



the Full Guide Halkidiki, Greece

halkidiki

inside your dreams



halkidiki



Halkidiki inside your dreams...

They say that no other place in Greece can boast beaches like those of Halkidiki. Still, the region stands for far more than beaches. Halkidiki is the perfect combination of the reviving Mediterranean light, the unspoiled land, the lively communities and a glorious past to explore.

Add the local gastronomy, the religious traditions, the openness and hospitality of the people, the wide range of activities and lifestyles; flavour with the soothing scent of the pine-trees and there you are! -the already desirable has turned to the simply irresistible.

Halkidiki is literally sculpted by nature forces to balance earth and sea. Three peninsulas, fjord-like bays with emerald beaches and coves, imposing mountains -the stage for thriving life and civilizations in every form -like the thousand- year old monastic state of Mt. Athos, a unique World Heritage Site!

Myth has it that the great greek philosopher Aristotle, who was born here and spent his life away from his native land -if only to teach the young Alexander the Great- never ceased to praise the honey of Halkidiki! Was it a metaphor or he actually meant the renowned honey we can cherish today? There is no way to know but who cares! You too will love the land and the rich produce of its gardens and orchards. It is truly a place of dreams... and your dream has only just begun...

DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

HALKIDIKI FACTS

Location: Halkidiki peninsula is located near the city of Thessaloniki and it is a part of Central Macedonia, Greece. Halkidiki region consists of the mainland and a large peninsula that resembles a hand with three "fingers" – Kassandra, Sithonia and Mount Athos.



Regions: The peripheral unit Halkidiki is subdivided into five municipalities. These are: Aristotelis, Kassandra, Nea Propontida, Polygyros, Sithonia.

Regional Capital: Polygyros

Size Province: 2.918 km²

Coordinates: 40°20'N - 23°30'E

Population Province: 110.000 (approximately)

Distances: "Macedonia" airport (SKG)

to Halkidiki: min 45km - max 120km

Thessaloniki city to SKG airport: 15km

Religion: Orthodox Christians

Language: Greek (English, German, Russian are also spoken almost everywhere)

Public Holidays: New Year's Day (1 Jan),

Theophany (6 Jan), Clean Monday

(The 1st day of Lent), 25 March, Good Friday

– Easter Monday, Holy Spirit Monday,

Assumption of the Holy Virgin (15 Aug),

28 October, Christmas (25-26 Dec).

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pets: There are pet friendly hotels, camping facilities and studios. Dogs are allowed on the beach as long as they have health certification and they remain under the custody of the owner.

Tiping: It is optional between 5% - 10% of the bill's total amount.

Water: Tap water is safe to drink although bottled water is recommended in some areas.

Banks, ATM's, Credit cards:

- Wherever you are, you will find a Greek bank branch in a short distance (maximum 20-25km).
- Numerous ATM's can be found all over the city center.
- Credit cards are accepted in hotels, restaurants and camping sites. Avoid using them at the beach, the bars, the busses and taxis.

Electricity supply: 220V – 50 Hz

Climate: The climate in Halkidiki is generally mild with limited rainfall whilst sunshine and warm summers are well known. It enjoys over 300 days of sunshine on average annually. The lowest temperatures occur during December to February ranging between 3.5°C to 19°C, while highest temperatures occur during summer months and range between 23°C and 38°C.

Sea temperature:

March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October
13°C	14°C	17°C	22°C	24°C	25°C	23°C	20°C

HOW TO GET TO HALKIDIKI

✈ **by airplane:** The National Airport "MACEDONIA" of Thessaloniki is connected to the biggest towns in Greece and Europe on a daily basis (several flights). Information on departures and arrivals +30 2310 985 000
Taxis and busses take you from the airport to the Coach Station of Halkidiki (KTEL) in Thessaloniki. There you can take the coach to reach the destination of your choice.
www.thessalonikiairport.com

🚆 **by train:** There is no train network in Halkidiki. Travellers coming by train from other parts of Greece or from abroad arrive at the Train Station of Thessaloniki. After arriving at the Train Station of Thessaloniki, take a taxi or the bus to reach to the Coach Station of Halkidiki (KTEL), in Thessaloniki, and then take the coach to reach Halkidiki.
Train Station of Thessaloniki - Information:
☎ +30 2310 599421, 14 511 - www.ose.gr

🚌 **by coach:** All the villages and the beaches of Halkidiki are connected by coaches to Thessaloniki. There are buses that run daily and several times per day, throughout the year. Information - Coach Station of Halkidiki (KTEL):
Thessaloniki Station ☎ +30 2310 316555
Polygyros Station ☎ +30 23710 22309
Nea Moudania Station ☎ +30 23730 21228
Arnea Station ☎ +30 23720 22278
Kassandra Station ☎ +30 23740 22214
Kalikratia ☎ +30 2399 021048
www.ktel-chalkidikis.gr

🚗 **by car:** The **Egnatia Motorway** (Egnatia Odos), which crosses Greece from its westernmost edge -Italy (Igoumenitsa)- to its easternmost borders with Turkey (Kipi, Evros), is a modern motorway of international standards, equipped with devices and safety systems that aim at protecting and helping the motorists. Egnatia Odos meets the Ring Road of Thessaloniki which leads to the National Road towards Halkidiki.
From Italy: Igoumenitsa → Egnatia Odos Motorway towards Thessaloniki.
From Turkey: Kipi → Egnatia Odos Motorway towards Thessaloniki

From Albania: Kakavia → Greek National Road towards Ioannina → Egnatia Odos towards Thessaloniki

From F.Y.R.O.M.: Evzoni → Greek National Road towards Thessaloniki until reaching the Egnatia Odos Motorway

From Bulgaria: Promachonas → Greek National Road towards Thessaloniki until reaching the Egnatia Odos Motorway

Connection from Egnatia Odos Motorway to the Halkidiki Road Network:

Exit K1 Thessaloniki

Exit K4 Thessaloniki

Exit Redina

Exit Vrasna-Asprovalta



CONTENTS

Spirit of nature...	8
3.000 year-old culture...	16
Pilgrims of Orthodoxy...	26
Sea, Sun, Sand...	34
Time for sports...	44
Taste & tradition...	48
Health & relaxation...	58
Business & pleasure...	61
West coast	65
Central Halkidiki	81
Kassandra	97
Sithonia	113
East coast	129
Mount Athos	145
Suggested Routes	161
Useful telephones	168



 SIGHTSEEING

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!



SPECIAL INFO



DID YOU
KNOW THAT?



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HALKIDIKI TOURISM ORGANIZATION
Dioikitirio 63100 Polygyros, Halkidiki, Greece
Tel. +30 23713 51425 - Fax +30 23713 51403
info@halkidiki.gov.gr
twitter.com/VisitHalkidiki
www.visit-halkidiki.gr

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Vourvourou - "Karydi"



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UNIQUE HALKIDIKI



BEACHES

Halkidiki can boast an amazing 550km of coastline, featuring a thousand different beaches, some offering an endless expanse of golden sand, others rocky. Some beaches are crowded -socialising spots, while others are no more than deserted coves among the rocks. All of them though are blessed with crystal clear waters reflecting the deep green of the pine-tree forests. The Blue Flags that Halkidiki is being awarded every year are rightly deserved.



>34 p.



GASTRONOMY

Halkidiki is famous for its olives, the high quality olive oil, its fine breads and cheeses, as well as for its traditional sweets and pastries made with delicious local fruit produced locally. The region is also well known for producing honey of the highest quality, while being a location worth visiting due to its wine routes. This is the ideal place to enjoy the healthy tastes of the Mediterranean diet and to savor dishes made from the purest natural ingredients.



>48 p.



ARISTOTLE

The ancient city Stagira was the birthplace of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. The city was occupied by Philippos in 349 B.C., after the fall of Olynthos. Philippos rebuilt the city in order to honor the great ancient philosopher, tutor of Alexander the Great. When Aristotle died, his fellow-citizens transported his bones to Stagira and set up a monument. Each year, at summertime, cultural events, the "Aristoteleia", take place within the archaeological site, continuing the ancient celebration.



>19 p.



ACTIVITIES

Thanks to initiatives by the local hotels and communities, Halkidiki has now developed a series of alternative tourism proposals, including sea sports, golf, mountain biking, horse riding, bird watching, spa facilities, hiking, agro-tourism, religious tourism and sports opportunities. Halkidiki offers an unlimited choice of activities, ideal for those who love to keep busy.



>44 p.



ENTERTAINMENT

Greece is famous for its 24/7 entertainment, its clubs, restaurants and bars buzzing with life until the early hours of the morning. For those seeking fun and entertainment throughout the day and night, Halkidiki has plenty to offer: morning coffee in a traditional kafeneion, cocktails at the beach bar until the sun goes down, dinner in a traditional taverna or in a luxurious restaurant, drinks in one of the sea-side bars, or a long evening listening to Latin, jazz or reggae...



>58 p.



MOUNT ATHOS

The most magical out of Halkidiki's three peninsulas is Mount Athos, home to the unique Orthodox community of monasteries. It is a place dedicated solely to prayer and the worship of God, known informally as the Garden of the Virgin Mary. Mount Athos is an UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site.



HALKIDIKI

Spirit of nature...

The land of Halkidiki is famous for its fruitful soil as well as the variety of its natural scenery. The west coast is rich in picturesque plains, while the center and the east region count three beautiful mountains, Holomontas, Itamos and Athos. Furthermore, Halkidiki's three peninsulas dive into the Aegean sea offering a coastline of about 500km –the longest one in Greece. When exploring the amazing natural environment do not miss out on the ancient Petralona Cave as well as the wetlands region protected by the Natura network.



Kassandra, Kassandrino



Varvara waterfall



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Natura 2000

Natura 2000 is the centerpiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy. The network aims to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It is comprised of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and also incorporates Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The protected areas of Natural Beauty and Biodiversity, by the Natura European Network, located in Halkidiki are:

1. *Agios Mamas Laguna*
2. *Nea Fokea Wetland Habitat*
3. *Paliouri Cape*
4. *Cape Pyrgos - Kypsas Bay - Malamo*
5. *Sithonia peninsula*
6. *Itamos Mount, Sithonia*
7. *Platanitsi - Sykia: Cape Rigas - Cape Adolo*
8. *Cape Elia - Cape Kastro - Ragoula Outlet*
9. *Taxiarchis - Polygyros*
10. *Holomontas Mount*
11. *Athos peninsula*
12. *Stratoniko Mount, Skamni Summit*



Sani wetlands

Mountains

Mt Holomontas: The central and northern parts of Halkidiki are dominated by the mountain range of Mt. Holomontas, an area of incredible beauty, with breathtaking views in all directions. In ancient times Holomontas was known for the quality of its timber, much prized by shipbuilders. Imposing trees grow high up on its slopes, with oaks on the lower reaches, and chestnut, pine, fir and beech higher up. Every so often the trees make way for a clearing, blossoming later on with wild flowers. Mushrooms are found here, growing alongside wild herbs, mountain tea and oregano. There are also many species of wild animals and birds. (Highest peak: 1165 m).

Mt Itamos (or Dragoudelis): The mountain range of Itamos is the biggest one in Sithonia. In the central forest zone, close to the mountain top, there are some rare old Itamos trees, a unique flora variety –the mountain was named after them. You



Mt Holomontas

can reach the top by car, via the hamlet of Parthenon village. The forest offers special trails ideal for walking and biking. From the top one has a magnificent view over Sithonia, Kassandra and Mt Athos. The mountain is covered with a great variety of coniferous trees. It is a protected area with significant flora and fauna. Typical mammal species that live in the mountain are wolves, foxes, rabbits and wild pigs. The locals speculate that there are also deers in the region (Highest peak: 811 m).

Mt Stratoniko: The Stratoniko Mountain is located above the village Stagira, Aristotle's birthplace. The place is full of astonishing oak groves, tall and old beech trees, chestnut trees and numerous other representatives of the thick flora. Sparkling fresh waters quench the thirst of the lumberjacks, and refresh the thousands of mountaineers who enliven the mountain paths. Wildlife features an abundance of wild boars, roebucks, hares, woodcocks, birds and insects who found a permanent

shelter among the trees and the bushes. (Highest peak: 913 m).

Mt Athos: Mount Athos is the mountain and the easternmost peninsula of Halkidiki. An UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is home to 20 Eastern Orthodox monasteries and forms a self-governed monastic state within the sovereignty of the Hellenic Republic. The actual Mount Athos has steep, densely forested slopes reaching up to 2.033 meters near the southernmost tip of the peninsula. The mountain mass is cleft by deep ravines, along which flow deep torrents and countless streams. It is only at the southern end of the peninsula that water is scarce. The whole peninsula is covered with dense vegetation, which harbours numerous ecosystems. There is a zone of Mediterranean evergreen, including pine, holm-oak, cypress, wild olive, lentisk, laurel, arbutus, and heather; higher up are deciduous forests of oak, chestnut, lime, and black pine; and higher still is the low vegetation of high mountain ranges.



Wetlands & waters

Sani (Kassandra): Sani company has undertaken an important environmental initiative – studying and protecting the birdlife of the Sani wetlands. The Sani wetlands is a large expanse of land of 110 hectares, home to over 200 species of birds -many of them rare and endangered. 34 species -or 16% of species- recorded in the Sani Wetlands are included in the three most important categories of the Red List. At the same time, 93 species fall into the three most important protection categories on a European level (SPEC), as defined by the Birdlife International.

Mavrobara Lake (Kassandra): The Lake Mavrobara is widely known for its ecological interest and is located 3km west of Polychrono, in a big forest area full of pine-trees. The lake shelters two rare species of water turtles in danger of extinction (*Emys orbicularis* and *Mauremys caspica*), which find refuge here. Small benches placed at the area, allow you to enjoy conveniently this land full of canes and nenuphars.

Agios Mamas (West Coast): Agios Mamas marsh is a small coastal wetland, located between Kassandra and Sithonia peninsula, an important location for breeding and passage waders. The wetland with the standing water has sand-dunes and reedbeds.

Vourvourou (Sithonia): Vourvourou is well known for its dense pine forest, the enchanting beaches with clear turquoise waters and the nine scattered picturesque islets. Here lies Livari, a beautiful lagoon which is delimited from the adjacent navy-blue sea by an elongated sandy beach with pine-trees. The whole area is a protected due to the significant flora and fauna.

Agia Paraskevi thermal springs (Kassandra): One of the most traditional villages of the region, Agia Paraskevi

is famous for its thermal springs and their therapeutic qualities. The residents revived the village, creating an elegant spa destination offering modern facilities, located in a lush pine forest. The springs, which were discovered accidentally, have important therapeutic qualities due to the water's special chemical composition.

Varvara waterfalls (Central Halkidiki): Between the villages Varvara and Olympiada, one can find the waterfalls of Varvara. It consists of two waterfalls 15 m. high, in a forest full of Itamos trees. The beautiful landscape is really worth a visit.

Geological shapes

Petralona cave: The Petralona Cave in Halkidiki is situated about 1km to the East of the homonymous village, on the western cliffs of the ancient Kalavros Mountain (700 m height). It is a famous cave with important human and hominid remains. Here were discovered the first human remains of Greece. The number and the historical value of the remains are extraordinary. The cave's internal temperature remains steady (circa 17 (+1) Celsius) all year long. On the right and left sides of the tunnel you can see displayed cases including stone and bone tools, as well as bones, jaws and teeth of different kinds of animals. The main volume of the findings is exhibited in the Anthropological



Museum which has been constructed right next to the cave. Signs of fire from burned bones have been traced in the "Mediterranean hall". There are also ashes dating back to 700.000 B.C. representing the most ancient fire that humans had lit on Earth.

Rocks on the beach (Sithonia): There is a long rocky coastline on the east side of Sithonia, interrupted by small enclaves of well hidden sandy beaches thus creating an astonishing natural environment especially when explored by boat. (f.e. Karydi beach – Vourvourou, Kavourotrypes beach – Sarti).

Taxiarchis forest

The University Forest of Taxiarchis is found in the center of Halkidiki and concretely in the Southern and South-western slopes of Holomontas. The unique agriculture found on the Mountain of Holomontas, which can survive at these winter conditions -low temperature, is the agriculture of Christmas trees, which are planted by seed in its fields, (trees are not cut from the forest). After 15 years of growth, the trees are sold, during the Christmas period. There is even a modern unit of treatment of herbs and therapeutic plants, such as tea are collected, drained and sold.



Islands & islets

Ammouliani: It is the only inhabited island of Halkidiki, located 120km from Thessaloniki. It is connected by frequent ferryboat routes that last only 10 minutes to Tripiti, the beach located across the island. This island is an idyllic combination of fine golden sand, aquamarine sea, vegetation and giant rocks.

Drenia or "Donkey islands": Located opposite Ouranoupolis, about 2 miles away from the mainland. The 6 islands present beautiful sandy beaches, amazing blue waters and an enchanting landscape.

Tigani & Pontiki: From Tripiti or from the island "Ammouliani" you can reach these two small islands by boat and enjoy their picturesque beaches.

Diaporos: It is a magnificent island situated on a private bay and surrounded by a natural forest, one of the last unexploited areas of Halkidiki, a fact that explains its astonishingly pure beauty. Diaporos is right across Vourvourou village in Sithonia peninsula. The bay is deep enough for large yachts and the natural beauty of the location is astonishing. Diaporos belongs to a complex of islets together with: *Kalogria, Ambelitsi, Kalamonisia (3), Prassonisi, Peristera, Agios Isodoros*.

Kelyfos: It is also called the "Turtle island" because of its shape. Kelyfos is located opposite Neos Marmaras. The island is full of wild goats but it is best known for its spectacular seabed.

Spalathronisia: It is a cluster of three islets almost opposite Porto Carras. Although they are very close to the land, they are isolated enough for private visits.

Punta: 9km after Porto Carras, turning left towards the sea, is a very small peninsula which is called "Diaporti". When the sea pulls away, a sandy path which leads to Punta island is being revealed. Punta has four beaches ideal for swimming.

Activities

Horse Riding: The pine forests of Halkidiki offer a great variety of special trails and paths, making the region ideal to be explored while horse riding. Whether you are looking to get off the beaten track and head off into the verdant hillsides, or trek along the stunning coastline, horse riding is a great way to admire the region's natural beauty.

Jeep Safari: The area is full of forests, cliffs and long, sandy beaches, ideal to practice this sport. There are also a lot of drift roads to explore, which connect remote villages. Day-long excursions by jeep, with the escort of a multilingual driver, are also organised often. During the excursion, the visitor can admire the rich flora and fauna, with constant stops to take pictures of the amazing landscape, to swim or to have a picnic.

Agricultural & Outdoor activities:

There are farms that provide fresh products and the opportunity to experience an alternative way of living. Here, the visitor has the chance to see the animals up-close, to participate in traditional events such as tsipouro-making and to taste fruits and vegetables produced in the farm. A lot of hotel resorts or guests houses with private estate, organize outdoor activities such as: archery, volleyball, basketball or tennis matches. The resorts located at the beach offer all kinds of water-sports, while some of them also have diving schools, teaching the sport. Along with fishing, biking, trekking, Halkidiki is ideal for active nature lovers.



