Resort - Pelion

The Leda Village Resort sits on the edge of the Pagasetic Gulf on the outskirts of the pretty village of Horto. All the rooms boast magnificent sea views and the resort offers a large swimming pool, tennis courts, mini golf, gym and a private beach. The restaurant is perched just above the beach allowing guests to enjoy freshly cooked Mediterranean meals whilst gazing out over the ocean. The beach bar and pool bar provide comfortable seating for relaxing with a drink in the evenings.

Accommodation Info

Rooms

The bedrooms are housed in small buildings interlinked by well-lit paths with flowers, shrubs and olive trees. The rooms are large with white painted furniture which offsets the traditional Greek architecture. As well as the double and twin beds, there are some day beds to relax on with a good book or have a snooze before dinner. The rooms are all en-suite and have some kitchen facilities that include a sink, microwave and electric hob, fridge and tea/coffee making facilities. There is air conditioning and television. All rooms have a sea view.

Facilities

As a guest, you can enjoy:

- an outdoor swimming pool
- private beach
- bar and outdoors seating area
- a game of tennis or a round of mini-golf.

Food & Drink

Your holiday is on a half-board basis with breakfast and evening meal. The resort produces a range of Mediterranean style dishes for dinner each night with a minimum of three options and all dietary requirements are catered for.

Your Evenings

The friendly atmosphere of our Guided Walking holidays continues into the evening.

Enjoy a glass of wine or beer whilst listening to your leaders outlining the next day's walks. Or just relax in the hotel bar or on the terrace outside chatting with your fellow guests watching the sunset.

TRAVEL DETAILS

The Hassle Free Option

Book your holiday 'with flight' and choose between Gatwick and Manchester flights to Thessaloniki airport.

If you choose this option we automatically include return transfers between the airport and the hotel.

The coach transfer takes approx 4 hours 30 minutes to the Leda Village Resort.

The Flexible Travel Option

Alternatively, tailor your journey to suit you by booking your holiday 'without flight' allowing you the freedom to book your own flights from your local airport.

If you choose this option, transfers are not included in the price. We recommend independent travellers meet our **HF Holidays' transfer coach** from Thessaloniki airport. This is timed to meet the HF Holidays' flights* (provisional flight times can be found on the dates and prices tab or you can call us on 020 8732 1220 for more information). Cost per single journey is £42.50

Transfers must be pre-booked. Please call 020 8732 1220 for more details

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

What To Bring

Essential Equipment

To enjoy walking/hiking comfortably and safely, footwear, clothing and equipment needs to be suitable for the conditions. Safety and comfort are our priorities, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities.

- Footwear with a good grip on the sole (e.g. Vibram sole) is the key to avoiding accidents.
- Walking/hiking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended (ideally worn in), and specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed, are better than a single layer (include spares).
- Fabrics (lightweight and fast drying) designed for the outdoors are recommended.
- Waterproof jacket and waterproof over trousers.
- Warm hat and gloves.
- Denim jeans and capes are not suitable on any walks.
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner.
- Thermos flask for hot drink.
- Water bottle (at least 2 litre).
- Spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar.
- Small torch.
- First aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed).
- Sun hat and sunglasses
- Sun cream.

Optional Equipment

- Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents.
- Insect repellent.
- Camera.
- Gaiters.

Useful Information

The local language is Greek.

Is considered safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled mineral water can be purchased from the hotel or local supermarkets.

If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.

To dial a UK number 0044

To dial a Greek number 0030

Local Currency

The local currency is the Euro.

Electricity

220 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

ATM Availability

There is an ATM machine in the nearby village of Argalasti, which is the next small town just 10 minutes drive away, where you can obtain money. We will probably go through this village to or from our walks.

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday & Sunday: 9am – 1pm Bank Holiday Monday: 9am – 1pm

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £10 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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