

## NORTHERN LESVOS

### “...Walking through the nature of Lesvos...”

The welcoming island of Lesvos invites us to take a tour of its countryside and culture along an extensive and well-kept network of way-marked trails indulging in its unparalleled natural beauty and discovering its unique heritage. Lesvos Local Development Company has for many years now put into effect a series of actions aiming to help promote Lesvos as a hiking destination where “tourists” become visitors-“Oiko Trekkers”.

#### Trails of Lepetymnos...

An extensive expansion of Lesvos’s Hiking Trails Network is currently under way involving several locations in the regions of Molyvos, Petra and Sykamia. For this section of the island, in particular, maps as well as digital applications are available at **www.walking-trails.net**. Hikers can digitally explore the trails and, what’s more, upload their own hiking experiences on the website or download “OikoTrails” as an Apple or Android application. Last but not least, children can play with “OikoGames” educational applications. A novel approach to exploring the countryside is the introduction of cycling trails that meander around magnificent Mt Lepetymnos and crisscross traditional villages such as, among others, Molyvos, Petra, Sykamia, Argenos, Petri and Stypsi.



## WESTERN LESVOS

*Two hiking trails in the western section of the island, an area of volcanic terrain, crossing one of the grandest and rarest world monuments of geological heritage: the Petrified Forest of Lesvos. Due to the movement of tectonic plates and the ensuing volcanic activity, the forest sank under layers of lava. Today, 20 million years later, natural workings and human intervention have revealed stunning tree trunks, branches, roots and leaves as well as fossilized animal bones in bright, vivid colours and unusual combinations and sizes that captivate visitors.*

#### Sigri - Eressos

A particularly interesting trail beginning at the Geopark, next to the Natural History Museum of Sigri Petrified Forest winding along a 14.2km-long rural dirt road, through Plaka Geopark, and up to the village of Eressos. The route cuts across a barren terrain which, nevertheless, rewards hikers with the diversity of alternating between uphill and downhill stretches and prime viewpoints, especially at the highest altitude of 198m, at 10.6km off Sigri. The trail has an elevation gain of 170m and hikers can follow it from either direction.

#### Tsichliondas - Petrified Forest Park

A trail combining the arid, eerie landscape of the Petrified Forest with the lush green riverbanks of the Tsichliondas River. A 2.75km-long footpath connects the Petrified Forest Park with the Tsichliondas Valley, which has been inhabited since the antiquity, as the ruins on the surrounding hills testify. Hikers may catch a glimpse of a large number of reptiles, small mammals, insects and birds, some of which are considered rare or endangered species. The trail has an elevation gain of 220m and hikers are recommended to set off from the valley of the river heading to the Park, ensuring a steady uphill climb. If they take the opposite direction, though there are trail posts to guide their way every 500m, they risk missing possibly the only ford leading to the other side of the stream, due to the dense riverside vegetation, in which case they will be obliged to go back.



Tsichliondas wetland

## NORTHERN LESVOS

### Petri - Ligona Valley and Springs

One of the most photogenic footpaths on the island. With a length of approximately 2.4km, it starts off from the settlement of Petri at an altitude of 214m, affording a commanding view over Petra and Molyvos. The first 1,600m make up a smooth moderately uphill path to the north through thick undergrowth, soon to reach an altitude of 250m. This location commands a breathtaking view over the Ligona valley, scattered with the ruins of the watermills that for centuries supplied the region with flour. The trail then slopes downhill along the same cobblestone path walked on by the millers of those bygone days, and reaches the river bed at 162m above sea level. From this point on, the route is a steady uphill ascent before reaching, through dense plane trees, the source of the Ligona River, at an altitude of 264m. The trail, with an elevation gain of barely 100m., is practically one-way, from Petri to the source of the Ligona River.