Walking routes

- 1. Potidea → Tsairi of Agios Mamas → Potidea (Kassandra).** This easy walk follows sandy access roads in a circular route around the reserve.
- 2. Sani → Sani Bird Sanctuary → Sani (Kassandra).** An easy walk through the woods which skirt the long and beautiful Sani beach, with views across the wetlands.
- 3. Sani → Sani camping → Siviri (Kassandra).** The route follows a well marked woodland path which meanders along the cliff tops between Sani Resort and Siviri.
- 4. Possidi → Pinewoods → Possidi (Kassandra).** An easy, circular, ridge walk in the pinewoods above the Possidi beach which provides beautiful views of the coast as well as the olive grove towards Kassandra.
- 5. Polychrono → Turtles → Polychrono (Kassandra).** This walk takes one up into the hills behind Polychrono to visit a pond in the woods where turtles are found.
- 6. Kriopigi → Kassandrino → Kriopigi (Kassandra).** This walk, which is quite long, takes one via forest tracks to the village of Kassandrino, hidden away in the hills of Kassandra.
- 7. Elia Beach → Agios Pavlos → Petros → Elia Beach (Sithonia).** This high level route is an easy woodland walk along forest roads and narrow tracks, which give fine views of the coastline and beyond.
- 8. Nikiti → Agios Nikolaos → Nikiti (Sithonia).** It is a circular route that uses mainly forest tracks to cross over the hill behind Nikiti to visit the small town of Agios Nikolaos.
- 9. Neos Marmaras → Parthenonas (Sithonia).** This long walk visits the very old village of Parthenonas. The walker is given two alternative methods of ascent and descent.
- 10. Porto Carras – Coastal walk (Sithonia).** This walk follows the beautiful coastline with its many sandy bays to the south of Porto Carras.

11. Porto Koufo → Kapros → Porto Koufo (Sithonia). It starts from the natural harbour of Porto Koufo and uses farm and goat tracks to reach Kapros, the remote southern peak of the peninsula.

12. Sykia → Circular walk → Sykia (Sithonia). It takes one on a circular trip around the ridge directly above the town to the north, giving fine views over the town and the surrounding countryside.

13. Ammouliani – Island walk (Athos). The route is mainly an easy walk along unmade farm access roads. Ammouliani is an island and one needs to take the ferryboat to crossover.

14. Ouranoupolis → Mount Athos → Border (Athos). This easy route takes one from the village of Ouranoupolis along the path which follows the coast to the border of Mt. Athos.

15. Ouranoupolis hotels (Athos). This walk links three hotels (Alexandros, Eagles Palace, Aristoteles), which lie along the road between Tripiti and Ouranoupolis.

16. Polygyros → Tsoukalas → Polygyros

(Holomontas). This walk takes one up onto the mountain overlooking Polygyros from the southeast.

17. Taxiarchis → Vrastama (Holomontas). This walk between the mountain villages Taxiarchis and Vrastama starts at a height of 640 m. above sea level and finishes at 450 m., so it is mainly downhill.

18. Vrastama → Agios Efthimios → Vrastama (Holomontas). It starts in the high mountain village of Vrastama and follows an unsurfaced road over the hill behind the village to descend along the narrow ridge into the large valley beyond.

19. Holomontas → Paleochora (Holomontas). It starts almost from the summit of Mt. Holomontas above the village of Taxiarchis and then descends through remote terrain to the village of Paleochora, 10km to the northwest.

20. Olympiada → Stagira → Olympiada (Holomontas). This short but interesting walk takes you through the archaeological remains of the ancient city of Stagira, at the north western corner of Olympiada.



Cycling routes

Halkidiki offers endless opportunities for active holidaymakers and ambitious cyclists, no matter the season. These are 17 tour overviews -of various difficulty levels- taking place all over the Halkidiki peninsula.

1. To one of the southmost extremes of the Kassandra peninsula
2. Into the southwest of the Kassandra peninsula
3. Over the Camel's Hump to Kassandrino village
4. Through the olive groves to Kassandra village
5. Coast to coast
6. To the excavations at ancient Olynthos
7. Along the coast to the beekeepers' village of Nikiti
8. To the Agios Pavlos Springs
9. To the highest point on the Sithonia peninsula
10. Coastal tour in the south of the Sithonia peninsula
11. From Toroni into the untamed hinterland of the Sithonia peninsula
12. Over the ridges of the Sithonia peninsula
13. Through the vineyards of Porto Carras
14. Tour around the charcoal burners' village of Taxiarchis
15. The woods around Olympiada
16. The Lerissos boatyards
17. To Ouranoupolis and the Athos boundary



SPECIAL INFO

Among the natural curved rocks of Kavourotypes beach, a marvelous statue made by a human hand is distinguished: the stoned mermaid who is laid between the sea and the land. This piece of art has been created by the students of Fine Art School and is considered a first effort for the beach to be transformed into an open-air sculpture museum.



Kassandra



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

HALKIDIKI

3.000 year-old culture...



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Halkidiki features in many Greek myths: it is said that the Giant Enceladus was buried in Kassandra, that Giant Olympus threw a rock forming Athos peninsula and that Sithonia took its name by Sithon, the son of the ancient Greek god Poseidon.

The remains of ancient extinct animal species found at Nikiti, Vrasta and Triglia, witness Halkidiki's past. The findings at Petralona cave prove man's presence in the region, 700,000 years ago –the findings include a human skull, dating back 200,000 years.

The first traces of a civilized human community appear in 4,000BC. The first inhabitants were Thracians and Pelasgians. During the 8th century BC new inhabitants arrived from Eretria and Halkida (hence the name Halkidiki). By the 5th century new city states have formed such as Aineia, Gigonos, Lipaxos, Potidea, Sani, Mendi, Skioni, Aiyai, Neapoli, Aphytis, Olynthos, Sermyli, Galipsos, Toroni, Sarti, Pyloros, Dion, Kleonai, Olofyxos, Akanthos, Stagira, Apollonia, Arnea and Anthemous. By the end of the 5th century the 32 most powerful cities founded the "federation of Chalkideans" under the leadership of Olynthos. The federation was later dissolved -in 379BC- by the Spartans.

In 348BC the area was incorporated to the kingdom of Macedons, leading to the formation of three major cities Kassandria and Ouranoupolis in 325BC and Antigoneia in 280BC. In 168BC the Romans conquered the area leading to its decay.

In 1430 the region was conquered again, this time by the Ottomans, incorporating Halkidiki into the administrative district of Thessaloniki. Halkidiki was divided into three areas -to fulfill certain tax-collecting demands. Kassandra, the first peninsula, Hasikohoria –as far as the bay of Toroni and Thermaic Gulf- and Mademohoria, while Mount Athos remained a separate area. The 18th century is a period of prosperity for Halkidiki, an element that explains why the coastal villages became a common target of pirate raids.

In May 1821, under the leadership of **Emmanuel Pappas**, Halkidiki joined the revolution against the Ottoman empire, unsuccessfully, leading to a second strike of the resistance in 1854 under the leadership of **Tsiamis Karatasos**.

During the early 20th century the people of Halkidiki joined the fight for the liberation of Macedonia. The long-awaited liberation arrived in October 1912. Ten years later the arrival of thousands of refugees from Asia Minor led to the formation of 27 new villages that contributed enormously to the region's cultural and economic growth.



Ancient Stagira -findings



Ammon Zeus sanctuary

Archaeological sites

Ancient town Olynthos

The area was constantly inhabited since the Neolithic Age. According to mythology, the town was built by the brother of Olynthos, the son of the mythic King of Thrace, Strymonas. Olynthos was killed by a lion and his brother built the town to honour his brother's name. However, the linguists insist that olynthos is the name of the wild fig tree, which is in abundance in the area, and the town was named after it.

Around 650 BC refugees from Pieria, hunted by the Macedonian army, settled in the area. The Persian army destroyed the town in 479 BC, and offered the region to their allies from Evia (Halkida). Later on, Olynthos joined the Athenian Alliance and then the Community of Halkida (Evia). From this alliance the town gained great profits (mainly financial). So, it became the capital of the Euboian colonies in Halkidiki and was able to support a huge army (about 20.000 soldiers). During the Peloponnesian War the area grew more, had its own monetary unit and provided protection to all the Euboian refugees in Greece.

When the Macedonian State faded, the army of Olynthos conquered its territories and reached the ancient town of Pella (389 BC). In 382 BC, after a three year-long siege, the Spartans captured the town and destroyed the Euboian Community. Nevertheless, the town quickly recovered and became wealthy and powerful again. In 348 BC the Macedonian Army, under the command of Philip II, conquered it and destroyed it. The town was never again inhabited and its destruction is remembered as one of the darkest moments of the entire ancient world.

Ancient town Toroni

Migrants from Evia inhabited Toroni in the 8th century BC. The town joined the Athenian Alliance, until the Spartans conquered it. King Philip II of Macedonia conquered the town in 348 BC while in 168BC the region fell to the Romans.

Ancient Toroni was one of the biggest and wealthiest towns of Halkidiki. Its location is described by Thucydides, along with the siege of Likithos (the small and steep rocky peninsula on the south end of the beach, which was part of the walls of Ancient Toroni) by the Spartans during the Peloponnesian War. During the years of the Roman Occupation and the Byzantine Era, the walls of the town were reinforced to protect it from sea and land. They were built with the construction material that had been left from the ancient acropolis. The excavation works in the area began in 1975 by the Australian Archaeological Institute in Athens. The findings indicated that the area had been constantly inhabited since the Early Copper Age. Some very important vessels were found in the town cemetery. Among them a wonderful silver pitcher, which dates from the 5th century BC, with engraved Medusas on the handles, which is now exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki. The visitor can see part of the town's walls and ruins from the acropolis. The docks of the harbour, made of huge granite stones, were discovered at the bottom of the sea, along with remainders of stonewalls, which continue on the shore and were probably the town's warehouses.

Ancient town Akanthos

It was the colony of the city of Andros, which was built around 650 BC, one of the biggest and wealthiest colonies in Halkidiki and the most powerful harbour of the region, with its own monetary unit



Castle of Ancient Toroni

(one of the most beautiful of its time). Its inhabitants joined forces with the Persian Army, then the Athenians and finally the Spartans. In 199 BC the Romans plundered the town, divided it in smaller properties and gave them to the legionnaires. At a certain point the Romans were the only inhabitants of the area. They named the town Ericius (Erissos). The name later became Ierissos. The ancient town Akanthos was built on the hills, covering an area of 140 acres. The ruins, that the visitor can see, are traces of the town's walls and houses. A public building with two wells, both with marble openings, was excavated in the middle of the settlement. The excavation works in the area started almost 25 years ago at the town's cemetery. Today, the village of Ierissos is built right on top of it. More than 9.000 tombs from the Hellenistic and Classic Time were excavated. Most findings are exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of Polygyros.

Ancient town Stagira

The birthplace of the philosopher Aristotle was a colony of Andros, founded in 655 B.C. The first name of the city was Orthagoria. Ally, initially of the Athenians and later of the Spartans, the city was occupied by Philippos in 349 B.C., after the destruction of Olynthos. Philippos, however, rebuilt the city in order to honour the great philosopher, tutor of Alexander the Great. When Aristotle died, his fellow-citizens transported his bones to Stagira and set up a monument. The excavations in the region began in 1990. The most impressive piece that was brought to light is the wall, at the top of the hill that was built in the classic years. The different ways of construction can be distinguished. The wall determines the western limits of the ancient city, surrounded by the sea. The powerful fortification supplemented round and square towers and ramparts that connected with heavy scales. At the top of the hill also appears the relic of the citadel. At the part behind, between the hills, is the well-maintained remainder from some

beautiful, spacious public building, with a gallery and a monumental facade with pillars.

Aristotle

Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC) was born in Stagira. He was a Greek philosopher and polymath, a student of Platon and teacher of Alexander the Great. He is one of the most important founding figures in Western philosophy. Aristotle's writings were the first to create a comprehensive system of Western philosophy, encompassing morality and aesthetics, logic and science, politics and metaphysics. Aristotle was appointed as the head of the royal academy of Macedon. During that time he gave lessons not only to Alexander, but also to two other future kings: Ptolemy and Kassander.

Aristotle's park

Aristotle's park is located in Stagira. The Theme park includes a series of other instruments which when used properly will show the phenomena of nature such as: Solar, Lens, Pentaphone, Optical Discs, Pendulum, Water turbine, Inertia spheres, Parabolic reflectors and Telescopes.

Aristotle's Park is an excellent place to learn about activities and interactive games. When the weather is good, you are able to see some of the monasteries on Mouth Athos, using the telescopes.



Aristotle's park

Petralona cave

Near the village of Petralona, at the base of Mount Katsika, one can find the entrance of the Cave of Petralona. It was accidentally discovered in 1959 by a villager. They named it “Red stones” (Kokkines Petres) because of the red earth which coloured the stalagmites and stalactites. It covers an area of 10.000 m2. “The cave is part of an extensive cavern system in calcareous Mesozoic deposits containing large quantities of fossil mammalian bones including horse, cave bear, lion and others” encyclopedia Britannica says.

In 1960 Dr. Aris Poulianos found a complete skull and part of the skeleton of an erect hominid. It belonged to a woman between 25-35 years old. The skull is dated as being 700.000 years old and the traces of fire found next to it, around 1.000.000 years old. It is considered one of the earliest human findings in Europe.

The cave provides a breathtaking spectacle of geology beauty. In the part named “cemetery of Giants”, 14 different types of animal-bones were found. The “Great Hall” has huge stalagmites in white coral-like. The “Hall of Roots” has fine roots above the cave having pierced the roof and formed a net.

There is a Museum near the cave which contains many of the archaeological findings of the cave. The authentic skull is in the paleontological collection of the Aristotelian Museum of Thessaloniki, but there is a replica inside the cave, where it was found. More info: ☎ +30-373-73365,

➤ <http://odysseus.culture.gr/>



Petralona Cave

Museums

Archaeological Museum (Polygyros)

The Museum has a fascinating collection of archaeological finds from all over Halkidiki. Exhibits include clay figurines and coins from Olynthos, vases from Toroni, parts of the roof of the temple of Zeus Ammon from Kallithea, reliquary chests, fisherman's equipment, lamps, jewels and amphorae from Akanthos, now the town of Ierissos, and funerary steles and the statue of a woman from the 1st century BC, from the sanctuary of a deified hero, from Stratoni. (More Info: ☎ +30 23710 22148).

Museum of Fishing Vessels and Equipment (Nea Moudania)

The Museum is largely the result of forty years of untiring efforts by Stavros Kovrakis, a passionate collector of the treasures hidden in the seas of Greece. It also enjoys the support of the Moudania Yacht Club. The Museum has an educational and research role, also doing much to promote the local identity and keep alive its links with its history. The items on display include ancient anchors, fishing nets, fishing rods and hooks, compasses, beacons and lamps and many other intriguing exhibits. There are 3D recreations of a variety of fishing techniques, demonstrating how the different kinds of vessel and net are used, with replicas of fishing boats and a rich archive of documents and illustrations. One of the most fascinating items is the bouyianδες, a traditional fishing vessel



Museum of Fishing Vessels and Equipment

formerly seen in the Sea of Marmara, introduced to Greece by the refugees from Asia Minor. The Museum also offers a thrilling insight into the strange and magical world beneath the sea, with its vast range of plant and animal life.

(More Info: ☎ +30 23730 26166)

On the ground floor of the Aretra building in the central square of Athytos there is a display of folk exhibits created on the initiative of the painter Nikos Paralís. The items represent the whole cycle of rural life in the region, with domestic utensils, tools, implements and so on. Open: afternoons.

Folklore Museum (Arnea)

The Museum is housed in the building known as the Yiatradiko, one of the oldest listed buildings in Halkidiki (1750-1755). It is a two-storey structure, built in the Macedonian style with a tower and projecting balcony. The ground floor has an exhibition of agricultural artifacts, photographs from the period 1880-1950, various items used in the daily lives of the local people, as well as implements used in beekeeping, building, baking, etc. The mezzanine floor houses a collection of carpenter's tools and items from the traditional coffee house. On the upper floor the visitor can inspect a loom and various pieces of equipment used in weaving, as well as an old fireman's pump, local costumes, weights, a brazier, washing boards, etc. There is also a special room which recreates a traditional Arnea domestic interior.



Folklore Museum - Arnea

Towers

Stavronikita (in Sani Resort). It is 8 m. high and must have been built at the acropolis of ancient Sani. In 1543, the tower used to protect the "metochi" of Stavronikita Mt Athos monastery.

St Paul in Fokea and St Paul's crypt. Its height is 17 m. and it was built after 1407 with ancient blocks which probably came from Potidea. Its purpose was the protection of farmers working in the "metochi" of St Paul's Monastery.

Mariana in Olynthos (and St Nicholas church). It was built by the monks of Dochiariou Monastery in 1375 and still exists today to a height of about 15 m.

Tower of Galatista (and two watermills). It is a Byzantine structure in the center of the village, probably built in the 14th century.

Krouna in Ierissos. It is preserved almost to its full height (15 m.). The surrounding wall is a Byzantine fortification which protected the property of Chelandrariou Monastery. It is called the "Tower of Krouna" because of the many crows which had their nests there (kourouna = crow).

Prosforion in Ouranoupolis. The biggest preserved tower in Halkidiki, was built for the Monastery Vatopediou before 1344 for the protection of the "metochi" (metochi = dependant of the monastery).



Stavronikita Tower

Traditional villages

The vernacular architecture of Halkidiki is a local version of the familiar Macedonian style. The region offers a wide range of interesting buildings, from simple one-room dwellings to fine mansions. There is also the distinctive mix of buildings with narrow, broad facades, the area's main characteristic.

Mademohoria

The *mademohoria* take their name from the Turkish word for mine, and they are the mining villages which enjoyed great prosperity during the years of Ottoman rule, exploiting the lead and silver deposits of the region. The men of those villages had extracted silver for the sultan from the deposits in Mt. Stratonikos. Many of them were fine workers in metal, as well as miners. These villages enjoyed special privileges and a certain amount of autonomy; although there was a local Turkish governor, he allowed the villagers great leeway to run their own affairs. The villages set up a sort of federation, administered by twelve *vekilides* or representatives of the *mademohoria*. The individual mining villages were as follows: Galatista, Vavdos, Kazantzi Mahalas (now Stagira), Stanos, Varvara, Liarigovi (now Arnea), Novoselo (now Neochori), Isvoros (now Stratoniki), Horouda, Revenikia (now Megali Panagia) and Ierissos.

Zervochoria

These are the villages of Geroplatanos and Paleochora (between Agios Prodromos and

Arnea), with the small nearby settlements of Sana and Riza. Due to their position on the mountainside the villages face the sun rise to their left, unlike most of the neighbouring villages – hence the name, from the Greek word *zervos* = left.

Fishing villages

The picturesque seaside villages of Halkidiki initially were home to families of fishermen. Each village had its little harbour where the fishermen moored their vessels after returning from the sea. In 1922, when the great wave of refugees from Asia Minor arrived in the region, these little villages were transformed. The state granted the refugees land near the sea, not being farmed at the time, and the new inhabitants demonstrated their mettle in building up new and robust communities. Many of the villages have names beginning with Neos or Nea (new), and then the name of the town or village they left behind in Asia Minor (e.g. Nea Moudania, Nea Triglia, etc.).

War legends

Persian King Xerxis canal

The Canal -reputedly built on the orders of the Persian King Xerxes across a narrow isthmus on the Athos peninsula in northern Greece to allow his fleet safe access into the Aegean in advance of the Persian invasion of Greece in the early 5th century BC- must have been a remarkable engineering operation for its time. An earlier invasion fleet had come to grief when rounding



Geroplatanos



Captain Hapsas monument

the dangerous Mount Athos headland. Yet apart from a piece in the central sector of the isthmus, almost nothing of this canal is visible today, nor the remains of building structures and harbour installations; what information there is about it comes from accounts by ancient writers, notably Herodotus, and 19th century travellers.

