

## STONE BRIDGES IN ZAGORI

### 1. The Voidomatis or Kleidonia bridge

This bridge is located near the Kleidonia village, some hundred meters away from the new Voidomatis bridge on the National Road connecting Ioannina to Konitsa. It is a big one-arch stone bridge built in 1853 by Missios.

### 2. The Kamber Aga bridge

This bridge is very close to the Miliotades village in east Zagori and its construction was financed by Kamber Agas in 1875. It is a well-preserved stone bridge, not very tall with a big arch in the middle and two small openings on the two sides.

### 3. The Kondodimos bridge or Lazaridis bridge (old Vikaki bridge)

When driving from West (coming from Dilofo) you can visit this bridge just some meters before entering the Kipi village. The bridge connects the two riverbanks of the Vikaki stream. Built in 1753, the bridge took its name from Kondodimos, the man who donated the money for the construction. Starting from here you can reach the Koukouli village following a beautiful path.

### 4. The Missios bridge

Situated between the villages of Koukouli and Vitsa, the Missios bridge was constructed in 1748. Missios from Monodendri was the man who financed the construction and so the bridge was named after him. It was built to allow access from Koukouli to Vitsa and vice versa. This path offers one of the most popular walks in Zagori. On this trail you will find well-preserved stone steps forming part of the path.

### 5. The Milos bridge

You will find the Milos bridge on your right hand driving from Kipi to Fragades not far from the Kipi village. It took its name from a nearby existing watermill. Built in 1748 over the Bagiotiko stream, the bridge allowed people living in Kipi to visit the mill and their fields. It has two arches and a much smaller one.

### 6. The Noutsos or Kokkoros bridge

Following the road to Kapesovo and Tsepelovo before the village of Kipi this beautiful bridge is known by the two mentioned names. It connects the two riversides of the Bagiotiko stream just before it joins the Xeropotamos stream. It is the most visited bridge of Zagori as it is just close to the national road but also one of the most impressive ones. Built in 1750, it was named after Noutsos Kondodimos a rich Vradeto villager, who donated the money for the construction. The name of Kokkoros came in 1910 when the Koukouli villager Kokkoros, owner of the nearby mill financed the renovation of the bridge.

### 7. Plakidas bridge

Situated just before the entrance to the Kipi village, on your right hand and in a lower level compared to the National Road leading to the village. It is a three arches bridge, the most famous bridge of the Zagori area connecting the two riverbanks of the Bagiotiko stream. Built in 1748, the bridge was renovated in 1863 with the support of the Plakidas brothers.

### 8. The bridge of Tsipiani

The bridge is close to the Miliotades village in east Zagori and was built over the Vardas river in 1875. The municipality of Greveniti and Paspaliaris from Dristeniko supported financially the construction. It is a well-preserved stone bridge with a big sharp arch. A bell was installed to inform the passing people when strong winds were blowing.

## Hike 1: Spiliotissa Monastery – Kleidonia Bridge

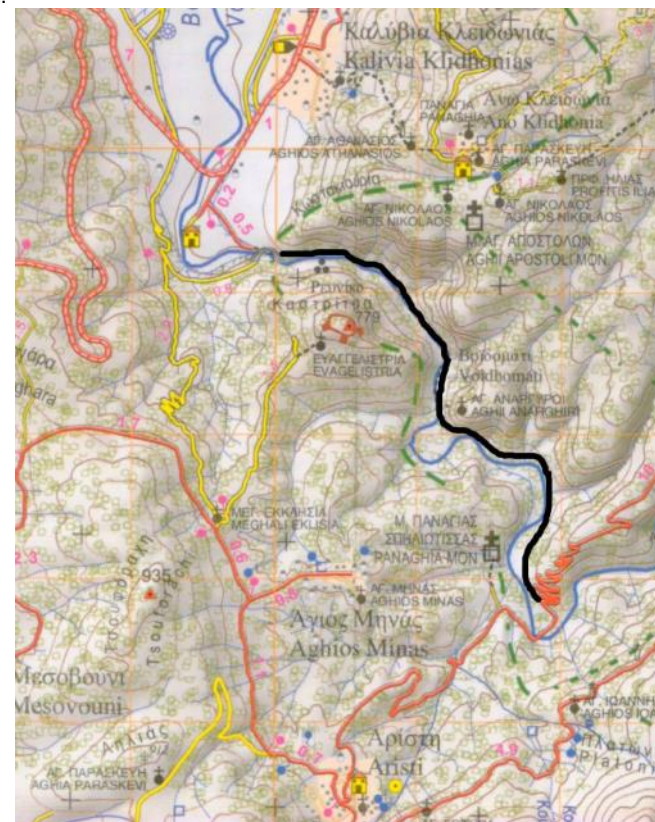
This is one of the most beautiful hiking trails in Greece.