Early Christian basilica of Chalinadou, close to Ayia Paraskevi

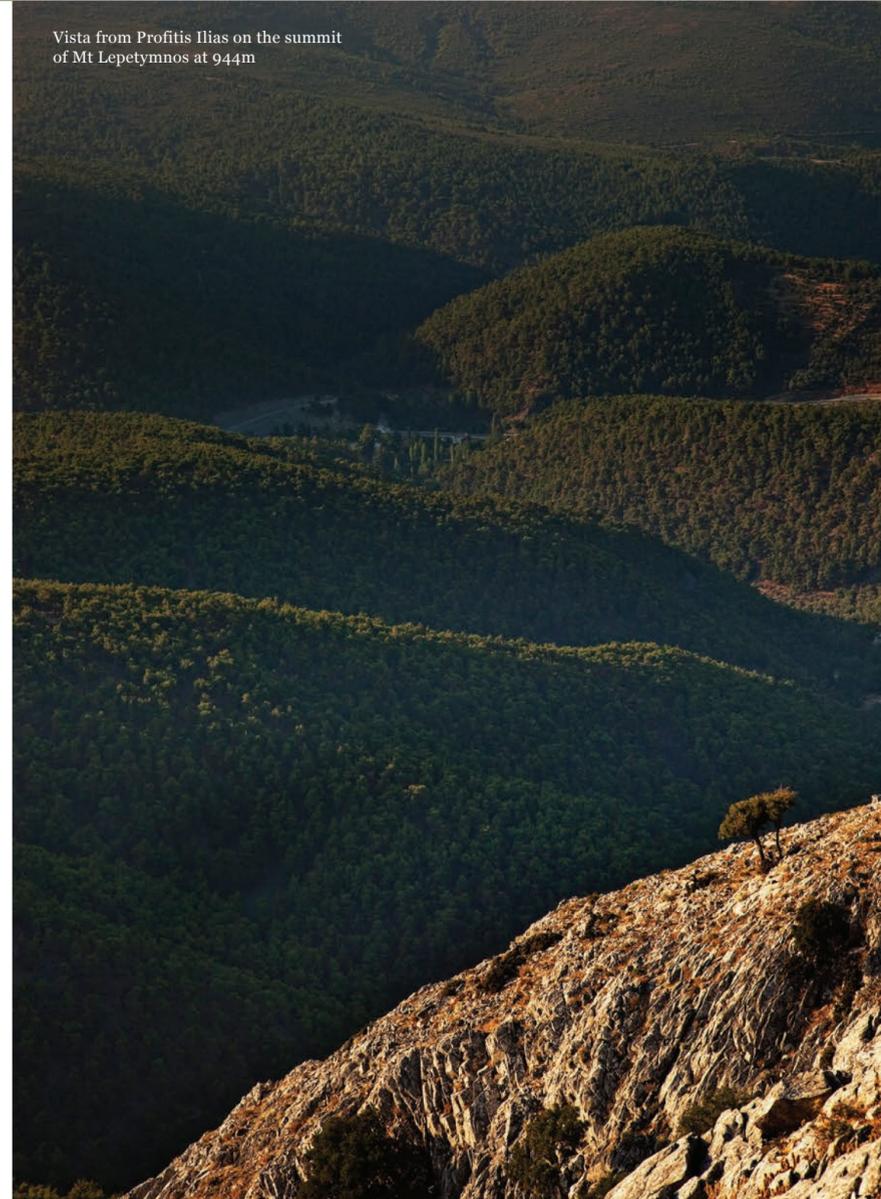
## NORTHERN LESVOS

### Profitis Ilias - Ano Kampos

One of the most scenic trails in Lesvos. A 2.2km-long footpath starts out from the church of Profitis Ilias at the top of Mt Lepetymnos at 944m above sea level. Lepetymnos is the highest mountain in Lesvos with an altitude reaching 968m boasting one of the longest sunshine hours in Greece. From Profitis Ilias, provided the weather is clear, you can be greeted by pristine views over Tenedos, Lemnos, Chios and mesmerized by the soaring peak of Mount Athos. The trail leads to the plateau of Ano Kampos located at an altitude of 756m. It’s a trail through a verdant landscape of oak trees for the less adventure-minded. Hikers can set their own trailhead anywhere along the way.