Macedonian warriors

The Greek revolution in Macedonia started in Halkidiki, where the population was almost entirely Greek, in 1821. One of the prime instigators of the revolt was *Dimitrios Karatasos*, better known as *Tsamis Karatasos*. *Emmanouil Pappas* - who started the revolution, had the support of the monks of Athos and the inhabitants of Kassandra, Polygyros and the Mademohoria. *Captain Stavros Hapsas* from Kassandra, was also one of the leaders of the Greek Revolution of 1821 in Macedonia. He and his men fell heroically in the battle of Vasilika, 25km from Thessaloniki, in June 1821.

Folk & cultural events

Nea Fokea - Three days of festivities at the end of June, in honour of the Apostle Paul (June 28-30), as well as the celebrations on July 14 to commemorate the arrival of the first refugees from Asia Minor.

Nea Moudania - The sardine festival in the middle of July.

Olynthos - The olive festival in the last three days of July.

Olympiada - The mussel festival on July 6-7, feast days of Agia Kyriaki.

Ierissos - A traditional festival with food and wine, on the 20th July – feast day of the Prophet Elijah.

Mavro Aloni - This is the location in Ierissos where in 1821 during the uprising of Halkidiki Sidik Yusuf Bey killed 400 local people. Every year the massacre is commemorated on the third day of Easter, with a service followed by a special dance, known as the kangeleftos, a recreation of the slaughter, and songs full of the people's longing for freedom. The religious ceremonies begin in the main church of the village and then feature a procession led by the priests, with the icon of the Resurrection, banners and the national flag, making its way to Aloni to the sound of chanting and the beating of the wooden prayer board. There is also a festival at Vavdos on July 20, on the feast day of the Prophet Elijah.

Nea Roda - Sardine festival on the last Monday in July.

Vrastama - Raki festival on the 14th and 15th of August.

Arnea - The town celebrates the feast days of Agia Paraskevi on July 26 and Agios Panteleimon on the following day, both rich and varied folk events. On Easter day in the village square the local people revive the old Easter Kiosk tradition, in which girls from dance groups dressed in traditional costumes regale visitors with painted eggs, pies, buns and wine, wishing them a Happy Easter and exchanging the traditional greeting 'Christ is Risen'. On



Folk dances



Ierissos, Mavro Aloni ceremony

the following day there is the tradition known as the "zygisma", and on the third day of Easter the ritual known as the Koutsamani, in which local people ride on horseback (in traditional costume) up the hill to worship the icons and join in the traditional dancing. There is then a shooting contest, using suspended red eggs as the targets, and once that is over they come down to the Chapel of Agia Paraskevi for more dancing and feasting.

Taxiarchis - Mushroom and fir festivals at the beginning of September.

Agios Mamas - There is a particularly interesting merchants' fair on September 1-5, accompanied by all sorts of cultural events.

Nikiti - Three-day traditional festival to mark the feast day of Nikitas Megalomartyras, on the 15th of September.

Polygyros - There is a local celebration on May 17 to commemorate the declaration of the uprising in Halkidiki. The best-known feast days are those of the Virgin (August 15), Agios Nikolaos Orfanos (June 20) and the Prophet Elijah (July 20). On October 18 the town celebrates the anniversary of its liberation from Ottoman rule in 1912. It is also well known for its carnival celebrations, going back to the 1950's. On Carnival Sunday wine and food are provided for the revelers as they watch the floats go past in the carnival parade.

➤ www.polygyros.gr

Stratoni - Carnival parades with floats have been staged in recent years in the district of Stratoni, in the Municipality of Aristotelis. ➤ www.karnavalistratoni.gr



Local feast

Festivals

Festival of the Sea – Nea Moudania

The Festival of the Sea is renowned for its musical and theatrical events. The town also hosts the sardine festival in the middle of July, where visitors are treated to grilled fish and white wine. ☎ +30 23730 65037,

➤ www.nea-propontida.gr

Sani Festival

Sani Resort has hosted its own cultural festival, the Sani Festival, best-known for its programme of jazz performances by international stars. Every night from mid-July to the end of August, the air is full of unforgettable sounds from the stage on Sani Hill. The Festival is organized into three main units: Jazz on the Hill, concerts of Greek music and a programme of classical concerts under the title Sani Classic. There are also dance performances, and exhibitions of paintings, sculpture and photography. ☎ +30 2310 - 317327, 23740, 99400, ➤ www.sanifestival.gr

Athytos

The town of Athytos has been organizing a festival of musical and theatrical events, special performances for children, exhibitions, book presentations, etc.

➤ www.kassandra.gr

Festival of Kassandra – Siviri

Kassandra Festival attracts top names from the world of music and theatre. There are parallel events staged in all the local districts of the municipality.



Siviri amphitheater

3.000 years-old culture...

The Festival is staged in the months of July and August.

☎ +30 23740 23997 ➤ www.kassandrafestival.gr

The G-Hotels group, has been organizing a cultural programme, with exhibitions and other visual art events. The programme runs from April to October.

☎ +30 23740 22100, ➤ www.ghotels.gr.

Paliouri has been staging a By the Sea Festival, at Porto Valitsa, with musical and visual arts events.

Porto Carras Festival

The Porto Carras Festival has been held over the last few years, in the open-air area between the Meliton and Sithonia Hotels. It features musical and theatrical events.

☎ +30 23750 77000, ➤ www.portocarras.com

Athos

There are cultural events in Aristotelis and in the municipal districts of Paleochori, Neochori, Varvara and Stanos. The programme begins on July 1 and lasts till September 5.

Polygyros Festival

There is a particularly interesting Festival of Folklore and Tradition (August 10-15) organized by the Polygyros Folklore Society. The events are held from July to August 15.

☎ +30 23710 21420, ➤ www.polygyros.gr



SPECIAL INFO

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki is the largest university in the Balkans. It was named after the philosopher Aristotle, who was born in Stagira. Its campus covers 230.000 square meters in the center of the city. In its library, 800.000 book titles and 300.000 volumes of periodicals can be found. More than 95.000 Greek and foreigner students study at the Aristotle University.



Sani Festival

SOURCES:
www.en.wikipedia.org

HALKIDIKI

Pilgrims of Orthodoxy...

Paul the Apostle introduced Christianity to Halkidiki region in 50AD when he passed through Apollonia on his way from Philippi to Thessaloniki. Christianity became the Roman state's official religion during the 4th century, which explains the findings of early Christian churches all over Halkidiki.

The foundation of Mount Athos monastic community transformed the area into the most important religious place for Orthodox pilgrims –with the Mount Atho's monks founding most of the monasteries outside the Athos peninsula.



Chapels are found all over Halkidiki



Mount Athos view from Sithonia



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Mount Athos

The monastic community of Mt. Athos was founded in the 9th century, when the Emperor Basil I issued a chrysobull or imperial decree allowing the monks to live there in peace. By the 10th century a whole host of small monastic settlements had developed around Karyes. In 963 the first monastery, Megali Lavra, was constructed – followed eventually by nineteen others.

Mount Athos (*Agion Oros*) was the bay of ancient Greeks or as monks put it, the “Land of Virgin Mary”. It consists of twenty monasteries, several skites (hermitages) and places of absolute tranquillity. It covers an area of about 336 sq.km, with 112km of coastline and 1.550 inhabitants; it is an imposing place in the northern Aegean, surrounded by trees and bluff cliffs. Its mountains are 2.033m. high, extend to the sky and approach the clouds.

The transformation of a mountain into a sacred place made Mount Athos a unique artistic creation combining the natural beauty of the site with the expanded forms of architectural creation. The Mount Athos monasteries are a veritable conservatory of masterpieces, ranging from wall paintings by Frangos Castellanos at the Great Lavra to portable icons, gold objects, embroideries, or illuminated manuscripts which each monastery jealously preserves. Mount Athos exerted a lasting influence in the Orthodox world, of which it is the spiritual center, and on the development of religious architecture and monumental painting. Since 1988,

Mount Athos is listed in *UNESCO'S WORLD HERITAGE LIST*.

Monumental Monasteries

Monastery **Dependency of Flogita (Kassandra)**

It dates back to 1311. Until 1924 it operated as a monastery dependency of the Russian monastery, later as annex of the American Red Cross, while during the Nazi Occupation (1944) it was bombed by the Bulgarian conquerors. In 1999 the City Council of Moudania decided to grant the area to the 10th Ephorate for Byzantine Antiquities in order for the latter to undertake the necessary restoration works and for the building to be utilized as the *Center for Byzantine Culture in Halkidiki*, “Justinian”, as it was named by the team of archaeologists responsible for the works. The building will house the museum of the monastery dependency.

Monastery of **Zygos (Athos region)**

It is in the greater area of Ouranoupolis, about forty meters beyond the Mount Athos borderline. It was dedicated to Prophitis Ilias (Prophet Elias) and it must have been founded around the year 991 AC. It is the only example of a big Mount Athos Monastery, the plain structure of which we can study. The excavation works are still running. Visitors are accepted upon request.

📞 For information call +30 2310 285163, +30 23770 71389



Holy Monastery of Simonopetra



Remains of Zygos Monastery

Monasteries

(outside Mount Athos)

Monastery of **Zografou (Kassandra)**

Located in the village of Zographou, between Nea Silata and Nea Moudania, the Monastery of Zographou was a dependency. Its remaining buildings are a Byzantine tower dated from the 14th century, the main church built in 1842 and a fountain of 1853. This monastery is situated just before the beginning of the peninsula of Kassandra.

Monastery of **the Annunciation of Theotokos in Ormylia (Sithonia)**

Panagia Philanthropini, *Center for Social Advancement and Medical Prevention and Research*, (Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Who Loves Humankind) is located near the town of Ormylia. The mother monastery, the *Cenobium of the Annunciation of the Mother of God*, is a large monastic community with over 120 nuns from various nations—the majority of whom hold university degrees. The convent is a dependency of the Monastery of Simonopetra on Mount Athos. The *Ormylia Art Diagnosis Center* was founded in 1996 by the sisterhood of the women's monastery to study and research with scientific methodology and adequacy the hagiographic tradition of the Orthodox Church, in order to decorate the Monastery Catholicon. ☎ +30 23710 41278

Monastery of **Agios Prodomos (St. John the Baptist) in Metamorfozi (Sithonia)**

The Monastery is located 2km northern the village Metamorfozi and was founded in

1975. The buildings initially belonged to the old monastery of St Dionysios. The church was constructed according to the Byzantine architecture in 1981. Today, 50 nuns live in the Monastery. ☎ For information call +30 23750 61592

Monastery of **Saint Arsenios the Cappadocian in Ormylia (Sithonia)**

It is situated near Vatopedi village, between the Monasteries of Ormylia and St. John the Baptist (Agios Prodomos). It was founded in 1986 and celebrates on the 10th of November. 14 monks live there. The Monastery is not open for visitors on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The rest of the days the pilgrims can visit it from 08:00-13:00 and from 17:00-20:00.

☎ For information call +30 23710 41880

Dependency (Metochion) of the life-bearing spring in Ierissos (Athos region)

The Dependency (Metochion) of the life-bearing spring, which belongs to the Monastery of Hilandary, is located about five km outside Stratoni, on the way to Ierissos, after the bridge of Kokkinolakos. The small, square Byzantine chapel is located atop a high rocky cliff and is surrounded by other buildings – cells, woodworking shops, manmade pond with a fish farm, and an open-air guest atrium, where visitors can enjoy monks' hospitality.

Monastery of **the Annunciation in Olympiada (Athos region)**

It is located on the northeastern side of Halkidiki on Strymonikos Gulf, near the



Monastery of Panagia Philanthropini



Monastery of St Arsenios

village of Olympiada and ancient Stagira. It became a Monastery in 1993 and is dedicated to the Annunciation. Today, three nuns live there. The view of the lush green mountains is spectacular. The monastery is daily open from sunrise to sunset.

📞 For information call +30 23760 51200

Monastery of **Saint Kosmas Etoles in Arnea (Mountain Halkidiki)**

The Monastery lies 2km outside the village Arnea amidst beautiful, majestic natural scenery on the southeastern slopes of Mt Holomontas, with a view towards Mt Athos. The Monastery is built on the spot on which Saint Cosmas appeared to the devout women, on July 23, 1943, (the day the Bulgarians marched into Arnea) and said "Do not be afraid. I am here to protect you". The Monastery officially opened in 2001. It is open for the public every day from 09:00-13:00 and 16:00-20:00. 📞 For information call +30 23723 04064

Monastery of **Agia Anastasia Farmakolytria (Mountain Halkidiki)**

The monastery of Agia Anastasia Farmakolytria (St Anastasia the Curer) stands near Vassilika of Thessaloniki, at the foot of Adrianos, one of Mount Hortiatiss's summits. It was built in 1522 by St Theonas, who later became metropolitan bishop of Thessaloniki. During the Turkish domination, the monastery owned many acres of land but it was destroyed and was rebuilt from scratch in 1850. Today, it belongs to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and honors St Anastasia on the 22nd of December.

📞 For information call + 30 23960 22440



Monastery of Agia Anastasia

Old churches

Central region

The church of the Virgin

Situated on a verdant slope about 2km outside the village of Megali Panagia, the church was built in 1863 and gave its name to the village. It was almost completely destroyed by an earthquake and has to be rebuilt.

The church of Agios Stefanos

Located in the traditional village Arnea, this church is a unique monument, where visitors can attend the mass and in the same time watch through the glass floor archaeological findings dating back from the 4th to 17th century.

The church of Taxiarchis

Located in the homonymous village Taxiarchis (Archangels), the church was built on the ruins of an early byzantine temple. The Miraculous Icon of Archangel Michael is covered by silver. On the second floor of the Holy Temple exists a small Ecclesiastical Museum with icons, utensils and books that are approximately dated in the 18th century.

Kassandra

The church of Taxiarchis

It is located at 1km southeast of the settlement of Potidea. It was built in 1872 with materials taken from the site of ancient Potidea.

The church of Agios Dimitrios

Built in 1858, this church is located in the square of the village Athytos. It has a unique architecture, built in the form of a basilica, with a beautiful dome, old religious icons and glyphs.



Athytos - Agios Dimitrios

The chapel of Panagia Faneromeni

It is located near the wonderful beach of the same name, on the road leading to Nea Skioni. Built just on the shore, the chapel of Panagia Phaneromeni has some amazing frescoes dating from the 16th century.

The chapel of the Holy Virgin

It is located at 1km northwest of the village of Kalandra. The chapel of the Holy Virgin is worth seeing for its fine frescoes dating from 1619.

The chapel of Agios Panteleimon

This small and lovely chapel is located in the village of Kallithea, south in the peninsula of Kassandra. The chapel is interesting to visit for its particularly beautiful murals.

Sithonia

The church of Agios Nikitas

Located in the middle of the village of Nikiti, the church of Agios Nikitas is one of the most important old buildings remaining in the village and was built in 1867.

The church of Agios Georgios

3km south of Nikiti stands the little church of Saint George which was built on the site where stood the 5 century-old three-aisled early-Christian basilica of St. George, destroyed in the 6th century. Nearby the church there are two underground vaulted graves dating from the early Christian times.

The Sofronios basilica

Located at 9km south of Nikiti, the ruins of the three-aisled basilica of Elia date from the 5th century. The basilica has fine frescoes and a beautiful mosaic floor in its central nave; five graves were found in the narthex.



Nikiti - Early Christian basilica of St. George

The chapel of the Apostle Paul

About 20km south of Nikiti is the chapel of the Apostle Paul, built during the late 19th century, on the site of an older church. It is worth visiting for its beautiful well-preserved interior fountain dated from 1713.

The church of Agios Athanasios

This 5th century church stands near the road leading from Toroni to Porto Koufo, among two other early-Christian churches. It is a three-aisled church with beautiful marble decorations and has, in its central nave, a mosaic floor.

The church of Agios Athanasios

It is located in the village of Sykia. It was built in 1819, was burnt down and rebuilt, in 1861. The church is very interesting for its unique wood-carved icon-stands dating from 1703, its beautiful wooden roof and fine stone relief on its exterior walls.

The church of the Dormition of the Virgin

East of the village of Neos Marmaras is the church of the Dormition of the Virgin. The church is part of the dependency of the Grigoriou Monastery and was built in 1865.

East Coast (Athos region)

The shrine of the Panagia Spiliotissa (Virgin Mary) of the cave

It is located in Stagira, across the archaeological site with the statue of Aristotle. In Byzantine times, this was a small monastery dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary. It is carved into a rock and lies about 200 meters from the settlement.

The church of the nativity of the Virgin

Built in Stagira, in 1814, it presents icons from the 19th century: a wonder-working icon of the Virgin at the Door and murals of the Evangelists and the Archangel Michael.

The church of Saint Nicholas

It is located in Stratoniki village. Built in 1812, the church has icons from the 19th century, an old icon of St Nicholas from the 16th century and many old treasures.

The church of Saint Nicholas

The oldest church of Ammouliani island was constructed in 1860. The icons of Christ and St Nicholas as well as the Byzantine icons from Asia Minor are worthy to see.

Religious festivals and events

6th of January ("Theofania"-Epiphany)

A splendid event, which is celebrated in every coastal settlement. People use to submerge the Holy Cross and jump to the sea in order to find it.

The celebration of Agios (Saint) Theodoros (1st Saturday of Lent)

A nice traditional feast is held in Agios Nikolaos, which is located in the bay of Panagia (Virgin Mary).

25th of March - The Evangelism of Virgin Mary (Lady Day) is the national celebration of freedom and is celebrated in every settlement. Special feast is organized in Ormylia.

Saturday of Lazaros - Many villages celebrate this day with the so-called "Lazarines".

Easter - Easter is a significant period celebrated in every settlement with special pomp and circumstance. Lots of folklore events take place during that period, such as the rotation of the Epitaph in the evening of Holy Friday, Christ's resurrection at the midnight of Saturday. It is also worth mentioning that during Easter Sunday the locals cook lambs on the spit, dance traditional dances and attend local concerts.

Tuesday after Easter Sunday - In Ierissos people dance the "Mavronios" dance, whereas in Arnea people enjoy a special game with eggs.

23rd of April (Agios Georgios celebration) - In Arnea people entertain themselves in the central square of the village, whereas in Olynthos, Paliouri and Kalandra people enjoy the traditional festival.

21st of May - (Agios Konstantinos and Agia Eleni celebration) - Traditional festival in Ouranoupolis, in Hanioti.

Pentecost - Agio Pneyma (Holy Spirit) This day is celebrated with nice traditional festivals and events in Neos Marmaras, in Sykia and Kalandra.

24th of June (Agios Ioannis celebration) Solstice in Klidonas. At night people light fires in Polygyros and have fun with traditional dances and songs. In Potidea people enjoy the feast.

29th of June (Apostle Petros and Pavlos celebration - Saint Paul and Peter celebration) - Impressive folklore religious feasts in Ormylia and Nea Fokea.

20th of July (Prophet Helias celebration) - Traditional festival in Ierissos with free food and wine. In Vavdos people celebrate "ta kazania tou Ai-Ilii" (the caldrons of Prophet Helias) with free food and wine. Traditional festivals take place in Polygyros and Petralona too.

26-27th of July (Agia Paraskevi / Panteleimonas celebration) - Religious feast in Arnea and folklore festival with several events, textile exhibition and other forms of folklore art. Traditional festivals in the church of Agia Paraskevi in Kassandra, in Agios Nikolaos, Galatista, Neos Marmaras (Parthenion), Nikiti, Nea Triglia, Kallithea and Kryopigi.

6th of August - Traditional festival in Metamorfofi, in the church of Agios Pavlos.

15th of August - The great feast of Virgin Mary is fully celebrated in every place of Halkidiki (bear in mind that in Mount Athos people celebrate that day according to the old calendar). Traditional festivals in Megali Panagia, Polygyros, Sarti, Portaria, Athytos, Kaladra, Nea Triglia, Lakoma, Krini, Kryopigi, Paliouri.