The well defined path starts from the first bend of the road connecting the concrete bridge of Voidomatis river with Papigo (3Km on the road from Aristi to Papigo). Leaving your car before the barrier at the start of the trail, you will walk along the right (north) bank of the river, passing near the 17<sup>th</sup> century chapel of Agioi Anargiri, to reach the stone bridge of Kleidonia. Duration of the walk is about 2 hours and is beautifully shaded during the hot summer months. In winter the absence of leaves allows an exceptional view of the river. It is a well marked, easy walk with a few points of moderate difficulty.

The Spiliotissa monastery is situated at the beginning of the path, but on the other bank of the river. To visit the monastery you leave your car about 400 m before reaching the concrete bridge of the river on your left side. Then walk for about 10 min following a beautiful path under the trees.

The clock tower of the monastery allows a panoramic view of the river and the Vikos gorge.

Transportation to the hotel from the Kleidonia bridge can be arranged at the reception beforehand.



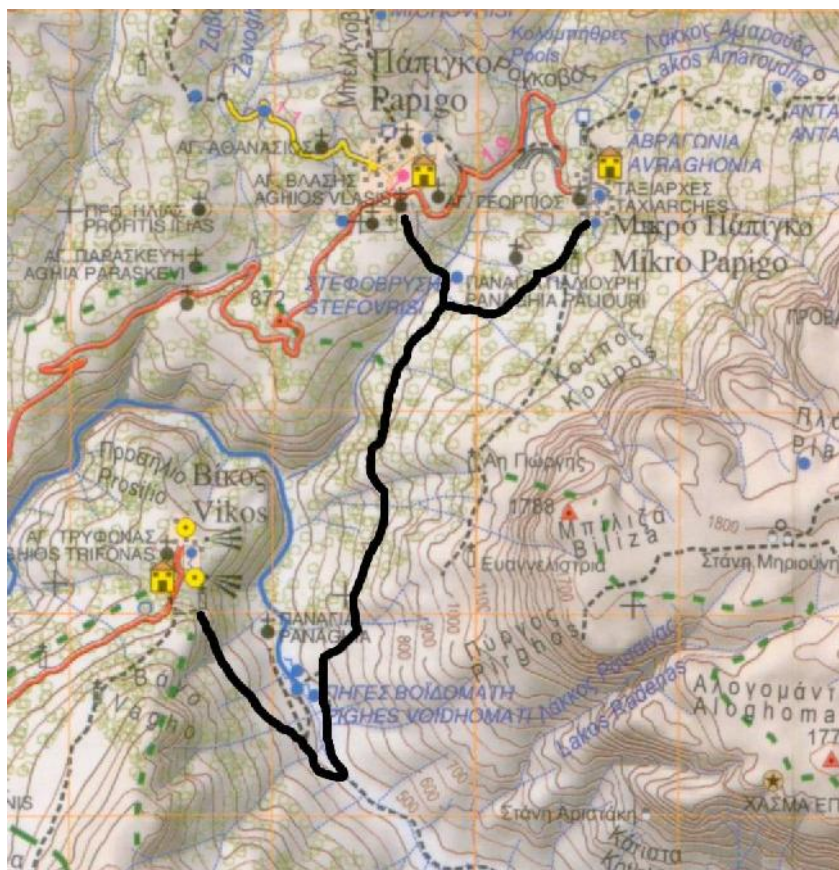


## Hike 2: Vikos village – Voidomatis river springs – Mikro or Megalo Papigo

The village of Vikos is about 5 Km from Aristi. You can drive to Vikos but you can also walk there. The 1 hour 20 min walk is easy and boasts a beautiful view of the river. You will find the path just before the entrance to the village that leads to the Voidomatis springs and to the villages of Mikro and Megalo Papigo, after crossing the riverbed.

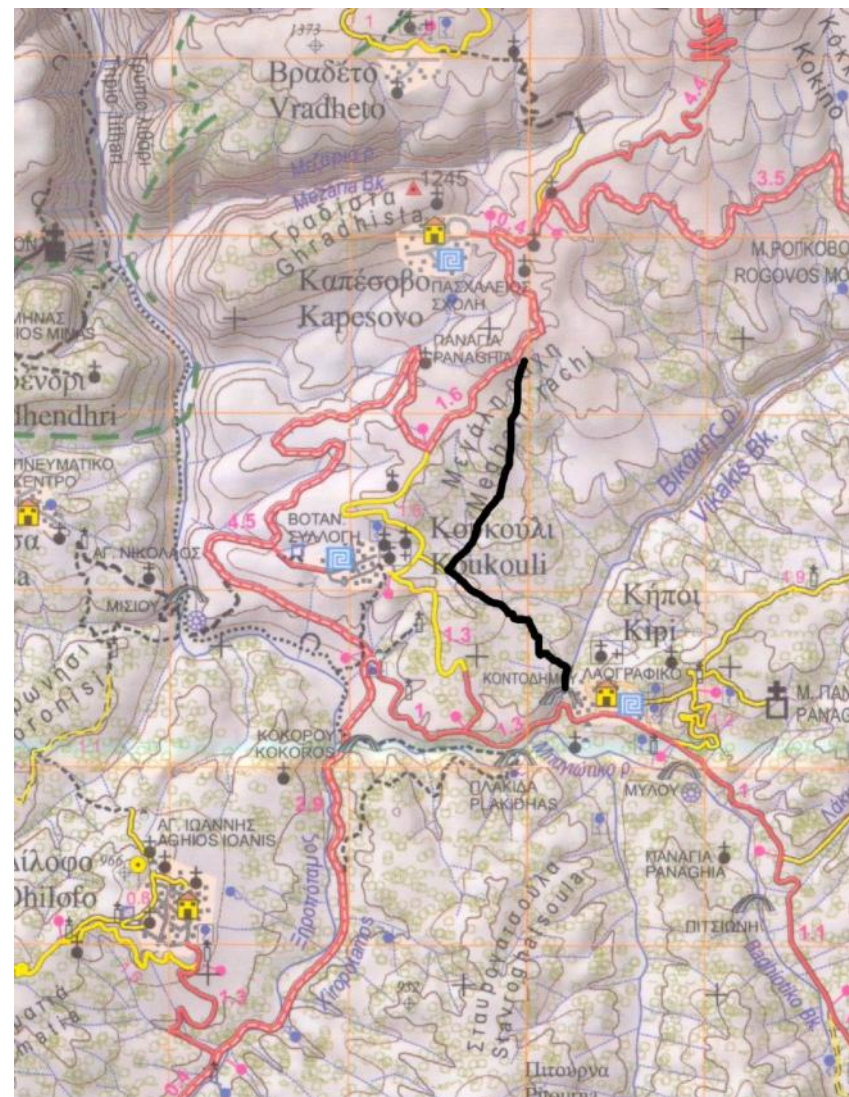
After a half hour descent on a paved path you will reach the Vikos riverbed and the old chapel of Panagia. Looking at the river on the left hand side you will also see the springs of the Voidomatis river coming out of the cliff. Even in summer the water is very cold (12 to 14° C) and comes out from the riverbed bottom. The riverbed upstream is dry during the summer, so you can cross it by foot towards Papigo. In winter this is not easy, as you have to ford the stream-the old wooden bridge was washed away.