#### Pelopi - Ano Kampos

The 2.65km-long trail sets off at the hamlet of Pelopi to the south of Mt Lepetymnos. It is an uphill hike, initially running along the banks of the Ligona creek dotted with the renowned watermills of the region and ending after 1.7km at Monoplatanos Point. It continues as a steep ascent amidst green undergrowth before reaching the plateau of Ano Kampos. Heading downhill is recommended.



Vista from Profitis Ilias on the summit of Mt Lepetymnos at 944m

## CENTRAL LESVOS - NORTH OF THE GULF OF KALLONI

### Agia Paraskevi - Sanctuary of Klopedi - Kremasti Bridge

A trail of exceptional cultural significance in the heart of Lesvos. It starts from the chapel of Agia Paraskevi reaching a total 12,640m. The first portion is a cobblestone track leading to the rural road of Prini. It runs across the bridge of Prini over the Tsiknias river, weaves through olive groves past the chapel of Taxiarches Kortsades and, subsequently, the Sanctuary of Klopedi. The sanctuary is a typical example of the island’s archaic architecture. Next, the trail turns into a dirt road carrying you to the Dependency (Metochion) of Taxiarches in the Holy Monastery of Limonas and winds down to the Tsiknias river. Then, it intersects with a narrow dirt track which leads to the stone bridge of Kremasti, an 8.5m-high monument of medieval architecture related to legends similar to those of the Arta Bridge. Heading towards Stivota, it runs along the old paved path used by the inhabitants of Agia Paraskevi, crosses over the torrent gushing down from Napi and meets the road to Prini. Heading west, you will find the trail winding back up to Agia Paraskevi.

## SOUTHERN LESVOS - PLOMARI REGION

### Kato Chorio - Kournela

The trail starts at the settlement of Kato Chorio and concludes at the settlement of Kournela running a 5.6km-long route. It is a route of varied difficulty through thick undergrowth. It goes uphill for 3.3km, reaching the church of Agia Irini; the path continues steadily downhill through oak trees to reach the scenic settlement of Kournela.

At the entrance of the village stands the three-aisled Basilica of St. John the Baptist dating back to 1863. As you go down the narrow alleys, once buzzing with activity, gazing at Paleochori and Melinda across the other side, you will find yourselves standing before a centenary plane tree. Just off the last house, you will see the three fountains of the village. The old oil mill, in operation until 1963, is not to be missed. Today, the village inhabitants number a scant two, while visitors are quite a few!



## SOUTHERN LESVOS

### Kato Chorio - Plomari

A smooth, effortless 1.5km-long trail connects the villages of Kato Chorio and Plomari. It is a versatile route with constant alternation of uphill and downhill slopes, weaving through prolific flora. It is ideal for an invigorating walk in the countryside all year round. Today, Kato Chorio, one of the oldest villages in the vicinity, stands forlorn amongst orange and lemon trees. Following the road to the left of the square, you will get to the region of Vigla, meaning “lookout”, and the chapel of Zoodochos Pigi. The path leads to Plomari, one of the most idyllic seaside villages of Lesvos.

## SOUTHEASTERN LESVOS

### Plakados - Paliokastro

The trail begins from the settlement of Plakados and, after a 3km-long walkway through olive groves, ends at the summit of Paliokastro, at an altitude of 400m. The first segment of the trail until the Skarlatos fountain, amounting to 1.7km, is fairly level, but the remaining rocky stretch to the summit of Paliokastro is a sharp ascent. The route reveals an impressive view over the Gulf of Gera, especially along the second section, but it could be rather daunting for the less-than-fit.