23rd of August - Traditional festivals in Potidea, Kalandra, Nea Roda, Nea Skioni.



Folk dances

29th of August (Agios Prodomos celebration) - Festival in Neos Marmaras, Agia Paraskevi.

8th of September (Panagia celebration - Virgin's Feast Day) - Traditional feasts in Moudania (Panagia Koryfini), in Ierissos, in Pyrgadikia, in Kassandria, in Polychrono.

25th of December - The Nativity is celebrated in every place with pomp and circumstance.

26th of December - In Ierissos people slaughter a pig. Then follows dinner and a folklore festival.

The footsteps of St Paul in Halkidiki

On the eastern side of Nea Fokea lies "Agiasma" (Holly water) of Apostle Paul. It is an underground corridor of about 20km in length, which has been carved on the natural rock and ends in a rectangular underground chamber. It is probably an ancient burial construction that, during the Byzantine period, was rearranged into a church. The chamber's walls had been painted during some period of time, but a large part of these paintings was destroyed by humidity. Tradition says that Apostle Paul was teaching at Ierissos at the time when haunted and with his life in danger he went into a hole. Then, passing through an underground corridor, he arrived at Kassandra and came out at the chamber of the "agiasma".



Nea Fokea - St. Paul's tower



SPECIAL INFO

Roadside chapels

In Halkidiki, like everywhere in Greece, the visitors will see a lot of roadside miniature chapels. Those are built to act as a remembrance for a traffic accident victim, by a survivor of a potentially tragic accident, or to publicly thank a saint for a benefit.

SOURCES:

www.halkidiki-holidays.gr/
www.greeka.com/macedonia/halkidiki/halkidiki-churches.htm

HALKIDIKI

Sea, Sun, Sand...

Crystal-clear blue waters, golden sand and a coastline of more than 550km create marvelous bays and beaches that excite us all! Halkidiki has a place for everybody. Here you will find popular beach bars -with music and water sports facilities- ideal for socializing. If peace of mind is what you are searching for, Halkidiki has many secret, quiet places by the sea, perfect for chilling out. There are beaches offering family activities -where children can play safely- yet there are also places with deep waters, ideal for scuba diving and explorers of the deep sea. The turquoise waters, the pine forests behind the beach and the wide range of facilities on offer, create choices that suit every taste. No matter what you are looking for, Halkidiki has the place for you!



Sithonia - Kavourotrypes



Sani beach



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

West coast



Nea Kallikratia: Wide, clean, sandy, fully organised beach, in front of the homonymous village. It has all kinds of restaurants, bars and facilities for water sports.

Flogita: Large, clean and fully organised beach in front of the homonymous settlement. You can find all kinds of restaurants, bars and facilities for water sports. It is connected with the beach of Nea Plagia.

Nea Plagia: This is a wide, sandy beach, located in front of the homonymous settlement. The area is full of restaurants, bars and facilities of water sports. It is connected to the beach Flogita.

Dionysiou: Huge, splendid, sandy, fully organised beach that reaches up to N. Moudania. Fields unfold around it, up to as far as you can see. In the old days, here was the pier for the boats that served the Dionysiou Monastery.

Agios Mamas: Sandy beach, sufficiently organised, that is extended in length of a few kilometres. It is situated in front of the homonymous village.



Nea Plagia

Kassandra



Nea Potidea: Situated in front of the homonymous village, this beach is enormous, sandy and fully organised. It is connected to the beach of Agios Mamas. It has all kinds of restaurants, bars and facilities for water sports.

Sani: In the coast of Sani there are plenty smaller beaches (at both sides of the Tower of Stavronikita Monastery Property). All of them are sandy and provide all comforts to the bathers (restaurants, bar and all kinds of water sports). In the region, there once was the ancient town Sani of Pallini, built by migrants from Eretria. Up to the Roman years, it was one of the most developed cities of Halkidiki.

Siviri: The old Kassandria's fishing port is today a seasonal small settlement around a beautiful, sandy beach with restaurants and bars.

Fourka: At the location called Skala lies a beach that assembles crowds of people in the summertime. The beach is sandy. It also has restaurants, bars and water sports facilities.

Possidi: This is a well organised, sandy beach, located in front of the homonymous settlement. It offers a great variety of restaurants and bars as well as facilities for all kinds of water sports.

Mola Kalyva: Beautiful, sandy beach with the marvellous pinewood forest of Kassandra in the background.

Nea Skioni: Beautiful, sandy, organised beach, in front of the homonymous village.



Possidi

Sithonia



Loutra Agias Paraskevis: Beautiful, sandy and quiet beach, 2km, away from the village of Agia Paraskevi, with the homonymous thermal baths. It has small taverns.

Paliouri: Otherwise known as Kanavitsa or Chrousso (from the name of the old settlement). It is a dreamy sandy beach with pine-trees all around. On the beach you can find hotels, restaurants and bars, as well as facilities for all kinds of water sports.

Glarokavos: Enormous beach, one of the most beautiful in Kassandra, with sand and thin gravel. At the end of it there is a lagoon. The beach has a refreshment stand.

Pefkochori: Wide, sandy and fully organised beach, in front of the homonymous village. During summertime it gathers crowds of visitors. It has all kinds of restaurants, bars and facilities for all water sports.

Hanioti & Polychrono: Wide, sandy and fully organised beach, in front of the homonymous villages. During summertime it gathers crowds of visitors. It has all kinds of restaurants, bars and facilities for all water sports.

Kryopigi: The beach in front of the village, also named Pigadakia, has thin sand and spotless sea. There is a refreshment stand and facilities for water sports.

Kallithea: Sandy beach, in front of the homonymous settlement. It has bars, restaurants and facilities for water sports. Here begins the Toroneos cross-channel swimming contest.

Athytos: There are two beaches, one in each side of the village. They are small, with crystal clear waters. You can find restaurants and bars on both of them.

Nea Fokea: The beach, in front of the settlement is sandy and idyllic. It has restaurants and taverns.

Gerakini: At the location called Scala, there is a harbor in which Gerakini's magnesite, digged out from mines close-by, is shipped away. Around it there is a small coastal settlement. The beach is enormous and sandy, fully organised (with restaurants, bars and facilities for all kinds of water sports).

Kalyves: Beautiful sandy beach within a seasonal settlement.

Psakoudia & Ormylia: A Sandy beach, with small fishing settlement, surrounded by pine-trees. It has restaurants, bars and facilities for water sports.

Metamorfofi: Small beach, with pine-trees and sand, in front of the homonymous settlement. It is one of the most beautiful beaches of central Halkidiki with thin sand, idyllic creeks, dense pine-trees (that extend up to where the waves break) and amazing sunsets.

Nikiti: Wide, sandy beach, in front of the homonymous village. It has restaurants, taverns, bars and facilities for water sports. Here is the finish line of the Toroneos cross-channel swimming contest.

Agios Ioannis: Beautiful and enormous sandy beach with crystal waters.

Koviou: Small, sandy beach. The access is possible only by walking from the main asphalted road.

Kalogria: Beach with white, thin sand and pine-trees that extend to the shore.

Spathies: Small beach with sand and rocks, spotless waters and pine-trees that extend to the shore. >



Spathies

Elia: Narrow beach, with pine and olive-trees that extend to the shore.

Perigiali: Small beach, next to Elia coast.

Lagomadra: The pine-tree orchard reaches up to the thin sand. The beach presents restaurants, bars and facilities for water sports.

Tripotamos: Beach with wide, white sand and pine-trees.

Paradisos: Wide, sandy and very clean, this beach is located on the right of Neos Marmaras. It has restaurants, taverns and bars.

Neos Marmaras: The beach of the village, on its left side, is sandy. It has restaurants and bars.

Porto Carras: In the homonymous seasonal resort, there are many small beaches and creeks, all with thin, white sand, pine-trees and light blue waters. In the resort you can find many restaurants and bars, as well as facilities for all kinds of water sports.

Azapiko: Great in length and width sandy beach with thin, white sand, without vegetation, very little developed.

Tristinika: Immense sandy beach that still reminds us what the beaches of Sithonia looked like in the past, before they were developed. It lies in front of a small settlement, with a few rooms for rent, hotels and taverns. It also has one of the most beautiful beach-bars in Halkidiki.

Aretes: Splendid, very little developed sandy beach, with pine-trees that reach up to the shore in a wonderful creek, in front of the homonymous, small settlement.

Porto Koufo: The beach is situated in front of the homonymous village, on a bay, between tall rocks. The waters are quite deep. There are restaurants, taverns and cafeterias.

Ampelos: Secluded beach, in an impressive place, where a narrow "tongue" of sea enters the abrupt mountain slopes.

Kalamitsi: Astonishing beach with thin, like sugar, white sand and impressive grey rock formations around it. It has restaurants and taverns.

Kriaritsi: Splendid sandy beach in a beautiful landscape with a view over the islets Skepes, Ahinoi and Petalida.

Klimataria: One of the beaches of Sykia. Small, quiet, sandy beach.

Linaraki: Immense, sandy beach with taverns.

Valti: After the beach Linaraki, small sandy beach.

Platanitsi: Astonishing, enormous sandy beach with thin, white sand and crystal waters.

Sarti: Enormous, sandy beach, in front of the homonymous village. It has restaurants, taverns, bars and cafeterias.

Kavourotrypes: A concealed lace of white small sandy beaches, turquoise waters, rocks sculptured by the waves and dense pine-trees that reach up to the shore.

Armenistis: Exotic beach with white, thin sand, full of plane and elm trees, acacias and eucalyptuses. It has organised water sports facilities.

Zografou: Beautiful beach, with white, thin sand, surrounded by rocks.

Koutloumoussi: Beautiful, sandy beach, full of plane-trees.

Karydi: Perhaps the most beautiful beach of Sithonia. White, thin sand, turquoise waters. Small and quiet beach.

Livari: Wide, sandy "tongue" of land penetrating the sea with some pine-trees on it, which forms a small lagoon.

Ormos Panagias: The beach of the homonymous settlement is sandy. There are restaurants, taverns and cafeterias.

Trani Ammouda: Immense, exotic and quiet sandy beach.

Livrohio: Small, sandy beach.

Salonikiou: Wide, sandy and peaceful beach.

Pyrgadikia: Small beach, in front of the homonymous village. There are restaurants, taverns and cafeterias.

Kavourotrypes



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

East coast (Athos region)



Kambos: East from Pyrgadikia, a fantastic, quiet, wide, stretched out, sandy beach, situated in front of a rich olive grove.

Pyrgos: Secluded, pebbly beach, few stubbles, certain farm houses rammed in plane-trees and a few fishing boats.

Develiki: A small fishing settlement; it is the beach of the village Gomati.

There are beautiful small taverns, next to the shore.

Kastri: Next to Develiki, a small, quiet, heavenly beach.

Ierissos: The beach of the homonymous village is enormous and sandy. It has restaurants, taverns and cafeterias.

Vina: Beautiful sandy beach, next to the peninsula Liotopi, after Stratoni.

Olympiada: Astonishing sandy beach with white, thin sand and a plane-tree forest, situated in front of the homonymous village. It has restaurants, taverns, bars and cafeterias, as well as facilities for water sports.

Nea Roda: Small sandy beach, in front of the homonymous village. There are taverns and cafeterias.

Xyropotamos: Before Tripiti, an amazing, quiet, white, sandy beach, with astonishing view to Ammouliani.

Tripiti: Immense sandy beach with shallow, warm and clean waters. There is also a restaurant.

Ouranoupolis: The sandy beach of Ouranoupolis begins from Tripiti and reaches up to the village. Along the shore there are many hotels as well as facilities for all kinds of water sports.

Ammouliani island

Alykes: Beautiful sandy beach with a few trees.

Megali Ammos: A quiet beach with a beautiful landscape and a view over the rocky islets Drenia.

Agios Georgios: Splendid beach with sand and clear waters. There is a restaurant.

Karagatsia: Very quiet beach.

Kalopigado: Small lovely beach.

Nisakia: Tiny, quiet beaches on the northeast side of the island.



Ierissos



Ammouliani

Diving

The sea off the coast of Halkidiki is rich in underwater wildlife, such as corals, sponges, octopi, crabs, sea horses and fish of a thousand varieties. Those of you who have no experience of diving can take lessons at one of the various diving schools. If you are an experienced diver, then there are lots of organized diving sessions you will be welcome to join. Water temperature ranges from 16 degrees Celsius in winter to 26 degrees in summer, at a depth of 20m.

There are also other interesting sights to explore when scuba diving, like caves and shipwrecks:

Over the course of the years our diving centers have taken advantage of certain diving routes. Although many of them widely known, no official plan has been organized and put to motion to promote and advertise these routes so that they can attract tourists. With rather innovative actions four (4) diving routes have been created and put on the map in the vicinity of Sithonia.



Diving centers

www.aqualand.gr	AQUALAND	SARTI
www.ngue.gr	NORTHERN GREECE UNDERWATER EXPLORERS	YOURVOUROU
www.tritonscuba.gr	TRITON	PALIOURI
www.bluedivingcenter.com	BLUE DIVING CENTER	POTIDEA
www.diveclub-kassandra.de	DIVE CLUB KASSANDRA	KASSANDRA
www.seaworld.gr	SEA WORLD	SANI RESORT
www.sldconline.com	SLDC	NEA FOKEA
www.oceanic.cc	OCEANIC DIVING CENTER	NIKITI
www.athos-scuba.gr	ATHOS SCUBA	EAGLES PALACE
www.kalamitsi.com	DOLPHIN DIVING CENTER	KALAMITSI
www.sharkfin.gr	SHARK FIN DIVING	AGIOS NIKOLAOS
www.atlantis-scubadiving.com	ATLANTIS DIVING CENTER	NIKITI
www.oceandive.com	OCEAN DIVE	LAGOMADRA
chalkidites.blogspot.gr	CHALKIDITES	PSAKOUDIA



Ports / Fishing shelters

The ports of Halkidiki are at:

Nea Moudania (Kassandra)

Porto Koufo (Sithonia)

Ormos Panagias (Sithonia)

Ierissos (Athos region)

Stratoni (Athos region)

Ouranoupolis (Athos region)

Fishing in Halkidiki is very popular with fishing opportunities from the shore or on boat in the Aegean waters.

The fishing shelters in Halkidiki are:

Kassandra

Nea Potidea (2), from both sides of Toroneos bay and Thermaikos bay (shelter)

Nea Kallikratia (shelter)

Nea Triglia (shelter)

Nea Fokea (shelter)

Nea Skioni (shelter)

Chrousso Paliouri (Fish-Wharf)

Pefkochori (Fish-Wharf)

Agia Paraskevi (Fish-Wharf)

Siviri (Fish-Wharf)

Sithonia

Nikiti (shelter)

Neos Marmaras (shelter)

Sarti (shelter)

Pyrgadikia (shelter)

Athos region

Ouranoupolis (shelter)

Nea Roda (shelter)

Olympiada (shelter)

Tripiti (Fish-Wharf)

Ammouliani island (shelter & Fish-Wharf)



Cruises

Tour of Mt. Athos

1) The 300 seats' ship "Captain Fotis" and the 99 seats' ship "Ioanna" depart once up to twice a day from Ouranoupolis port, right next to the "gates" of Holy Mount Athos, according to demand. Departure times are 10:30 and 13:45 (second cruise on the same day) and the cruise lasts about 3 hours.

Info: ☎ +30 23770 71071, ✈ www.athos-cruises.gr

2) The luxury cruise ship, "Menia-Maria III" departs daily from Ormos Panagias bound for Agion Oros (the Holy Mount) and Ouranoupolis. The cruise ship offers a large lounge (100 people), a panoramic lounge (150 people) and the sun deck with seasonal seats and tables, with a capacity of 100 people. Departure time for Mount Athos tour is at 9:30. At 13.30 arrival at Ouranoupolis, stay for approx. 2 hours, departure at 15.30 and arrival at 17:00 at Ormos Panagias. **Info:**

☎ +30 23750 31522, ✈ www.halkidiki.com/ormos-travel/index.htm





SPECIAL INFO

The Blue Flag is a voluntary eco-label awarded to over 3450 beaches and marinas in 41 countries across Europe, South Africa, Morocco, Tunisia, New Zealand, Brazil, Canada and the Caribbean. The Blue Flag Programme is owned and run by the independent non-profit organisation Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).



The Blue Flag works towards sustainable development

at beaches/marinas through strict criteria dealing with water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, and safety and other services. Halkidiki, each year, has more than 40 beaches and 2 marinas awarded by the Blue Flag.

DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

HALKIDIKI

Time for sports...

There is plenty to do in Halkidiki! The combination of the blue sea and the beautiful mountains offers a great variety of sports opportunities, such as sailing, water ski, golf, tennis, football, basketball and hiking. The local sports clubs offer a selection of activities ideal for people of all ages, for beginners or regular athletes, so that you can enjoy your holidays to the fullest!



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Golf

Porto Carras Golf Course is located in Porto Carras Grand Resort and it is open all year round. It is a member of the Hellenic Golf Federation. The course covers 77 hectares and was designed by Geoffrey Cornish and William Robinson as a 9 hole course. It was redesigned in 2003 by Roy Machary and opened in 2004 as an 18 hole course. The newly designed course utilizes Seashore Paspalum-Warm season grass. It is an 18-hole, par 72 course with four par 5, four par 3 and 10 par 4 holes. The Porto Carras Golf Course offers a brand new club house, 2 practice range, 1 putting green, 1 chipping green and 1 bunker.

More info: ☎ +30 23750 77300

F: +30 23750 77549, ✉ golf@portocarras.com,

➤ www.portocarras.com

Sailing

Halkidiki actually holds the longest shoreline in Greece which makes it a place that is very favorable for yacht sailing. One of the factors that makes Halkidiki the ideal place to enjoy sailing is its pleasing weather. The weather in Halkidiki is generally Mediterranean, meaning limited rainfalls, a mild winter season and a perfect summer climate. Yacht sailing in Halkidiki is an amazing experience during the summertime due to the warm daytime sunshine and the cool night breeze. Halkidiki also has beautiful beaches, that have been awarded with the European Union Blue Flag.



Sani Marina

Marinas

Sani Marina (Sani Resort, Kassandra,

➤ www.sani-resort.com)

SPECIFICATIONS:

- 32,000 m² with water depth of 3m
- 215 individual berths for craft up to 25m in length
- Pontoons 3m wide, with attached finger piers
- Providing power supply, drinking water, fuel, sewerage and fire protection piping
- Traffic-free roadway around the Marina
- Fully protected by 24-hour Sani Resort security services
- Boat maintenance - on request
- Boat chartering service

Porto Carras Marina (Porto Carras Grand Resort,

➤ www.portocarras.com)

SPECIFICATIONS:

- Water depth of 5,5m 315 individual berths for craft up to 55m in length
- 296 utility points for power supply (220 – 380 V)
- Water supply of vessels, telephone and data TV service
- Fire fighting installation, fuel station, showers, washing machine, dryer and iron
- Pontoons 3m wide, with attached finger piers
- Vessel repair crew
- 24h port Captain service
- Open all year round

Nautical Clubs

- The most active Nautical Clubs of the region, the ones that participate in pan-Hellenic or international races, also



Porto Carras Marina

provide sailing courses for beginners. Nautical Club of Thessaloniki.

☎ +30 2310 414521, ✈ www.ncth.gr

- The Nautical Club of Thessaloniki was founded in 1931 and is one of the oldest nautical athletic associations in Greece. Since 1974 the club is offering offshore sailing teaching, thus giving the residents of Thessaloniki the opportunity and the resources to be involved with sailing and the sea in general.
- Nautical Club Nea Moudania. ☎ +30 23730 23990
- The Nautical Club N. Moudania, offering a great range of activities, has been awarded many times with prizes in international sailing and fishing competitions. Also, the Club offered to the Municipality of Moudania's "Fishing Museum" an important collection of shells from Greek waters, while contributing to the conservation of old fishing equipment.