After crossing the riverbed you start ascending an impressive path, after which you will arrive either at Mikro or at Megalo Papigo (signs available). Total hiking time is about 2h and 30mins.



## Hike 11: Kapesovo – Kipi

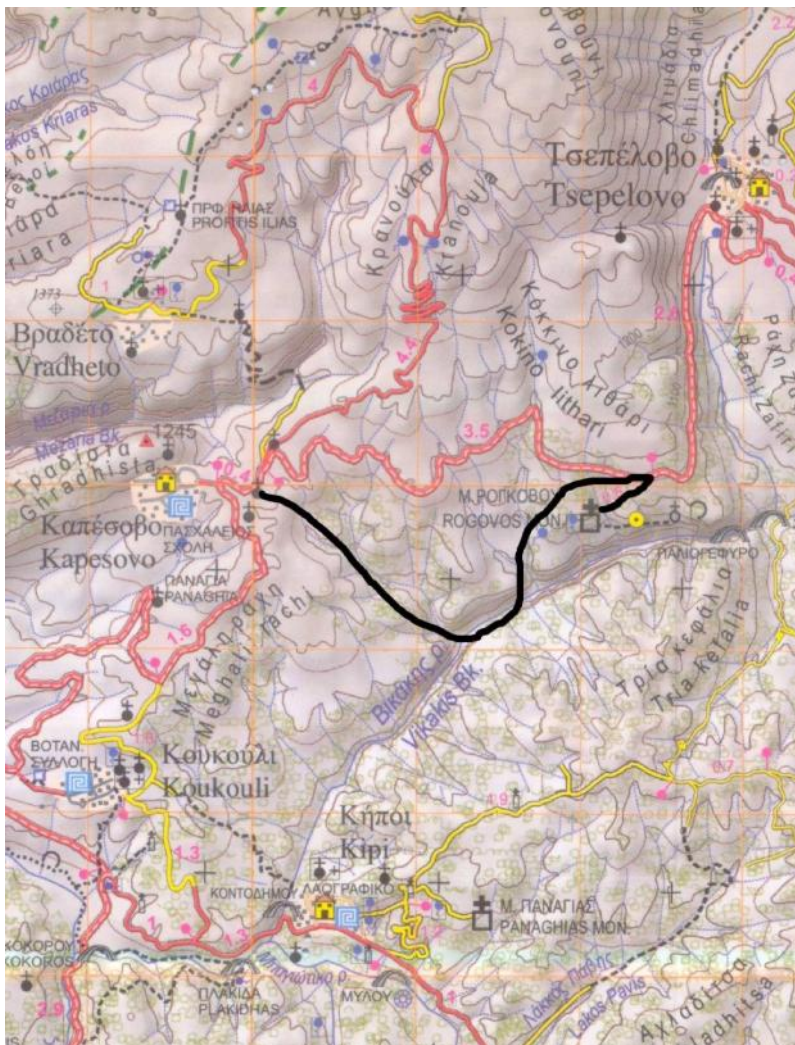
Pleasant downhill walk through an oak forest. The trail will take you through the old mill and an old open oven (kamini) and merges with the Koukouli path. It is marked with red signs and the duration of the walk is estimated to 1hour 15 minute more or less. It is a relatively easy path that leads to the paved road and more precise to the road bridge 100 m west of the Kipi village.