Trail through the chestnut woodland of Agiassos



## WEST OF THE GULF OF KALLONI

### Potamia - Parakila

A trail to the west of the Gulf of Kalloni promising dazzling vistas! It is a 13km-long route whose initial section is an uphill dirt track. It wanders across interesting geological formations and a rare black pine wood. Here the black pine couples with the oriental rhododendron in a lavish panorama. Rhododendron trees bloom in April and in May filling the forest with their beguiling fragrance. 4.45km later, you reach the highest point of the trail at 619m, where you can let your eyes take in the view over the valley of Potamia and the Gulf of Kalloni. The track bends down to pass amidst dense pine trees and, after veering off the rural road, runs an additional 4.25km before reaching a coppice with a rest area. Getting there you will come across the chapel of Zoodochos Pigi. From this point on, the trail rejoins the rural road and heads on through olive groves, until the settlement of Parakila.

Black-winged stilts in the Gulf of Kalloni



## CENTRAL LESVOS

### Mt Olympus Summit - Agiassos

Starting out from the rocky summit of Mt Olympus with its magnificent view over a chestnut wood, you walk for 4.2km and, after going past the Kadis fountain, you reach the traditional village of Agiassos. It is a steeply sloping trail across dense vegetation of olive, oak, chestnut, walnut and pine woodland, rarely to be seen on the terrain of an island. The ascent, in particular, calls for top-notch physical fitness. Perched on the slope of Mt Olympus, Agiassos boasts rampant greenery and traditional architecture and crafts, plenty of which have stood the test of time: ceramic artists, wood carvers, cutlers and weavers live and create on the cobblestone streets of the village. The site is home to an exceptional Church featuring the icon of the Panagia Vrefokratousa (Virgin Mary with Child) which, according to tradition, was painted by the Evangelist Luke.

## CENTRAL LESVOS - NORTHWEST OF THE GULF OF GERA

### Assomatos - Agioi Anargyroi

From the settlement of Assomatos, follow a 1.3km-long cobblestone footpath to the spectacular location of Agioi Anargyroi. The trail cuts across a luxuriant verdant landscape with plane, poplar and cypress trees alongside streams of running water. The first 750m-long downhill stretch is particularly steep, but later on it levels off. Hikers had better pick Assomatos as their trailhead and make their way to Agioi Anargyroi. Assomatos is a mountainous village with two-storey stone houses and wooden *sachnisia* (projecting upper floors) amidst lush olive groves. The village church, a three-aisled basilica, is dedicated to the Most High Archangels Michael and Gabriel. In the churchyard stands the Ecclesiastical Folk Museum of the village displaying manuscripts, old liturgical books, ciboria, vestments, antique icons, one of the oldest *Epitaphios* sepulchers on the island and a fine collection of coins and ecclesiastical “bigliettos”.



Cobblestone street in Assomatos

## EASTERN LESVOS - SOUTH OF MYTILENE

### Agia Marina - Provasma

An approximately 1.8km-long trail starts out past the playing field of Agia Marina to be completed at Provasma Point in the mountain massif of Amali. After the first few metres, it crosses a makeshift wooden bridge. For the next 15 minutes it weaves along a fairly undemanding route through pine trees before reaching a rest area. From this point onwards and for about 10 minutes the trail heads up a gently rising slope leading to a small wooden bridge at an altitude of 226m. After completing this section, expect a steep uphill and narrow track taking stamina and pace to take to the top. It is a tough 40-odd-minute ascent which culminates at a privileged viewpoint rewarding you with sweeping vistas at 373m above sea level.

### Hiking Tourism in Lesvos

A network of well-way-marked trails makes Lesvos an ideal hiking tourism destination. Information stands, observation towers and rest kiosks further enhance the hiking experience in Lesvos. In the present publication, we list only some of the trails which are open and accessible to visitors.

Discover more trails and get tipped off about the island at [www.walking-trails.net](http://www.walking-trails.net) & [www.etal-sa.gr](http://www.etal-sa.gr)



Written and visual material comprising the present publication has been drawn from projects carried out by ETAL S.A. as Lesvos Local Action Group.

Information in this publication may have been modified since the time of writing and weather may seriously affect the operating condition of the trails. Visitors are recommended to confirm the information provided well in advance before setting out on their hiking tour.

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