Sailing races

North Aegean International Sailing Week

Thessaloniki's offshore Sailing Club is organizing every year -in the end of July- the North Aegean International Sailing Week at the Porto Carras Grand Resort. The Cup Yiannis Carras, was named after the founder of the resort and has been giving the first winner's prize since 1977.

ITENBA race, Glarokavos – Kassandra

In the summertime, the well-known sailing-boat races called ITENBA, take place here, starting from the natural marina called Glarokavos.



Swimming - water sports

Crossing of Toroneos Gulf

Built at the narrow entrance of the Sithonia Peninsula (the middle one of the three 'fingers' forming Halkidiki), Nikiti is renowned for having the longest beach in Greece (32km/20 miles long!), a highly developed apiculture, and the most difficult international swimming marathon in Europe: the crossing of Toroneos Gulf (26km /16 miles) takes place every July. ☎ +30 23750 23900, 20066, **fb**: swimmingcrossofToroneos

"Hearty Race" in Toroneos gulf

On Saturday, October 29th 2011, 55 swimmers from Halkidiki and the rest of Greece jumped into the freezing waters of Toroneos and participated in the 6th "Hearty Race" of 5km from Metamorfoosi to Nikiti. The "Hearty Race" is dedicated to the memory of Michalis Georgakoudas, ardent supporter of the Toroneos Sea Crossing.

Water sports

At most of the commercially run beaches you will be able to rent canoes, windsurfing boards, jet skis, bananas, or enjoy a session of water-gliding. Also, some of the sports centers offer water sports lessons.

Beach Volley

Tournaments are organized all over Halkidiki either by the local Athletic Unions, hotel resorts or companies that sponsor them. Beach Volley tournaments are very popular in Halkidiki not only for the participants but mainly for the followers.



Sport courses & fields

Tennis

Almost every hotel resort in Halkidiki offers modern tennis facilities (tennis courts) and almost all of them have a professional tennis teacher available for private lessons. There are also public tennis courts in every municipality of Halkidiki.

Football

There are: 11×11, 8×8 and 5×5 fields for the football teams' preparation. Besides the public ones which are managed by the local Athletic Unions, there are also private football fields at specific hotel resorts, as well as at the athletic summer camps.

Gyms & Fitness studios

The visitor has the chance to attend Aerobic, Pilates & Yoga lessons, Tae Kwon Do (the team of the Athletic Union of Polygyros is more than 30 years old), Karate or Aikido. In Nea Moudania and Polygyros, you can find fully equipped fitness centers operating all year round. During summer season, lessons are also offered at hotels and camps.

The following events have recently taken place at Halkidiki:

- The *International Halkidiki Bicycle race*
- The *World Youth Chess Championship*
- From its first run, in 1976 up to 2001 and 2007, the *ELPA RALLY* took place in Halkidiki
- The Macedonia Classic Car Club organized for 13 years the *Antique Summer Rally*, starting from Thessaloniki.



SPECIAL INFO

Giannis Chatzibeis is the first Greek swimmer with a disability who completed the marathon open sea swimming of 26km at Toroneos, Chalkidiki (Greece). Marcos Diaz was for 3 consecutive years the champion in the International Crossing of the Toroneos Gulf in Greece (2004, 2005, 2006).



HALKIDIKI

Taste & tradition...

Here, taste is a celebration! Placed in the center of an enchanting landscape surrounded by nature, where the air is rich with the scent of wild herbs and the bees produce sweet honey of the highest quality, you can expect to experience unforgettable gastronomic adventures. And you would be right to do so!

Halkidiki offers the delights of the Mediterranean cuisine, the extra virgin olive oil, the cheese, the herbs, the honey, the wine from the local vineyards and the traditional tsipouro, as well as fresh fish and locally produced meat, in marvelous dishes that will excite you!

Enjoy the delicious local tastes at the restaurants and the tavernas or at one of the prestigious food festivals, offering gourmet experiences prepared by famous chefs.



Kassandra



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Wine & wineries

Halkidiki's wines: Renowned wines were produced in Ancient Halkidiki. Writings from the 5th century BC mention the white "afstiro" (dry) and the "malthako" (semi-sweet) wine of Mendi (a town southwest of Kassandra). Also well-known for their wines were Akanthos (today's Ierissos) and Afitis (today's Athytos) while the first model vineyard at Stagira was planted by its most famous son, Aristotle himself. Today there are vineyards in central and mountainous Halkidiki, at Sithonia and Mount Athos.

On the sun-drenched slopes of Mt Meliton, the warm, dry climate and the humidity from the Aegean Sea create a beneficial environment for winemaking. The red wine is made from *Limnio*, an old Greek variety, along with the French varieties of *Cabernet Sauvignon* and *Cabernet Franc*. A white wine comes from the white grape varieties of *Assyrtiko*, *Roditis* and *Athiri*.

Almost all Monasteries in Mount Athos have a longstanding tradition in winemaking. In quite a few of them a revival of this tradition is taking place. This blessed stretch of land with its mild climate, more than adequate sunshine, mountain coolness and sea breezes produces the Regional Wines of Mount Athos.

The vineyards of central Halkidiki stretch from the low hills near the sea, with a beneficial sea climate soothing the land during the summer, to the mountainous regions of the area. The grape varieties cultivated to produce the white Regional Wines of Halkidiki are *Roditis* and

Sauvignon Blanc. The red Regional Wine of Halkidiki is produced from the *Xinomavro*, *Grenache Rouge* and *Cabernet Sauvignon* varieties.

More information: **Wine Producers Association of the Northern Greece Vineyard.**

✉ [www.wineroads.gr](mailto:info@wineroads.gr), info@wineroads.gr,
☎ +30 2310 281617

Wineries

Tsantali Agios Pavlos Winery

In the winery of this well-established Macedonian company you will get a full tour of the production facilities, the aging cellars and the distillation units, before ending up in a specially designed room for a delicious tasting of wines, tsipouro and grape distillates. - Agios Pavlos (West coast),
☎ +30 23990 76100, ✉ www.tsantali.com,
✉ info@tsantali.gr

Domaine Porto Carras

The tour begins with a walk through the winery and the cellar where the wines mature in oak barrels. It concludes in the "Melissanthi" tasting room with a wine tasting and an informative video about the winery's activities. Neos Marmaras (Sithonia),
☎ +30 23750 77000, ✉ www.portocarraswines.gr,
✉ wines@portocarras.gr

Tsantali Metohi Chromitsa Winery

Only men can visit the vineyard of Metohi at Chromitsa, at the Monastery of Agios Panteleimonas, after contacting the Tsantali winery and the Holy Caretaker of Mount



Athos. The revival of the vineyard began in 1973 by Evangelos Tsantalis. The fruits of his labor were recognized in 1981 with the establishment of the indication "Regional Wines of Mt Athos".

Agios Pavlos (West coast), ☎ +30 23990 76100,
✉ www.tsantali.com, ✉ info@tsantali.gr

Milopotamos, Mt Athos

Holy Cell of Saint Efstathios. Men can tour the vineyards, and look around the traditionally built yet modern winery and distillery.

Mt Athos, ☎ +30 23770 23774, ✉ www.mywines.gr,
✉ info@mywines.gr

Claudia Papayianni Estate

At the outskirts of Arnea, in mountainous Halkidiki, you will be offered a tour to the vineyards and the estate's new winery. The tour concludes with a video presentation and wine tasting. - Central Halkidiki - Arnea,

☎ +30 - 23720 21190, 23720 23120
✉ www.cp-domaine.gr, ✉ claudie@otenet.gr

Agricultural products

Olive oil & Olives: The olive tree is indigenous. From ancient times until today it contributes to the local economy. In ancient times, the oil had many uses, from lighting to lubrication. Halkidiki, thanks to its climate and to the morphology of its land, produces oil and olives, which are distinctive for their special taste and quality. The olive trees of Halkidiki are cultivated without chemical

interventions. The olives are rich in organic characteristics (substances which are necessary for the operation of the human organization) and they are processed by one major principle: the satisfaction of the consumers. The high nutritional value and the unique taste of the olives and the oil have rendered them as integral part of the Mediterranean nutrition. **Production areas:** Mount Meliton, Pallini Peninsula, Holomontas Iporia, Polygyros, Ormylia, Olynthos and Moudania.

Ouzo & Tsipouro: Ouzo is made in a traditional way found only in Greece; it belongs to the general category of the alcoholic drinks with a scent of *anisos* (*anitholi*). It is a product of marcs distillation and other saccharoid raw materials, which have been scented with seeds of anisos and other aromatic seeds, plants or fruits. Ouzo, for the distillation of which a special distillation machine (amvikas) is used, can not be submitted to an aging process.

Tsipouro on the other hand, is the clear product of the marcs distillation, which means that it is not submitted to any scenting process. The variety and the fermentation procedures of the grapes, the distillation way, the analogy of ingredients are all the determinative factors during the production procedure. Tsipouro is colorless, and has a very high degree of alcohol, that is why it is often drunk with water and always with some snacks, which traditionally have the following order: light salads, sour (pickles), various dry-salted



(sea rover, anchovies, e.t.c) fish, crawfishes, shrimps, rarebit, e.t.c.

Many habitants of Halkidiki produce their tsipouro for sale but mostly for domestic use.

Honey: Halkidiki is the motherland of beekeeping. Over 6.500 beekeepers (32% of the country's total) and 1.910 tons of production of high quality honey, annually, is sufficient to characterize Halkidiki as the center of beekeeping in Greece. Aristotle 2.300 years ago praised the honey and its benefits to man by saying that it prolongs life. Today the area's beekeepers respect the tradition and exploit the rich fauna of Kassandra, Sithonia and North Halkidiki, in the most pure way by producing great quantities of quality honey of a high nutritional value. **Production areas:** Nikiti, Kassandra and Arnea.

Cheese products: The climate and soil conditions, the flora of Halkidiki and the powerful tradition in cattle breeding, result in the production of high quality products. The traditional cheese of Halkidiki, is produced from pure goatish milk and has an increased content of protein. Most of the cattle-breeding units are located in Holomontas Mountain due to the special elements in its climate and ground that contribute to the favourable synthesis of the goatish milk to the cheese production. With respect to tradition, the cattle breeders of Halkidiki produce significant quantities of goatish cheese. **Production areas:** Central and South Halkidiki.

Hand-made tastes & products

Marmalades, Sweets: A great variety of fruits of excellent quality is being cultivated all around Halkidiki, without the use of fertilizers. These tasteful fruits are the raw material for the production of the well-known marmalades and of the special deserts the exceptionally skilled women of Halkidiki make. High quality, special taste and the respect to tradition have established these products in the Greek and foreign market. The traditional marmalades and the deserts of Halkidiki, transform the simple breakfast into a unique and tasteful experience!

Pastries: Both, the traditional and modern bakeries of Halkidiki, create unique bread products and pastries. The hard wheat, which is being cultivated in great areas in Halkidiki and is rich in proteins, amino acids, vitamins and rich acids, is used as the raw material. The traditional recipes which pass from one generation to the next, convert it into delicious pastries. The high nutritional value of the raw materials and the respect to tradition make the local pastries popular to all its visitors.

All over the region one can see the traditional windmills, which were developed for milling grain for food production. There are remains of windmills and watermills in: Kassandria, Ormylia, Sykia (standing from 1840), Metaghitsi, Galatista.



Weavings: Women weavers of the Prefecture of Halkidiki manufacture all the traditional weavings on the ancient wooden loom. These folkloric handmade works of art are elaborated with care and sensibility and meet the finest specifications of durability, stability of form and inedible colours. The quality, the variety of the designs and colours make the local weavings unique while at the same time contribute substantially to the preservation of tradition and economy of the Prefecture. The beautiful, warm atmosphere their presence creates represents the warm-hearted and friendly mood of the region's residents. **Production areas:** Arnea.

Painting in wood: Halkidiki has many intense colour changes: the green environment, the beautiful blue of the sea and the blue sky, thus all these are an inspiration source for all the painters who live and work in this blessed place. The work of the painters presents images from every day life and very often prints of the Garden of the Virgin Mary, the amazing Mount Athos. The intense traditional elements of these works of art aim at portraying the efforts for a creative life and inspire love for the nature.

Forest products: The forest of the Prefecture of Halkidiki, apart from being an important source of life for the residents and the visitors, consists of a raw material ideal for the manufacturing wood

industries. Oak, beech, chestnut, evergreen and pine compose the image of the region's forests. This wood is being processed to the manufacturing wood units. Their products, (wooden constructions, furniture, cavities, floor, roofs, pavilions, constructing wood, wood for boats), are distinct for their high quality, durability and originality. The combustible material is still manufactured in the traditional way of kiln and thus many locals and foreigners monitor the process with great interest.

Pottery: The original creativity and artistic completeness of Halkidiki's pottery is incomparable. The vessels that are being manufactured here are elegant, one of a kind, with a great variety of decorations portraying flowers, fish, shells, geometric shapes, mythological representations, e.t.c. Their coloring is vivid, exceptionally resistant and sometimes is covered by enamel. Their line is light and elegant. The variety of the shapes and their quality is remarkable. The local artists usually work without any organized establishments but with a special handicraft, using the traditional method of the wheel or forming block.

Candles: The beekeeper producers of Halkidiki do not only provide their delicious honey but also the bee wax for candle making. The local candle makers are manufacturing natural aromatic candles mainly in Vrastama.







DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Food in Festivals

& Feasts

Sani Gourmet Festival

Sani Gourmet is an annual gastronomic celebration that brings together some of the finest chefs from Greece and around the globe, along with some of the rising stars already starting to make a name in their field. Each year Michelin-starred chefs join the acclaimed line-up set at Sani's top restaurants to create contemporary dishes that astonish and delight the visitors. Over the ten days, guests are also treated to a number of workshops, presentations and wine tastings. Sani Gourmet is on its way to becoming a world-renowned culinary festival.

More on Sani Gourmet: www.sanigourmet.gr

Local feasts

Every religious celebration or cultural feast in Halkidiki would be incomplete without the special tastes that tradition requires. Those courses are cooked by the people of the village that celebrates and are freely given as "Kerasma" (treat to guests).

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

- Sausages and wine in Polygyros (Carnival, February)
- Painted eggs, pies, buns and wine in Arnea (Easter day)
- Sardines in Nea Moudania (mid. July) & Nea Roda
- Olives in Olynthos (July – last 3 days)
- Mussels in Olympiada (6-7 July)
- Raki (tsipouro) in Vrastama (14-15 August)
- Mushrooms in Taxiarchis (mid. September)
- During the religious feasts, the locals treat the guests with: bean soup, grilled meat (souvlaki, sausages) and of course wine.

Associations & Cluster

Women's Associations

They were founded in several villages of Halkidiki, especially the mountainous ones. The women of the villages were organized to promote their handmade products, to preserve their tradition and transmit their culture. When visiting such an association, the visitors have the chance to taste homemade pasta and pastries, marmalades and liqueurs made of local fruits. There are Associations in:

“**Dryades**”, Varvara village

“**Ef Gevesthe**”, Taxiarchis village

“**Theofylaktos Klironomia**”,
Paleochori village

“**Ta Gennimata**”, Vrastama village

Cluster of Halkidiki

It was founded to connect Halkidiki's companies and promote them. The Cluster of Halkidiki introduced its members to the “*Local Quality Mark*” in order to ensure specifications of high quality and balance value for money. The project is still new, but businessmen always on the look out for high standard new business ventures will be interested.

More information about products and Associations in Halkidiki: Halkidiki Chamber,

☎ +30 2371024200, ✉ info@epichal.gr,

📍 www.epichal.gov.gr

Street Markets

Day	Place
Monday	Ormylia, Nea Triglia, Metagitsi Nea Fokea, Stratoni
Tuesday	Kassandria, Nea Kallikratia, Ierissos
Wednesday	Nea Moudania, Arnea, Megali Panagia, Galatista
Thursday	Neos Marmaras, Agios Nikolaos, Lakkoma
Friday	Nikiti, Simantra, Paleochori
Saturday	Paleochora, Polygyros, Sykia



SPECIAL INFO

The Guinness Book of World Records featured the tirokomio (cheese making factory) of Ierissos in Halkidiki, Greece where they make the largest caprine (goat) cheese in the world. The representative of the Guinness World Records, Jack Brockbank gave the certificate to owner Ioannis Stathoris, within the 21st International Exhibition of Food and Drinks Detrop. The cheese under the name of "caprine rock" weighed **939 Kilograms!**

SOURCES:

www.gohalkidiki.com



HALKIDIKI

Health & relaxation...

Some of the earliest descriptions of the western spa therapies came from ancient Greece. The curative powers of mineral waters and other health practices passed on a valuable knowledge that formed the foundation for the modern spa treatments. In Halkidiki you can find a great variety of specialized spa resorts offering rejuvenating and relaxing treatments that nourish the body and the mind.



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Agia Paraskevi thermal springs

Halkidiki has one of the natural healing thermal springs in Greece. For centuries now, healing waters have risen from deep within the earth, rich in healing properties that soothe pain. These rare healing qualities, are formed by a unique combination of chemical elements in their warm waters. Agia Paraskevi is now home to a state-of-the-art spa, famous for the rare therapeutic properties of its waters, offering treatments and cures for people of all ages.

Just 5km south of Agia Paraskevi and right on the coast is the village of *Loutra*. The village takes its name from the local healing springs, famed for their exceptional therapeutic properties. It is set in a uniquely beautiful landscape of sand, rocks, pine-trees and crystal-clear sea. All around the majestic beauty of the landscape with the caves winding through the mountains and the pine-trees growing down to the water's edge – a picture of unparalleled natural harmony.

The facilities include pools, saunas, steam baths, showers and hydromassage for individuals and groups. The spa provides relaxing and rejuvenation treatments, a relief from the stress of a fast-paced modern lifestyle. All services are offered within a superb environment, with medical advice and support available.

- *Outdoor and indoor pool*
- *Rooms and Café*
- *Individual baths, Hydromassage, Saunas, Steam baths*
- *Physiotherapy, Relaxation massage, Medical support*

More info: ☎ +30 23740 71810 📞 71358

Spa treatments

There is a wide selection of health spa, beauty treatments or spa breaks in the resorts of Halkidiki. A lot of hotels constructed luxury facilities, provided them with the best fitness and leisure equipment and hired specialists from all over the world to provide their guests a high level service. The products they use are the best known brands in the market. Spa is a serious investment for the hoteliers in Halkidiki, who keep their hotels open long before and after summer season, offering deals that combine accommodation and spa treatments. Typical treatments include:

- *Indoor pools, steam rooms, saunas, Jacuzzis, Gym & fitness rooms*
- *Thalassotherapy, hydrotherapy, aromatherapy, hot stone massage*
- *Body and facial treatment*
- *Beauty salon*

Thalassotherapy facilities

Thalassotherapy and Spa center of Porto Carras Grand Resort- the biggest in South-eastern Europe (4.700m²) - applies in a modern way, the most ancient methods to health and beauty. It has been awarded 6 times by *Condé Nast Traveller* magazine.