### Hike 10: Kapesovo – Rogovos Monastery

The trail starts from the Kapesovo - Tsepelovo road (there is a sign on the road). It descends smoothly into the woods and then more steeply, diverging slightly to the right passing under "Theogeofyro (Godbridge)" and descends into the gorge. It follows the river bed upstreams and then leaves the canyon and climbs to the left to a paved stream with slabs. It merges with the road just above the monastery of St. John the Rogovo. Walking time is estimated to be 1 hour 30 minutes more or less with signs along the way and a low degree of difficulty.



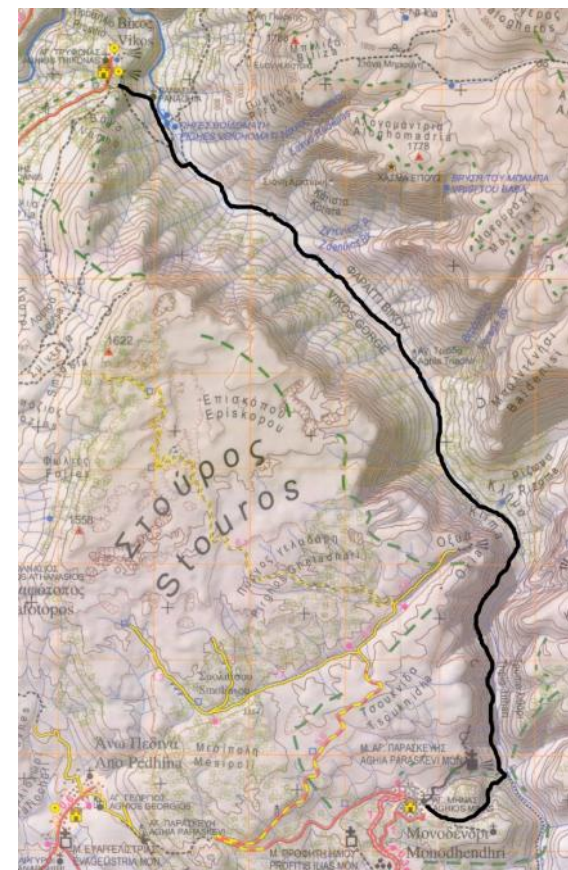
### Hike 3: Crossing of the Vikos Gorge (from Vikos village to Monodendri or vice versa).

The most popular hike in West Zagori is the crossing of the Vikos Gorge. The 15km hike, which takes about 6 hours, is not an easy one. The starting point or it can also be the end point of the hike follows a rather steep stone path. Due to the fact that the warning or information signs are rare and not very clear near Monodendri, it is better to have a guide with you, or you should obtain information about the path's condition before starting. At one point the path is actually the riverbed which makes the crossing dependable on the weather conditions.

The ascent to the Vikos village takes about 45 minutes, and the ascent to Monodendri about 1 hour 30 mins

This hike is impressive, but near Monodendri the view is obstructed by the dense flora. This can result in losing sight of the path. You are advised to pay attention to the hot hours of the day during summer.

Transportation from and to the hotel can be arranged at the reception beforehand.





#### Hike 4: Elafotopos Village – Vikos Village

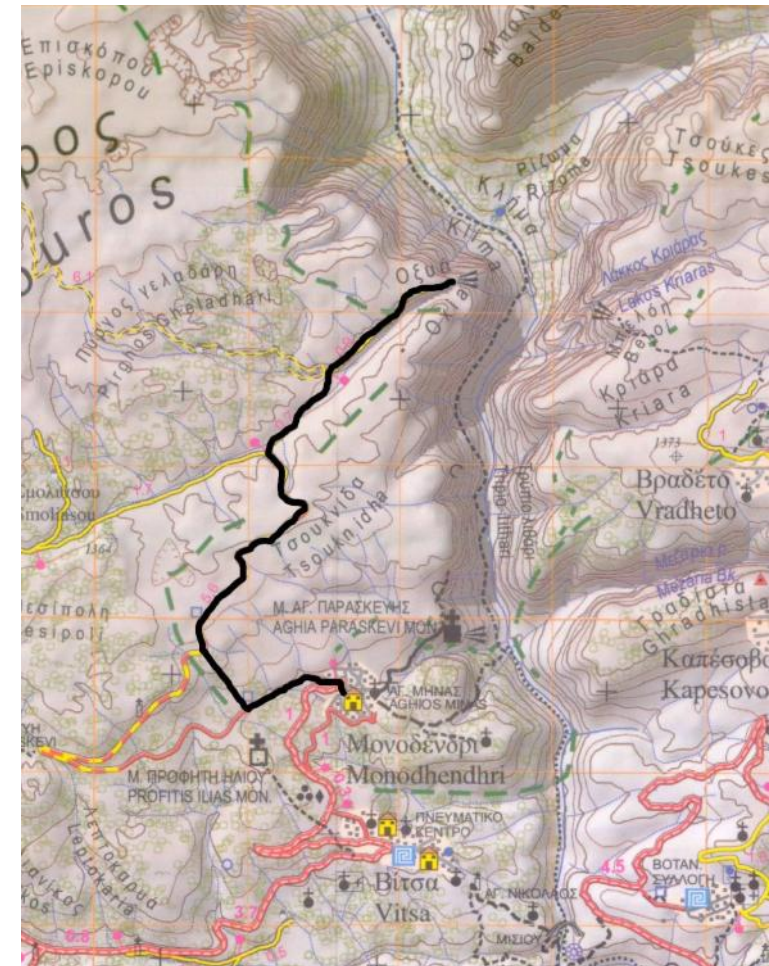
Leaving the Elafotopos village, an unpaved road leads up to the Stouros mountain which is itself part of the mountain forming the Vikos Gorge opposite to the Astraka Peak. The path arrives at a plateau called Kastri that offers an excellent view to the “ Towers of Astraka”. It is a rather unknown path of exceptional beauty. After 3h and 30mins walk with changing landscapes you will arrive at Vikos village.

In case you want to be transported back to the hotel you have to make an arrangement with the hotel's desk beforehand.



#### Hike 9: Monodenri village – Point of view Oxia

One can reach magnificent point of view Oxia from Monodendri, either through the paved road (8 km by car or on foot), or by taking a stone path or sometimes an unpaved trail, which leads over the gorge of Vikos to the Oxia spot (1320 meters in altitude), providing a spectacular view of the Vikos gorge and its riverbed 800 meters below. It is the tallest and narrowest point of the gorge. In the middle of the path and at "Theoktista" spot one can see impressive geological formations of slate, creating a unique labyrinth of paths. It is a unique experience. This trail is a relatively easy walk of around 2 hours (4 hours returning to Monodendri).





## Hike 6: Old Konitsa stone Bridge – Stomiou Monastery

The trail starting from the old stone bridge by Konitsa and leading to the Stomiou Monastery (about 1 hour and 30 minutes away) is especially beautiful. During the first hour the walk is mainly on an unpaved road that runs parallel to the Aaos riverbed among the mountain series of Gamila on the one side and Smolikas on the other. It is an easy and pleasant walk through an exceptional landscape. For the last 30 minutes the ascent becomes more demanding. You arrive in Stomiou Monastery, which is built on a rocky formation and offers an amazing view to the Aaos valley from the one side, and to the Konitsa highland from the other. The famous monk Paisios lived here for some years before moving to Mount Athos.