“Green Key” labelled hotels

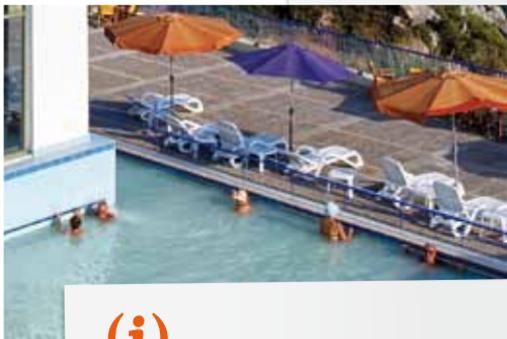


Along with the personal revival goes the preservation of the environment. Sustainability became a major concern of Halkidiki's businessmen, so they started fulfilling the criteria needed to create “green hotels”.

The *Green Key*[®] is a worldwide available eco-label awarded to leisure organizations, as hotels, youth hostels, conference and holiday centers, campsites, holiday houses and leisure facilities. To obtain The Green Key the company has to fulfill a list of environmental requirements. Besides environmental demands (for example to control the production of waste and the use of water, electricity, etc.), the criteria include demands on policy, action plans, education and communication.

“Green Key” Hotels in Halkidiki:

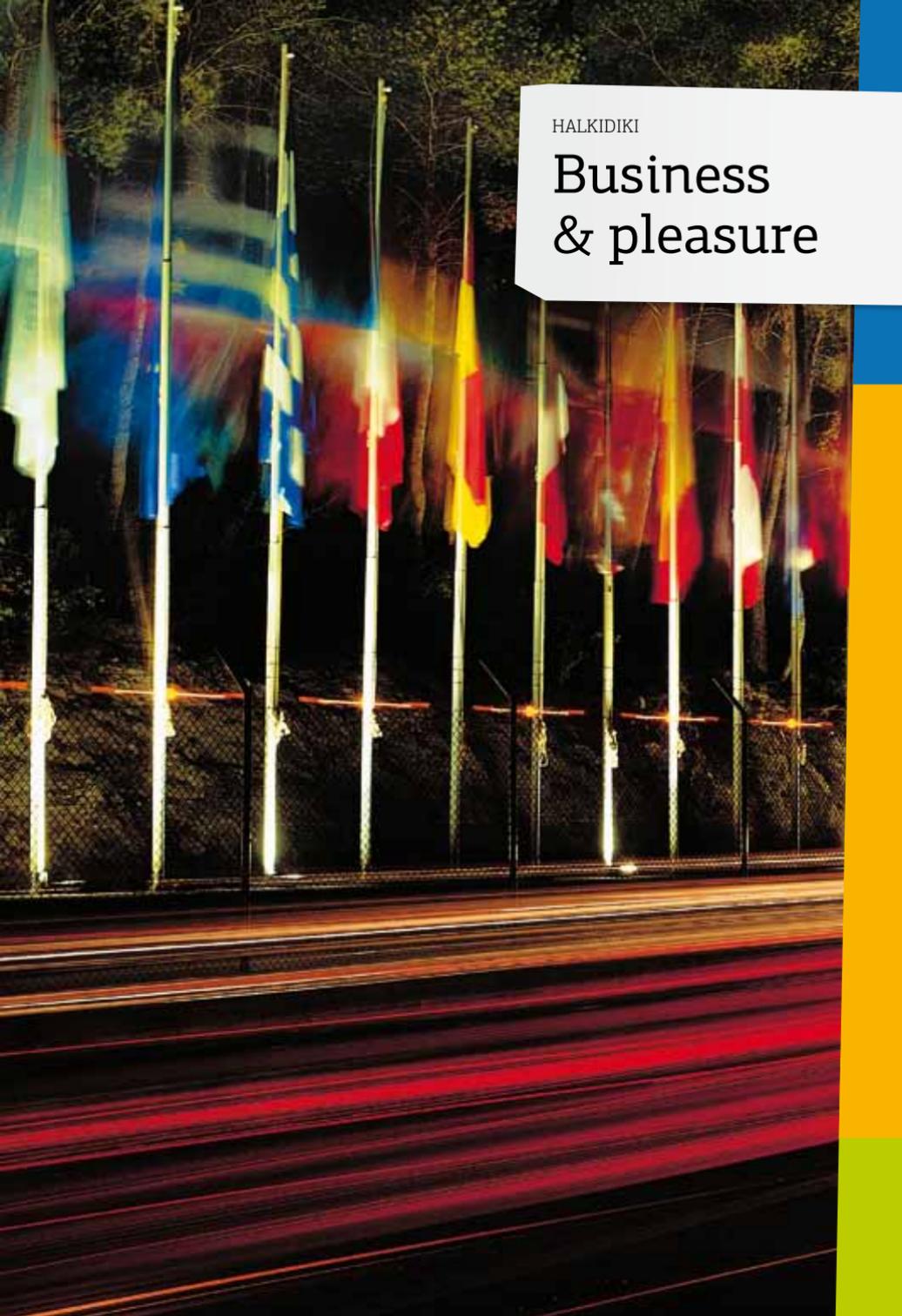
1. **Agionissi Resort**, Ammouliani island,  www.papcorp.com
2. **Xenia Ouranoupolis**, Ouranoupolis,  www.papcorp.com
3. **Eagles Palace Hotel & Spa**, Ouranoupolis, www.eaglespalace.gr
4. **Meliton Beach-Porto Carras Grand Resort**, Neos Marmaras,  www.portocarras.com
5. **Sithonia Beach-Porto Carras Grand Resort**, Neos Marmaras  www.portocarras.com
6. **Athemus Sea Beach Hotel & Spa**, Nikiti, www.anthemussea.gr
7. **Sani Beach Hotel**, Sani Kassandra,  www.sani-resort.com
8. **Sani Beach Club**, Sani Kassandra  www.sani-resort.com
9. **Porto Sani Village**, Sani Kassandra,  www.sani-resort.com
10. **Sani Asterias Suites**, Sani Kassandra,  www.saniresort.gr
11. **Alexander The Great Beach Hotel**, Kriopigi,  www.papcorp.com
12. **Ikos Resorts**, Nea Moudania,  www.ikosresorts.com



SPECIAL INFO

The thermal springs of Agia Paraskevi are hotly-sulphurous and are advisable for: rheumatic-arthritis, dermal diseases (eczemas, dermatitis, mycosis on skin, psoriasis, scabies etc), urological, orthopaedic and gynaecological conditions.

SOURCES:
<http://en.wikipedia.org/>
www.halkidikinet.gr



HALKIDIKI

Business & pleasure

Business

Conferences

The whole peninsula caters to tourism. The region's deluxe hotels and resorts offer a complete range of facilities, from fully equipped conference halls with state of the art technical support systems, to a wide selection of recreational services that go a long way to make every visit a highly memorable occasion. Halkidiki can host congresses of all kinds, large or small ones, offering spaces and halls that respond ideal for any number of guests.

The total capacity of the conference rooms in Halkidiki is approximately 12.500 pax. The conference centers mainly belong to hotels, although there are a few operating by the municipalities (Polygyros – Halkidiki Chamber's hall, Ierissos – Cultural Center, Nea Kallikratia municipality hall).

Halkidiki hosts a lot of International events such as:

- Medical congresses
- Championships (chess, bridge)
- Athletic tournaments
- Corporate events
- Political meetings

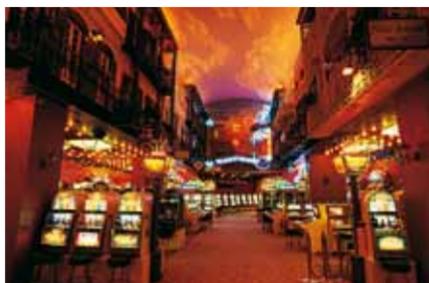
More info about hotel conference halls:

➤ www.halkidiki-hotels.gr



Casino

The Casino of Porto Carras, located in Sithonia, is an amazing place, that combines a warm atmosphere, perfect service, many parties, happenings and plenty of gifts -an ideal environment for those who love to have fun. Enjoy the Table Games Hall, wonder around in the Slots alleys and explore the Unique Sensation of "Privé" Areas. Visit the casino and experience entertainment at its best!



Social Events

The hotels of Halkidiki which are located in a glorious natural setting, are the ideal place to transform a simple social event into an absolutely unforgettable experience. Weddings, baptisms, anniversaries, birthdays or engagement parties - are unique moments worth savouring in the company of family and friends. There are both indoor and open-air venues for social events, with professional advisers to guide you through every stage of the preparations and offer ideas and suggestions to make your most romantic dreams come true.



Weddings in Halkidiki

Halkidiki has a big number of historical, early Christian and Byzantine churches, parish Basilicas and gorgeous traditional chapels offering an amazing view. Some resort hotels operate their own private chapel within their estate for private wedding ceremonies.



SPECIAL INFO

Halkidiki was chosen by the Greek Presidency to host the *European Summit Meeting* in June 2003

SOURCES:
<http://conferencesgreece.travel/>
www.travel2greece.com



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Beach between Nea Moudania and Potidea

West coast villages

DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Agios Pavlos

← Thessaloniki 37km ← Polygyros 48km



Here are the vineyards of Central Halkidiki. They cover low hills, right next to the sea, whose breeze balances the extreme high temperatures in the summer. The grapes, mainly cultivated here, are the white Roditis and Sauvignon Blanc, to produce the spirited, fruit-flavoured white local Halkidiki wines. Respectively, the Xinomavro, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon varieties are used to produce the mild red local Halkidiki wines.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

The TSANTALIS winery, located here, produces some of the most famous Greek wines, since 1890. To visit the winery and taste the wines you can follow an organised tour. For information you can also call +30 23990 76100

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Taste the stuffed wine leaves known in Greece as "Dolmadakia", a specialty at the village Nea Gonia.

Nea Iraklia

← Thessaloniki 42km ← Polygyros 55km

Located near Nea Kallikratia is the refugee village of Nea Iraklia, where a silver reliquary dating back to the 4th and 5th century AD was found, bearing engraved scenes from both the Old and New Testaments on all four of its sides. This discovery is displayed in the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

Four kilometres away, among the ruins of the old monastery, the little church of "Zoodochos Pigi" (=life-giving source), dedicated to Virgin Mary, can be found.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The long and picturesque coast, which is famous for its beautiful beaches and its pine-trees.

Nea Kallikratia

← Thessaloniki 41km ← Polygyros 45km



Nea Kallikratia is situated just before the peninsula of Cassandra. It owes its name to the refugees from Kallikratia in Eastern Thrace who moved here in 1922 in the Asia Minor catastrophe. The area hosted many thriving and powerful ancient settlements. The most important was the city of Antigonía, founded in 280 BC by the King of Macedonia Antigonos Gonatas, to praise his name. During the Byzantine era the land on which the village is built belonged to the Stomion dependency of the Athonite monastery of Xenofontos. Today, Nea Kallikratia offers a large organized beach, with calm waters and smooth sand, many bars and cafes, tavernas, and hotels ideal for a pleasant stay.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

The natural stronghold/acropolis of ancient Antigonía (5km from Kallikratia, at Nea Gonia).

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Go swimming at "Mykoniatika" beach and enjoy a coffee or a cocktail at the stylish beach bars.



Hills of Sozopoli



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Flogita beach

DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Sozopoli

← Thessaloniki 48km ← Polygyros 41km

Heading from N. Silata to the Southeast towards the coast, one can visit the village of Sozopoli; it is situated beside the sea. Along its vast beaches there are bars, cafes, restaurants, fish-taverns, play-grounds and sport installations, in brief, everything that any tourist or holiday-maker needs.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

On the way returning towards N. Kallikratia from Sozopoli, 6km from the capital, we meet at our left side a pine-wooded hill; on its top level there is a Byzantine fortification and an ancient town called the "Toumba of Veria". The excavations that have been made here revealed parts of a wall from stone masonry, some public buildings and portals.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

From the top of the hill one can have a splendid view of the vast beaches between Veria and Nea Kallikratia.

Flogita

← Thessaloniki 55km ← Polygyros 31km

The village was populated by refugees of the Asia Minor (around 1922). Soon after their arrival an American hospital started operating in the area, providing care to the hundreds of refugees who settled in the region. Today, the village has transformed into a lively destination. The seaside village of Flogita that you are able to explore today proudly presents a great

variety of small tavernas, cafe, and bars, as well as a unique sandy beach.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

Near Flogita the visitor has the chance to admire the ruins of the dependency of the Athos monastery of Panteleimona, dating from the 17th century.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

From the settlement Nea Plagia to Flogita, at a distance of 1.5km, there are a lot of clubs and beach bars with live music bands performing during the summer months.

Nea Moudania

← Thessaloniki 61km ← Polygyros 27km

Nea Moudania was created after 1922 by Greek refugees, coming especially from Moudania of Propontida. In this area there have been discovered ancient settlements, probably from the Hellenistic period. During the past century, there was only a jetty for loading goods which was called the "Kargi Limani". At the beginning of the 20th century a Turkish landowner of the area, established the first organized olive tree grove in Halkidiki, the greatest part of which still exists today on the hills northwest of Nea Moudania. Today, Nea Moudania is the most dynamic community of southern Halkidiki. Both in winter and in summer time, Nea Moudania is a vibrant, busy place, with banks, shops, cafes, bars. There is also a programme of art events during the summer season, attracting more visitors each year.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- At the highest point of the town, called "the hillock of Panagia (Virgin Mary) Koryfni" there is a pretty three-aisled basilica church, built in a captivating environment.
- Zografou Tower: The Byzantine tower (14th cent.), the church (1842) and other structures (19th cent.) belonging to the "metochi" still exist today. Of great interest is the fountain of the "metochi", built in 1853, about 50m west of the tower. >



Athos monastery of Panteleimona



Nea Moudania beach

DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



- Nea Moudania has an important museum of marine exhibits and seashells, which is unique in Greece, as well as a folklore museum with exhibits from the inhabitants' never-forgotten homelands.
- The Open-air Theatre, the jewel of the town, with a capacity of 2000, hosts a great variety of quality theatre productions and high-class concerts as part of the events of the "Sea Festival", taking place right next to the waterfront, during the summer season.
- The indoor gymnasium, football pitches with sod, of the classic type (5X5) and also other sports grounds, such as basketball, volleyball and tennis courts encouraged the development of basketball, volleyball and football teams which progressed into top league divisions. Every year, beach soccer, beach volleyball, and beach tennis matches are organized, with entries from all over Greece. The Yachting Club of Nea Moudania, with its numerous activities, has often gained international distinctions for its sailing courses, as well as for its organisation of international fishing competitions.
- Nea Moudania boasts one of the largest fish-wharves in Greece, so that the visitors can go fishing in town!
- Nea Moudania beach and Dionysiou beach present shallow warm waters and gold sand.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

- The sunset behind Mount Olympus from the numerous cafes in central Nea Moudania is a superb view that pleases every romantic visitor. Moreover, when the weather is good, the visitor can be photographed against the background of the Kassandra peninsula.
- In mid-July the cultural club "Faros", under the auspices of the Municipality of Moudania, offers the locals and the visitors of the town times full of entertainment and thrill in a week of folklore, which also includes dance, music and theatre events. The major event is the "Sardine festival", a feast marked by the grilled sardines and retsina, which are offered generously to all.



Port of Nea Moudania

Ag. Mamas, Touba



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Agios Mamas

← Thessaloniki 66km ← Polygyros 22km

Heading down towards the Sithonia peninsula, about four kilometers after the junction, you will come to a sign to Agios Mamas. 2.5km along the road you will find the prehistoric settlement of Agios Mamas. It is a small village between Kassandra and Sithonia. The old chapel of Agios Mamas was the place where the festival used to take place. Today, a new church and a modern cultural center are built on this location.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

Touba was inhabited by the end of the Neolithic period till the Iron Era- in consecutive layers. It is one of the most important prehistoric positions in Halkidiki as far as the duration of inhabitancy and magnitude is concerned. At the west of Touba an organized cemetery of the Early Cooper Era was discovered, the oldest cemetery ever found in Macedonia.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

- Agios Mamas is best known for the festival that takes place here each year in early September. This is a custom dating back to the Byzantine times. Every September, the biggest fair of Halkidiki takes place at the village. The visitors come from everywhere to buy farm products, animals, clothes and house objects.

Olynthos

← Thessaloniki 70km ← Polygyros 16km

Nea Olynthos lies next to the site of ancient Olynthos (+1.5km) and is the modern counterpart of the Byzantine village of Myriofyto. It is said to have taken its present name from its founder, Olynthos, brother of the Thracian king Rissos. Others claim the name comes from the hero Olynthos, son of the river god Strymon.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- **Ancient Olynthos.** It was located on the heights east of the present village. The

area is fenced and the entrance is at the southwest foot of the heights. The location of the city has been known since the 19th century. The people in the area called it "Pirgos" after a Byzantine tower that was built there to protect the "metochi" of the Mt Athos monastery of Kastamonitou. Only the foundation of this Tower is preserved today, at the southern end of the city. For 100 years Olynthos was the most important city of Halkidiki. Its foundation goes back to mythical times. The city was destroyed in 480 B.C. by the Persians. The evidence from the excavations show that the archaic city, which was a continuation of the prehistoric one, was built on the southern hill. The north hill seems to have been the area of the new settlement of the Chalkideans. The accuracy of the city plan of Olynthos helps us understand how the Ippodamio city planning system was applied. Although the ruins are remarkable, the findings of the excavations are exhibited at the Museums of Thessaloniki and Polygyros.

- The ruins of the Byzantine church of St Nicholas, a structure of the 10th or 11th century.
- North of Olynthos, at the site known as Mariana, there is a fortified tower dating from the 14th century, built by the Docheiariou Monastery on Mt. Athos.
- About 7km from the village is the site of the ancient city of Mikyvera, the port of Olynthos, which must have been destroyed when Olynthos was laid waste by Phillip II in 348 B.C.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Walk through the ancient roads of Olynthos and admire the perfection of the architecture.





Ancient Olynthos



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Nea Triglia

← Thessaloniki 54km ← Polygyros 54km



Nea Triglia, is a village that consists of local residents and refugees who came from the homelands of Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace. Before the arrival of the refugees the village was called Souflar. Other villages and towns where the refugees of Asia Minor arrived from include Triglia, Veletler, Apolloniada, Kavouklia, Kalolimno, Peladari and Kisdervent. The Thracian refugees came from the following villages: Sterna, Ganos and Panido. It is also known that the broader area of the municipality of Nea Triglia was inhabited since prehistoric times.

SIGHTSEEING

Petralona Cave

← Thessaloniki 46km ← Polygyros 39km

In Western Halkidiki, is the reknown Cave of Petralona. This cave became famous, not only because of the size or the wealth of its stalactites, stalagmites and its very intricate corridors and halls, but mainly because of the human and other fossils -dating from the Pleistocene Age- found here and the secrets of human life and prehistory that it veils. The cave of Petralona served as a home for the first humans about 700.000 years ago. It has a total surface of around 2.500 acres and its corridors are almost 1.500 m long. The "Main Hall" is 104 m long, 12 m wide and 8 m high. The stalactites and stalagmites make an impression with their wealth, shapes and colourings.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Visit the Palaeontological museum, at the entrance of the cave which hosts important exhibits.



Petralona Cave



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



DID YOU KNOW THAT?

The discovery of such an old specimen in Europe challenges the prevailing theory that the earliest "Homo" species evolved in Africa.

Among the remains of animals found in the Petralona cave is a petrified tortoise, 65 million years old!

The mosaics of Olynthos are the oldest mosaics found in Greece to this day. They date to the 5th century BC.

Kalisthenis, nephew of Aristotle and schoolmate of Alexander the Great, who escorted Alexander in his military campaigns, was from Olynthos.