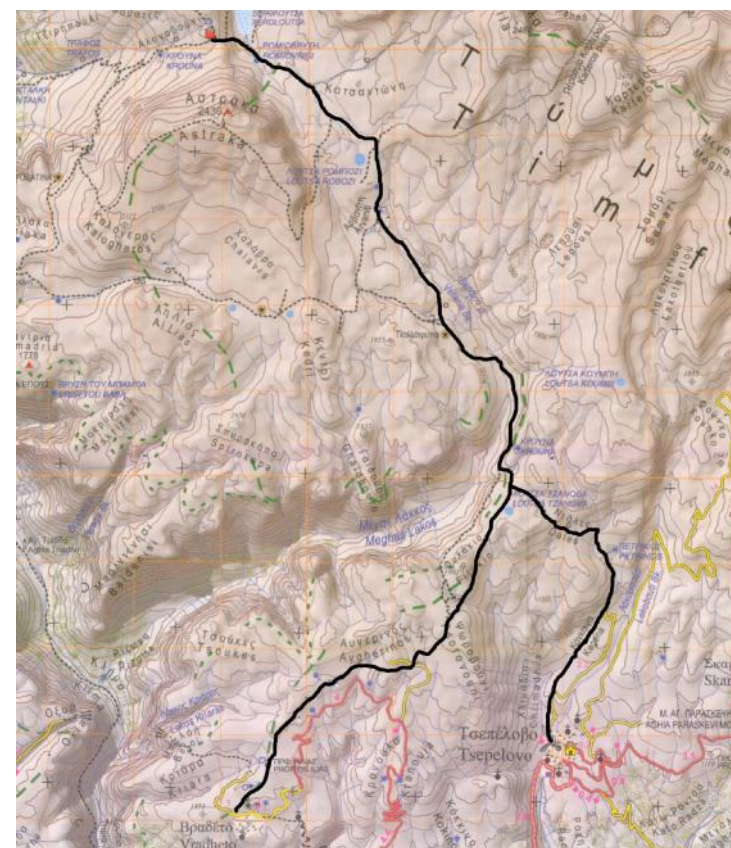
## Hike 7: Gamila Refuge – Rombozi lake – Tsepelovo (Mountaineering trail)

This trail can be combined with the ascending hike to the Gamila Refuge from the village M. Papingo (see path 5). It is a mountaineering hike of about 5 hours 30 minutes, starting from the refuge, and is the most well known cross of the Gamila (Tymphi) mountain range.

From the refuge the path begins descending towards the Xeroloutsia lake (drying lake) before climbing up to the Rombozis small lake. The path continues parallel to the Vikos Gorge, at a height of about 2000 meters, leaving behind the Astraka on the right and the Gamila Peak on the left. Continuing along you will arrive above the Megas Lakkos, which meets up with the Vikos Gorge.

From there you will descend towards the Petrinos spring, and follow the stone path to arrive at Tsepelovo village.

We advise that you engage a mountain guide to help you, or take detailed information about the path's exact condition and location.





### Hike 8: Vradeto – View Point Beloi (alternatively Kapesovo-Vradeto stairs -Beloi)

The village of Vradeto has the highest altitude (1360 m above sea level) of all the villages in the Central and West Zagori area. Starting from the end of the paved road that leads to the entrance of the village, you will follow the unpaved road for about 800 m. There you will leave the road and follow the signed path which leads after 20 minutes to the view point called Beloi (that means “point with good view” in the Slavic language). The walk is easy and the view of the Vikos Gorge is magnificent. You can even see the village of Vikos at the other end of the gorge and the Nemertsika mountains forming the border with Albania.

On the opposite side of the gorge you can see Monodendri village, and the viewpoint Oxia.

Alternatively, you can start from the Kapesovo village following the Vradeto steps. The approximately one thousand stone steps were the only way to reach Vradeto until 1973. Vradeto is situated about 300 meters higher than Kapesovo. The Vradeto steps take about 90 minutes to ascend.

On the return journey you can refresh yourself by stopping at Sterna, the “sweet” coffee shop of Kapesovo, with it’s imposing cistern.