Mount Athos view from Arnea



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Tower in Galatista

Central Halkidiki villages

DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Galatista

← Thessaloniki 40km, → Polygyros 23km

Reference to Galatista dates back to as early as the end of the 9th century AD, while later, after the Ottoman occupation in around 1500, the village became the property of Ishak Pasa. In the area below Galatista, near the church of Agia Paraskevi, the ancient settlement of Anthemous is thought to have been located. Anthemous was a city that ruled the surrounding region, which was known by the same name. Anthemous was granted by the Persians to Macedonia. King Amintas I then presented the city as a gift to Hippias the tyrant, son of Peisistratos, who refused the offer. The art of icon painting flourished in Galatista during the 19th century. Today, Galatista is a picturesque village with narrow alleys, old houses, and beautiful churches.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The churches inside the village. Galatista has the greatest number of churches out of all the villages in Halkidiki (*St George* - 1813, *Panagia* - 1835, *St Demetrios* - 1830, *St. John Prodromos* - 1835, *St Paraskevi* - 1835, *St. Nicholas* - 1842).
- The tower and the 2 watermills in front of the tower, built in the 14th century.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

10km east of Galatista, following the national road Polygyros-Thessaloniki, is the magnificent monastery of "*Anastasia Farmakolytria*", founded in 888 AD by the Empress Theophano (wife of Leon VI the Wise).



Vavdos

← Thessaloniki 50km, → Polygyros 24km



Vavdos was probably inhabited in Roman times, although records mention it for the first time in 1321. Vavdos is a picturesque mountain village set out like an amphitheatre on the lush green hillsides, with stone paved streets, picturesque alleyways, old houses and a pleasant town square in the center with a huge plane-tree. Some of the village residents make a living through beekeeping, farming, stock-raising, while many work in the neighbouring magnesite quarry. Vavdos is the birthplace of Nikolaos Germanos, a parliamentary representative and politician of northern Greece, founder of the International Trade Fair of Thessaloniki in 1926.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The plane-tree in the village square, one of the biggest in Halkidiki, which has been listed by the Ministry of Culture as a "protected natural monument".
- In the bema of the village church, there is a marble pulpit with bas-relief scenes of wreathed crosses. It is a very important monument, probably of the 5th century, and comes from an unknown early Christian church in the area.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The fair of *The Cauldrons of Prophet Helias* takes place on July 19-20. After the church mass is over, the fair committee cooks goat with barley-shaped pasta in big cauldrons, which is offered to the visitors along with white wine. There is traditional music and dancing all day long.

Farmland in Agios Prodomos



DREAM NOT

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Agios Prodomos

← Thessaloniki 49km, → Polygyros 14km



It is a small mountain village about 50km. from Thessaloniki on the road towards Arnea, Ouranoupolis and Mt. Athos. Agios Prodomos is famous for its meat and meat products, which you can find in any of the numerous tavernas in the center of the village.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The river which crosses the village and is surrounded by wild vegetation.
- The chapel of St. Prodomos which is one of the late Byzantine churches in Halkidiki.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

On the eve of St. Prodomos day (Patron saint), there is a Service of Vespers; on Agios (saint) Prodomos name-day (29/8) there is a Holy Liturgy followed by kourbani with lenten food.

Paleochora

← Thessaloniki 57km, → Polygyros 18km

It is the oldest village of the area, which explains the origin of its name Paleochora (old village). Its houses are built very close to one another, with small yards, narrow alleys; the severe climatic conditions or the difficulty of the conqueror to invade the interior of the village, could be the reasons behind this specific architectural style.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The country church of "Profitis Elias" at an idyllic site with pine-trees.

- The church of St George, unique in its construction.
- The house of the folk artist and teacher Demetrios Tsiotras, in the center of the village, with a permanent folk art exhibition.
- The watermill (with a waterfall) of Demetrios Delis, 500 m north of the village

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

Visiting the picturesque nearby villages:

"Riza", "Geroplatanos", "Krimni", "Marathousa".

In Riza, light a candle in the basilica of the Assumption of the Virgin. Geroplatanos was named after the old plane-tree (Platanos), in the center of the village (over 700 years old). 3km north of Krimni, is the country church of Agia Paraskevi in a beautiful landscape with plane-trees, holm-oak and chestnuts. 2-3km north of Marathousa is the country church of Virgin Mary, while among beautiful plane-trees you can admire the monument of the 1944 National Resistance.

Arnea

← Thessaloniki 73km ← Polygyros 35km



During the Ottoman occupation, Arnea was known as Liarigovi, yet during ancient times it was also commonly known as Arni, Arnea and Avgea. Its current name was created in 1928 from the first three letters of Arni paired with the last three letters of Avgai. In 1821 it was one of a total of 42 villages that were burned to the ground by Baram Pasa. It was the most important of the 12 mademohoria, where merchants and professional people gathered. >



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Arnea was liberated on November 2, 1912. When the residents returned home after the disaster they immediately began rebuilding their village. The Ministry of Culture has declared Arnea a historic site because it has important examples of traditional Macedonian architecture.



👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The center of the village is the central square or "pazari" as it is called. It contains cafes, small tavernas, shops featuring local products and just a bit farther up, the folklore museum, which is housed in the historic mansion known as the "Giatradiko".
- Located by the horostasi is the old village school, which was once the historical seat of the Aristotelis municipality.
- The wooded knoll of Agia Paraskevi, which has a small church of the same name.
- For a panoramic view of Arnea, walk up to the small chapel of the Prophet Elijah, about 2.5km from the village.
- The church of Agios Stephanos, built in 1812 but burned in the revolution of 1821, is located next to the village. The bell tower was built in 1889 and stands right next to the old school. The church of Agios Stephanos is the largest in Halkidiki, in terms of both space and height. The church was burnt by fire in September 2005 and the inferno exposed remains of prior churches on the site. Within the church, thick glass panels on the floor enable the visitor to look down and view the archaeological remains.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The area produces textiles, honey, mountovina or tsipouro mixed with honey and jams.

Megali Panagia

← Thessaloniki 85km ← Polygyros 38km



Megali Panagia is a mountain village about 13km from Arnea, that used to be called Revenikia. It came by its current name when a small chapel was built close to the village in the 19th century in order to house a miracle-working icon that was found there. The chapel quickly attracted many religious pilgrims who named the village Megali Panagia (it means Big Church dedicated to Virgin Mary).

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The pilgrimage center of Panagia, about 1.500 m. east of the village. According to legend, the carved-wood iconostasis of the church was built by two Bulgarian craftsmen who worked on it for seven years.
- The 19th century old houses in the village are of great interest.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Walk over the old stone arched bridge, on the 2nd km of the road towards Gomati village.





Polygyro's nature



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Forest trail at Holomontas

DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Vrastama

← Thessaloniki 74km ← Polygyros 13km

Vrastama is a scenic mountain village of Mt. Holomontas, one of the oldest in Halkidiki, just 15km east of Polygyros. The settlements of Kelli and Plana are also part of the district. The village is named after a monk who was known as Vrastamos. A traditional small hotel operates in the village, housed in a fine old town house, now restored.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- Central church of Vrastama (Annunciation of the Virgin, main church together with St George church): restored in 1814. It is built on a hill at a site of an ancient temple.
- Cave of Osios Eftymios at the site Mikrokampos, Vrastama.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The 3-day feast on August 15th, the day of Virgin Mary's Assumption. Vrastama is famous for its tsipouro, which is made from the berries of Mt. Hortiatias.



Taxiarchis

← Thessaloniki 67km ← Polygyros 16km

During the Ottoman occupation the village was known as Lokovi. It acquired its current name in 1928 from its patron saint, Michael the Archangel. Taxiarchis took part in the 1821 revolution with tragic consequences. The village was finally liberated on October 10, 1912. There are two entrances to the village, one to the west which serves as the

main entry point, passing by the Sipotoura, or Tspipotoura spring; and one to the north, which passes through the Stravros area and by the football field.

Taxiarchis is built on two hillsides to the west and southeast and is situated between four natural springs: Sipotoura, the Upper and Lower Spring, and Iho (local water). The women's "Ev yevesthai" cooperative operating here, offers local products such as jams, preserved fruits, frumenty, etc. The village is well known for its mushrooms and for a variety of 'egg apples', owing their name to their colour. Other local products include beans (the pardala variety), Holomontas potatoes, as well as forestry products such as firewood and charcoal. In recent years fir tree cultivation has developed rapidly, to meet the demand for Christmas trees.

In the Holomontas area surrounding Taxiarchis, there are many forest trails for hiking, mountain biking, and four wheel drive vehicles. You will also find traditional guesthouses that cater for agricultural tourism, offering both a pleasant and comfortable stay, open all year round.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- Ecclesiastic Museum: Hosted in the church of Archangel Michael, where there is an icon of the patron saint wearing a gold-platted robe dated to 1870.
- The town square is known as the horos or horostasi, an old name meaning "dancing place"; the name refers to exactly what happens here every Sunday. In the square one can find cafes as well as the statue of Giannis Parliaris, who was a commander of troops on the Macedonian front. A war memorial, the community store, the elementary school, and the local health centers are all situated off the main square.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The mushroom festival, in mid autumn. The women of the village fry mushrooms collected from Mt Holomontas and bake mushroom pies.

Polygyros

← Thessaloniki 61km



The capital city of Halkidiki is located in the center of the region. Polygyros was built on the southern slopes of Mt. Holomontas at an altitude of 550 meters. Its name is thought to have been inspired by the many twists and turns in the endless surrounding hills. Another explanation stems from “Poly-geros” or “very-strong”, a reference to the good climate but also possibly “Poly-ieros” or “very-holy”, because of a temple that used to exist in the area. There have been references to Polygyros since Byzantine times, and it is where the Halkidiki uprising started on May 17, 1821. Today, small hotels and guesthouses are available for an overnight stay while tavernas and quaint ouzo bars provide traditional local delicacies. Throughout the year Polygyros organizes various cultural events.



Findings at Archeological museum of Polygyros

SIGHTSEEING

- The traditional web of narrow streets with their old houses. The scenic location of Exi Vrises is well-known, named after its six water taps. A restaurant and a coffee shop located here, are the ideal places to relax and grab a bite.
- The Archaeological Museum with findings from the entire Halkidiki (Olynthos, Potidea e.t.c.).
- The Folk life Museum at Karaganis Mansion.
- The Church of Metamorfofi (Transfiguration): Byzantine church with murals, built in an old prison property.
- Country church of Prophitis Elias (Prophet Elijah).
- The Church of St. Demetrios, built in 1871 at the site Bares.
- Church of Saint (Agios) Modestos with the icon of the saint that was painted in the 15th to 16th century by Monks from Mount Athos.
- Just 6km down the road that leads to Taxiarchis -situated above the general hospital- is the location known as Tsoukalas, which offers a panoramic view of the township.
- A short distance from Polygyros, in the area called Paleporta, was the ancient town Apollonia, southwest from where the city lies today. Here, the visitor can still see part of the castle walls foundations.

✓ **CAN'T MISS THIS!**

The Carnival feast: 10 days of events that culminate with the parade of carnavil floats on the last Sunday of the carnival period.





DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Mount Holomontas



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Taxiarchis is home to a branch of the Forestry Department of the University of Thessaloniki, due to its forest of Christmas trees.

In Agios Prodomos you can visit the traditional taverns where -among other local preparations- the famous "souvlaki" is being served, a recipe that has been awarded by the Government of New Zealand.

There are a lot of legends about mountainous central Halkidiki. Some talk about ghosts whispering round the Tower of Galatista. Others refer to golden bells and looms buried under the village Taxiarchis. In Arnea, tradition says that if you drink water from the plane-tree of the central square, you will get married there.

Sanctuary of Ammon Zeus - Kallithea



DREAM NOT

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Kassandra villages



DREAM NoT

GO LIVE!



Nea Potidea

← Thessaloniki 68km ← Polygyros 31km



In ancient times, Potidea -formerly known as the Gateway to Kassandra- was at the heart of the political life of Halkidiki, along with the other ancient city of Olynthos. Nea Potidea was founded in 1922 by refugees from eastern Thrace. It holds an important strategic position, controlling the two bays, the Thermaic and the Toroneo. The channel that cuts through the peninsula was mentioned by the ancient geographer Strabon in the 1st century A.D., and was reopened in 1930. The modern town is a busy tourist resort in summer, with a long beach, lots of bars and tavernas at the seaside, hotels with all amenities, shops catering for the tourist trade, etc.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The Castle ruins. Today, we see mainly sections of the fortification at the isthmus of the peninsula. It is an almost straight wall of about 1.200 m. which at various points is supported by square towers.
- The Canal. Dimensions – length 1.250m., width 40 m., depth 8 m. It is not known when the canal was dug for the first time, but Strabon (geographer 1st cent. A.D.) mentions its existence.
- The chapel of Taxiarchon (The Archangels). Located 1km southeast of Potidea, it was built in 1872 with building materials from the ancient city.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Fishing at the fish-shelter of Potidea

Sani

← Thessaloniki 85km - ← Polygyros 48km



This was site of the ancient Sani, a member of the Athenian Alliance until the 1st century A.D. Modern Sani is a luxury resort with hotels along the seafront and private villas set back among the pine-trees. One of the most impressive features is the Byzantine tower on the headland, once belonging to the Stavronikita Monastery on Mt. Athos, now the venue for the summer arts festival. Archaeologists believe the headland was the site of the acropolis of the ancient city.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The Byzantine tower of Stavronikitas (8 meters high), isolated in a prehistoric settlement, guards the village.
- The Sani wetlands is a large expanse of land, 110 hectares –located next to the Sani Resort- home to over 200 species of birds, many of them rare and endangered.
- The Sani Marina, with the luxurious setting and the spectacular Piazza.
- Helona (turtle) Beach, where tiny turtles share the waters with the swimming holidaymakers.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

- Hiking or biking among the unique natural treasures
- Attending Sani Festival's concerts and performances during July-August

Nea Fokea

← Thessaloniki 77km ← Polygyros 44km

Built by refugees from Asia Minor in 1922, the town is a busy resort with a picturesque harbour, with tavernas along the waterfront and some cafes where one can watch the fishing boats return from the sea. The most imposing feature of the town is the tower of Agios Pavlos, built up on the hill in 1407. It was a dependency of the Agios Pavlos (St Paul) monaster and served as the headquarters of Emmanuel Papas in the uprising of 1821.

SIGHTSEEING

- The Byzantine Tower (50 square meters and 17 meters height).
- St Paul's holy water. The underground 20 m. length corridor, which terminates in a rectangular chamber. In the corner of the corridor there is a small basin where the holy water is collected.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The traditional festival on June 29th, name-day celebration of the Apostles Peter and Paul



Athytos

← Thessaloniki 83km ← Polygyros 46km

Also known as Athytos, the town is built on a rock with steep slopes and is one of the most attractive places in Halkidiki. References to Athytos date back as early as the 1st century AD. Until the 14th century it appears in documents under the name Afetos. The oldest part of the town lies

around Agios Dimitrios church and along three main streets, two of which end at the church. Most of the houses are of two-storey, and fall into two main types: the broad-fronted house with a rectangular ground plan, and the square structure with a square ground plan. This city was a member of the Athenian Alliance, and was responsible for the sanctuary of Zeus Ammon, of Dionysius and the Nymphs. Modern Athytos attracts many visitors, from Greece and abroad mainly because the outcrop of rock -on which the town is built- presents a variety of tavernas, cafes, shops, hotels and traditional guesthouses, all with a great view to the sea.

SIGHTSEEING

- The traditional village with the stone-paved alleys, the fountains, the houses, and the churches.
- The church dedicated to Agios Dimitrios (St Demeter), a basilica with dome (1858).
- The traditional, renovated houses (*the Katsanik mansion, the house of the painter Paralix, the house of the musician Mandakas etc.*)
- The prehistoric mound known as Koutsomylos (now the site of a wine bar), the remains of the ancient walls and the traces of an ancient quarry all indicate that ancient Aphytis was founded in the mid-8th century BC by colonists from Halkida.
- The Aletra building, home to a folklore museum.
- Works of the sculptor Pavlis.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Have a coffee or a glass of wine while admiring the sea from the 75 m. high cliff





Kallithea

← Thessaloniki 86km ← Polygyros 48km



The village probably took its name ('fine view') from the beautiful view enjoyed from the main square. Kallithea was founded after 1922 by refugees from Asia Minor. However, the coast area was the site of the famous sanctuary of Ammon Zeus and the sanctuary of Dionysos. Modern Kallithea is a magnet for young people and all those who enjoy a lively nightlife. The town is full of night clubs, bars and tavernas, as well as banks and shops selling folk art, jewelry and clothes. There are plenty of hotels and rooms to rent.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The ruins of Ammon Zeus's sanctuary, on the coast of Kallithea. Ammon Zeus, the greatest of the Olympian gods, was served by this temple which dates from the second half of the 4th century BC. The temple, 10x21 m., was of a Doric order and had 6 columns on the short sides and 11 on the long sides.
- The temple of Dionysos and Nymphes southeast of the temple of Ammon Zeus. A stone stairway has been excavated, carved into the rock, leading to a hollow in the rock. Under the stairway there is a cave with stalactites.
- The small Byzantine church of the 10th century above the cave of the Nymphs. The walls are preserved up to a height of about 1m.
- At the location of "Solinas" was discovered an early Christian basilica of exceptional interest, dating back from the 6th century.

Apart from the impressive architecture, the archeologists found out that the church was built on an older building that seemed to be a place used for torturing.

- The chapel of St. Panteleimon, built in 1865.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Watch the sunrise after a long night of fun and dancing

Krypigi

← Thessaloniki 91km ← Polygyros 54km

Krypigi, is built on a hillside 1.200m from the sea. According to Herodotus, ancient Neapolis was probably built here. The history books mention it, as an area that suffered during the troubles in Kassandra in 1821. It is worth leaving the car for a walk in the little streets of the village, above the main road, in order to visit the little square with its stone houses and tavernas. The town has a number of hotels, rented rooms, camping sites and children's summer camps.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

Visit the "Educational Research and in Service Training Center" an offer of Dr Erhart and Sofia Ziegler. This center is a meeting point for tutors and education professionals from all over the world that meet here to discuss or participate in seminars about education.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Explore the special paths -ideal for trekking and cycling- throughout the pine-tree forest





Sani beach



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



Kryopigi



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!

Polychrono

← Thessaloniki 97km ← Polygyros 59km

This is an old village, known since the 18th century, which now has transformed into a popular tourist resort. Polychrono is very lively in the summer, with a long beach, lots of tavernas and bars along the coast road.

SIGHTSEEING

Three kilometers west of the village, at 300m above sea level, you will find Mavrobara Lake, a site of considerable ecological interest. It was declared a protected natural monument in 1997 and it is the only wetland with both rare species of the Emydidae turtle. There are walking trails around the lake, with natural springs and lots of rare plant life to admire.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

The 1km of the beautiful beach is ideal for snorkeling



Hanioti

← Thessaloniki 101km ← Polygyros 64km

Hanioti village has been recorded in the beginning of 18th century. Prior to 1955 Hanioti was located 2 kilometers closer to the mountain than its current location. In 1936 the village was transferred to its present position due to an earthquake which destroyed the old village. In the new village area there are remnants of earlier inhabitants dating back as far as the Greek classical years. It is possible that these ruins could have been the ancient city of Aeghai or Aegi. The settlement of

Hanioti is believed by many to be one of the best holiday spots in Halkidiki, due to its exciting nightlife, lush fauna and organized beach. The village provides its guests comfortable accommodation in high-quality hotels, as well as many restaurants, beach bars and clubs.