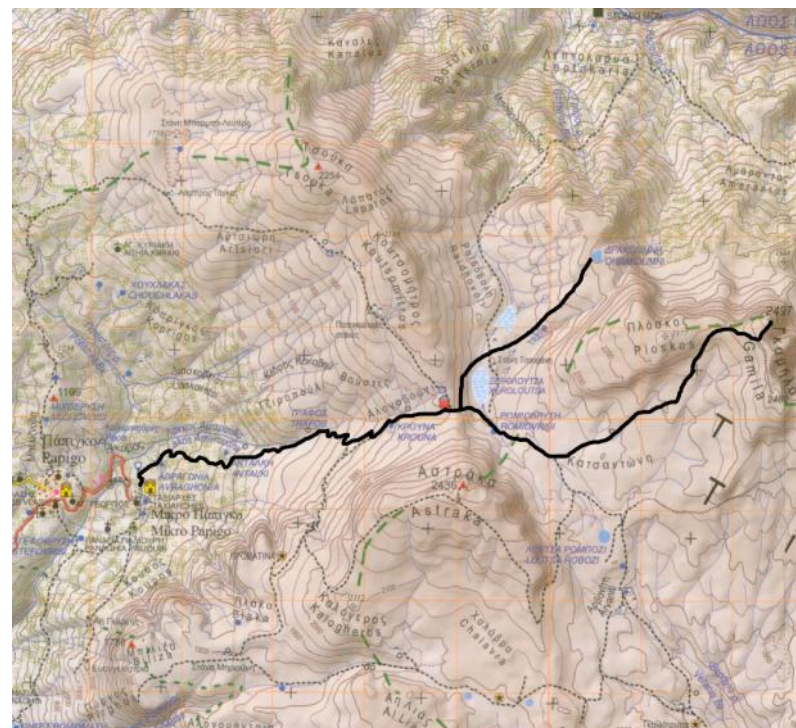


### Hike 5: M Papingo – Gamila Refugee – Drakolimni – Gamila Peak (Mountaineering trail)

The most well known mountaineering trail of the Zagori area starts from the village M. Papingo and ascends up to the Gamila or Astraka shelter at a level of 1920 m above sea. This takes about 3 hours along a well-signed path; for well-trained people 2 hours 30 minutes are enough. During the last hour the ascending path is steep and leads through an alpine landscape. The view from the refuge is magnificent. The refuge is in good condition and offers drink, food and sleep facilities to the visitors. The most beautiful alpine lake in Greece, Drakolimni (Dragon Lake) can be reached within one and a quarter hours from the refuge. Tritons the small impressive amphibians can be seen in the lake’s water. From there you have a breathtaking view towards the Aaos river valley and the Smolikas peak.

Alternatively, or additionally to the Dragon lake, from the refuge you can hike to the Gamila Peak. Starting from the refuge, you descend down the same path that leads to Drakolimni for thirty minutes, until you reach the loutsas (small lakes that dry up during the summer months). From here you turn south (to the right) and climb up the pass between the Gamila and Astraka Peaks. After a 2 hours 45 minutes demanding walk you will reach the Gamila Peak (At 2540m it is the third highest Greek mountain peak). The last part of the hike is rocky and not signed.

We advise that you engage a mountain guide to help you with the hike, and to stay overnight in the refuge.



## **Completions - Amendments**

The listed times of trekking refer to pure walking time without any stops.

With regard to the time of the year at which hikes can take place as well as concerning some further information please keep the following in mind:

Hike 1 : All year

Hike 2 : From May to October. Preferred start Megalo Papigo village, ending in Vikos village.

Hike 3 : All year, preferred start at Monodendri and finish the Vikos village.

Hike 4 : From May to October. It is suggested to be accompanied by a mountain guide

Hike 5 : From May to October

Hike 6 : All year

Hike 7 : From May to October

Hike 8: All year

Hike 9 : All year

Hike 10 : From May to October. Due to lack of marking it is suggested to be accompanied by a mountain guide.

Hike 11 : All year



ΖΑΓΟΡΟΧΩΡΙΑ, ΗΠΕΙΡΟΣ

## ZAGOROCHORIA WALKING AND HIKING TRAILS



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