SIGHTSEEING

- The ruins of the original village.
- The small Chapel of Agios Georgios (St. George) at the old village.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

On St. George's feast day (Easter Monday), at the old village of Hanioti on the mountain, there is a folk feast after the Mass at the picturesque chapel, organized by the local Cultural Association

Pefkochori

← Thessaloniki 104km ← Polygyros 67km

Pefkochori is a quaint village, with pedestrian promenades, squares and gardens. The village gets its name from its pine forest (pefko means pine), which is an ideal place for a walk around nature. Also known as Kapsohora, Pefkochori was the site of the ancient city of Neapolis. A densely populated village with a cosmopolitan atmosphere, it has excellent hotels and rented rooms. Along the coast road and throughout the little streets the visitor can find a great variety of restaurants, bars, patisseries, supermarkets and souvenir shops.



👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- About 4.5km from the village there is a road leading to Glarokavos, a beautiful lagoon.
- Following the road from Pefkochori to Nea Skioni, there is the male Monastery of St. John the Russian (Agios Ioannis Rossos).
- The old parish church, built in the middle of the 19th century.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The all day long beach parties at Glarokavos beach.



Xinas and the settlement of Agios Nikolaos with two picturesque small gulfs and a natural bay where the church of St. Nikolas is located.

- Two kilometres north-east of the village you will find the busy beach of Chrousso where you can enjoy the deep blue waters and the gold sandy beach in combination with the pines that touch upon the sea.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Explore the underworld of Paliouri Bay from "Porto Valitsa" or dive by the rocky sides of "Koursaros Beach".



Paliouri

← Thessaloniki 114km ← Polygyros 77km

Paliouri is the southern village of Kassandra. It is a nice traditional village with narrow small roads and old traditional houses. It is located at the bottom of the peninsula, within a wooded area, nearly 3km away from the sea and in an altitude of about 120 meters from the sea. The village is said to have taken its name from the paliouria, a plant which thrives in the area. Paliouri was built near the site of the ancient city of Theramvos, mentioned by Herodotus.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The folklore architecture of the old houses of the 19th century is really impressive. A lot of sculptures and other findings in the ancient Theramvos are still preserved in a good condition.
- Southeast of the village, at the limits of Toroneos Gulf and after 6km towards Kanistro Cape there is the settlement of

Agia Paraskevi

← Thessaloniki 110km ← Polygyros 72km

Agia (Saint) Paraskevi is located in the inland of Kassandra, surrounded by a pinewood. It was named after the church of Agia Paraskevi, which is situated in the village. The Agia (Saint), as the habitants call the village, has a rich historical tradition and it was ruined three times by the Ottoman conquerors -the last one was in 1821. The visitor has the chance to wander around the peaceful alleys of the village and escape through beautiful routes that are traced in the woods.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

The village is best known for its healing springs, whose sulphur-rich waters are believed to help in curing various ailments. The spa is 5km outside the village. Facilities include pools, saunas, steam baths, showers,

hydromassage, for individuals and groups. The spa provides treatment and rejuvenation, a relief from the stress of a fast-paced modern lifestyle. All offered within a superb environment, with medical advice and support available. Information ☎ +30 23740 71358 & 71810 fax: +30 23740 61439

✓ **CAN'T MISS THIS!**

The springs of the spas are located in small caves in the rocks along the coast. The visitor can descend by a steep cement stairway.



Nea Skioni

← Thessaloniki 109km ← Polygyros 72km



The village was formerly known as "Tsaprani", and stood at the site of that name, 3km or so north of the modern village. Its present name is a reminder of the earliest of all the colony cities of Kassandra. It was a member of the Athenian Alliance. The modern village is a tourist resort with hotels, tavernas, ouzo bars, cafes and a pretty little harbour.

SIGHTSEEING

- 3km along the road to Nea Skioni is found the little church of Panagia Faneromeni, a dependency of the Agia Anastasia monastery. It has paintings of saints and an impressive, miracle-working icon of the Virgin. The history of Panagia Faneromeni goes back to the 16th century, when the present village did not yet exist. According to tradition the Virgin herself chose the site for the church, close to the sea.
- The ruins of the old village (Tsaprani) and the old parish church, which was built in 1867 and presents interesting architectural details.

✓ **CAN'T MISS THIS!**

The annual 3-day sardine feast in the first weekend of August, where the visitors are treated on fresh sardines and wine.

Kalandra

← Thessaloniki 100km ← Polygyros 63km



It is a beautiful village with old stone houses. Documents from Mt. Athos relating to a dependency of the Hilandariou Monastery indicated the presence of a village here as far back as the 14th century. Kalandra lies close to the site of ancient Mendi, a colony founded by the Eretrians.

SIGHTSEEING

- Details of popular architecture in the old houses of the village (19th century).
- The ruins of the ancient city of Mendi, which



Kassandra - Villages

enjoyed great prosperity thanks to the popularity of its wine, exported in special amphorae. The city's coins showed the god of wine, Dionysius.

- The country chapel of Panagia (Virgin Mother). This is 1km west of the village. It is the only church in Halkidiki with all its frescoes preserved. The frescoes were painted in 1619.
- The biggest church of Kalandra "Assumption" was built in 1900. It has a basilica style and unique architectural interest.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The local feasts organized to honor Virgin Mary on the 15th and the 23th of August.

Possidi

← Thessaloniki 102km ← Polygyros 65km



The village probably owes its name to the god Poseidon. Nearby is the headland on the western side of the peninsula which was known in ancient times as Poseidonio; the whole area belonged to ancient Mendi. There are hotels, rented rooms, beach bars, little tavernas and ouzo bars.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The ruins of the ancient sanctuary dedicated to God Poseidon.
- The lighthouse of Possidi cape, built in 1864.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Take some photos by the lighthouse, the only building at the edge of the Possidi cape while waiting for the dolphins to show up in the sea!

Fourka

← Thessaloniki 95km ← Polygyros 58km



A village with old stone houses and courtyards full of beautiful flowers. Two kilometers along the road to the shore is Skala Fourkas -an amazing beach with crystal waters and gold sand- full of cafes and beach bars, picturesque tavernas, fast food shops, supermarkets, hotels and rented rooms.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The traditional houses and the village's main church (1830).
- The chapel dedicated to Panagia Mavroutsa (Virgin Mary) on the northwest with murals of the 16th century AC.
- The chapel dedicated to Panagia Meleti (Virgin Mary) southeast of the old village, amidst the pine forest. It is a masterpiece of the Byzantine church architecture.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The cemetery church with frescoes of the 16th century and early Christian sculptures built into the walls.

Kassandrino

← Thessaloniki 96km ← Polygyros 65km



Located 4km from Fourka, Kassandrino is a mountain village with stone houses, famous for the local meat served in its tavernas.

SIGHTSEEING

- On the road towards Kalandra you will come to Mola Kalyva, the harbour of Kassandrino.
- At a distance of 3km. South-east of the village in an enchanting location surrounded by age-long trees, is situated the beautiful chapel of St. George.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Taste the grilled meat and the fresh Greek salad made of homegrown vegetables.

Siviri

← Thessaloniki 94km ← Polygyros 65km



A seaside resort with lots of privately owned houses, comfortable hotels, tavernas and café-bars.

SIGHTSEEING

- The well organized, fine sand beach is perfect for sunbathing. The sea is shallow forming a place ideal for safe swimming.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Musical and theatrical performances take place in the amphitheatre every summer, organized as part of the Kassandra Festival.

Kassandria

← Thessaloniki 89km ← Polygyros 52km



Kassandria, also known as Valta, is the center of most services in the peninsula. Its history is recorded back to the 16th century; it was an important center for the grain trade and has a number of fine examples of vernacular architecture. As the administrative center of the municipal area of Kassandra, it has banks, a health center, a local tax office and a courthouse.

SIGHTSEEING

- Details of popular architecture in the old village houses.
- The sculpture architrave over the west entrance of the metropolitan church (the church was built in 1859).
- The 19th century windmill, northwest of the village, the only one in Halkidiki that still has its wooden mechanism in fairly good condition.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Admire the beautiful window shops while walking in the market's pedestrian zone.

Possidi beach



DREAM NOT

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DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Silver coins from 6th century BC have been found in Potidea depicting the god of the sea, Poseidon, on horseback holding his trident in his right hand. This is very rare and unusual since he is the god of the sea.

The famous sculptor Paionios, the sculptor of the famous victory of Olympia, was born in Mendi.

The villages that hence the addition of the word nea - which means new in Greek, were built after 1922 by Greek refugees from Anatolia who wanted to give the settlement the name of their hometown.

SOURCES:

www.united-hellas.com/tourism/halkidiki

www.gohalkidiki.com

Ancient Toronto



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Sithonia villages



DREAM NOT

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Gerakini

← Thessaloniki 76km ← Polygyros 14km



Once a small community of workers in the magnesite mines, Gerakini is now one of the main and most cosmopolitan resorts in Halkidiki. The area offers a wide choice of hotels, rented rooms, tavernas and bars. There are also many privately owned holiday homes.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

3km north of the village there can still be seen the old mines of granulite and magnesium of Gerakini.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The main beach of the village is Skala and it is characterized by a long white sandy beach, surrounded by two impressive pine-covered hills.

Psakoudia

← Thessaloniki 81km ← Polygyros 19km



A seaside resort with hotels offering amazing sea view, rented rooms, tavernas, bars, mini-markets and shops.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

The village's four kilometre long beach. The pine forest and the olive trees reach all the way down to the beach.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Taste the olives and the honey made from the local producers.

Ormylia

← Thessaloniki 81km ← Polygyros 18km



It is a big inland village, built on the location of the ancient town of Sermlyli, colony of the town Halkida of Evia. Its inhabitants participated in Xerxi's army and fought against other Greeks. Soon after that, they changed sides and became allies with the Athenians. Therefore, the Spartans plundered the town many times during the Peloponnesian War. The coup de grace came in 348 BC from the King of Macedonia Philip II. After that, the town languished. Sermlyli was inhabited and flourished again in the Byzantine Era, when a castle named Kallipolis was built near the town. The monks of Mount Athos took possession of the town's rich fields and olive groves during the 13th century. Two centuries later, the Ottoman arrival destroyed the settlement. The Christians, who survived, built the first houses of the present village, which was burned down again in 1821 and was later on rebuilt.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- Just outside the village is the Convent of the

Announcement, where the *Center for Social Advancement and Medical Prevention and Research* is operating.

- *The Monastery of Saint Arsenios the Cappadocian* is situated near Vatopedi village, between the Monasteries of Ormylia and St. John the Baptist (Agios Prodomos).
- The central Church of St. George (1818) and the church tower bell.
- The old Primary School, which was built in 1909.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

Buy fresh fruits and honey from the kiosks located at the side of the roads.

Metamorfoosi

← Thessaloniki 92km ← Polygyros 30km



Carry on another 9km along the main road, a pleasant drive through pine-trees, and you come to Metamorfoosi, another community founded by refugees from Asia Minor. Today, it is a fully developed tourist resort, which extends to some of the most beautiful beaches of Halkidiki with smooth sand, idyllic little bays, thick pine-trees reaching to the coast and magnificent sunsets.

SIGHTSEEING

The Monastery of Saint John the Baptist located 2km to the north.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

The traditional festival on August 6th in the church of Agios Pavlos.

Nikiti

← Thessaloniki 98km ← Polygyros 36km



The village is located close to the site of ancient Galippos, which played an important role in the events of the Peloponnesian War. Most of the region formerly belonged to monasteries of Mt. Athos (Megisti Lavra, Xiropotamou, Xenofontos). From the traffic lights turn down towards the sea. The road along the waterfront is lined with tavernas and ouzo bars, cafes and rented rooms. The long beach unveils a series of picturesque mini-bays offering light blue waters and gold sand. From the upper part of the road there are signs to the traditional center of the town, with its stone houses (many of them now renovated), narrow streets, little square with a fountain, a plane-tree, a little taverna, a café and a couple of guesthouses. One of the area's most important annual events is swimming across the Bay of Toroni.

SIGHTSEEING

- The old section of Nikiti, containing houses which were built from 1830 on; the church of St. Nikitas (1867) and the old school (19th century). The chimneys of the houses are particularly interesting.
- The cemetery church built in the 16th century, of which the central nave and some frescoes are preserved.
- The early Christian basilica of St. George, about 3km south of Nikiti, of the 5th century.
- The early Christian basilica dedicated to Agios Sophronios (St. Sophronios).
- The chapels dedicated to Agios Pavlos (Paul the Apostle), Agios Panteleimon (St.



Panteleimon) and Agios Athanassios (St. Athanassios). The chapel of Agios Pavlos is built on the site of an older chapel with a monumental fountain of 1713. According to the tradition, when Agios Pavlos (Paul the Apostle) was here, he was thirsty. He hit the rock and water came out -water that flows constantly ever since.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

The crossing of Toroneos Gulf on the last Sunday of July. The swimmers, who come from all over the world for the event, start in the morning from Kallithea in Kassandra and finish in the afternoon at the beach of Nikiti. Their finish is celebrated with a big public feast.

Neos Marmaras

← Thessaloniki 118km ← Polygyros 54km



The town was founded in 1922 by refugees from the island of Marmara in Asia Minor. Until then the land had been owned by the Grigoriou Monastery of Mt. Athos. The history and tradition of the local people are symbolized by the boat *Santala*, which led the fishing fleet in their original home. The Church of Agion Taxiarchon houses the icons the original refugees brought with them from Asia Minor. Today Neos Marmaras is the most cosmopolitan of all the villages and towns of Sithonia, with hotels and rented rooms, camping sites, bars, cafes, patisseries, tavernas, ouzo bars and pizza parlours, clubs, bouzouki halls, supermarkets, wine shops, travel agencies, banks, folk art shops,

clothes shops, a go-cart course and a health center. Just along the coast is a community known as Paradisos, presenting a sandy beach, rented rooms and tavernas. Just two kilometers south of Neos Marmaras is the big Porto Carras hotel complex.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- A replica of the boat "Santala" can be seen in the town harbour.
- The "Tripotamos metochi" next to the road west of Marmaras, a building complex belonging to the Kastamonitou Monastery, built in the 19th century.
- The "metochi" of the Monastery Gregoriou, on the eastern boundary of Neos Marmaras. The church of the Assumption was built in 1865.
- Kelyphos island, 2 nautical miles from the coast, is a steep, rocky waterless island covered with pine-trees and wild olive trees. In Roman times there was a small installation on the northeast side on the small bay, probably a military installation.
- Porto Carras Grand Resort is one of the biggest hotel complexes in Europe. In the 1960's the shipowner John Carras bought 4.250 acres and organized a unique tourist complex with 4 hotels, a private marina, a big conference center, a thalassotherapy & spa center, horse riding facilities, golf courses, tennis courts, football, volleyball, basketball facilities and 8 kilometers of crystal, sandy beaches.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

Visit the Porto Carras winery and taste the branded local wines.

Parthenonas

← Thessaloniki 123km ← Polygyros 59km

By 1970 this mountain village had been abandoned by all its inhabitants, who moved down to Neos Marmaras. It is believed to occupy the site of the ancient city of Parthenopolis. Parthenonas is built on the slopes of Mt. Dragoudelis (or Itamos), the main mountain mass of Sithonia, at an altitude of 810m. In recent years the village has acquired a new lease of life. Many of the

Toroni beach



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Sithonia - Villages

old houses have been restored, preserving the original character of the village. There are two or three tavernas (one open also in winter), a café-bar and a few guesthouses. Parthenonas has its own cultural association, the Parthenon, founded in 1985 by a group of young people from the village. The idea is to preserve the local customs and traditions, and to ensure the safety of the traditional architectural styles.



SIGHTSEEING

The mansion, known by the name "The Guesthouse of Vaggelio". It once belonged to a monk, by the name Ilarionas, who had built the house and gave it to his brothers to live in.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Trekking at Mount Itamos, a mountain covered with a wide variety of coniferous trees. From the summit the visitor has a magnificent view over Sithonia, Kassandra and Mt Athos.

Toroni

← Thessaloniki 138km ← Polygyros 76km

The rocky peninsula proves that Toroni has been inhabited continuously since Neolithic times. This was one of the most important cities in ancient Halkidiki, which was destroyed in the 6th century AD by raiding barbarians. Traces of a prehistoric settlement have also been found here. The beach of Toroni extends to over 2km in length.

SIGHTSEEING

- On the Lykithos headland stood the second acropolis of Toroni, and the remains of a

Byzantine fort can still be seen, probably destroyed during the Ottoman occupation.

- The early Christian temple dedicated to Agios Athanassios (*St Athanassios*). It was built in the 5th century and is a three-nave basilica. A fire destroyed it in the 6th century and another temple was built on its foundations, which was also destroyed later. The mosaic of the middle nave is still preserved today.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The Iron Age cemetery (11th century BC) where 134 tombs have been excavated and 500 fully preserved artefacts came to light.

Porto Koufo

← Thessaloniki 143km ← Polygyros 81km



Porto Koufo is the biggest and safest natural harbour in Greece. Porto Koufo offers a calm mooring for fishing boats and yachts in all weathers. Thucydides refers to it as 'the deaf harbour', i.e. so well protected one cannot even hear the sea. Its steep rocky coast has many caves, one of which, on the southeast side of the entrance, can be reached by boat. The little village has a couple of hotels, some rented rooms with views of the harbour, and some small fish tavernas.

SIGHTSEEING

- The southernmost cape "Kartalia" of Sithonia, an area very dangerous for navigators, but very impressive as a landscape. The coast is rocky and the cliffs stand vertical to a height of more than 100 meters. The name of the cape comes from the hawks that used to have their nests in inaccessible crannies in the cliffs. >

Kalamitsi Beach



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- The fortification that was constructed by the Germans during World War II. Also preserved are the underground chambers and the platforms on which they set the machine guns.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

While scuba-diving explore the underwater cave "Erica" and admire the old iron Turkish pirate shipwreck. The sea depth ranges from 10 to 35 meters

Sykia

← Thessaloniki 152km ← Polygyros 90km

One of the oldest villages in Halkidiki, and formerly known as Logos, once belonged to the Megisti Lavra Monastery - according to Athonite documents. There are various explanations of how the village came to be called Sykia. The first explains the name as meaning the 'shadow (skia) of Athos'; the second interprets it as a corruption of Singos, name of an ancient city in the vicinity, and the third claims there was once an ancient fig tree (sykias) in the center of the village. This is a traditional village, with narrow streets and quaint old houses. There are rooms to be rented in Sykia and the surrounding area, as well as camping sites and tavernas much prized for their local meat dishes.



👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The old quarter of Sykia, where many neighborhoods remain as they were in the middle of the 19th century.
- The Church of Agios Athanasios, dating from 1819, which was twice burned down. Next to it you can admire the remains of the old school, built in 1870.

- On nearby Koukos Hill are the remains of a castle; excavations have shown that the area had been inhabited since the 11th century BC.
- The windmills on the long sandy beach of Sykia, built around the middle of the 19th century.
- The ruins of the church in Episkopi, a 20 minute walk south of Sykia.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Swim at the amazing beaches of Kriaritsi and Kalamitsi.

Sarti

← Thessaloniki 141km ← Polygyros 79km

This is a town built by refugees from Afissia, an island in the Sea of Marmara, in Asia Minor. The land was part of a dependency that belonged, in the 14th century, to the Xeropotamou Monastery on Mt. Athos. The ancient city of Sarti occupied the site, and gave the modern village its name. In the summer months Sarti is a vibrant tourist town, with hotels, rented rooms, tavernas, souvlaki shops, cafes, bars, clubs, ouzo bars, folk art shops, wine shops, supermarkets, travel agencies, car hire agencies, etc.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The "parade of monuments" (sculptures and paintings) of the folklore artist Zaphiris at a local cafeteria.
- The "metochi" of the monastery of Xiropotamou, 500 m. west of the village. Its small church was built in 1867.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The beach "Kavourotrypes", with the amazing rocky shapes and the turquoise coloured sea.





"Karydi"



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Vourvourou

DREAM NOT

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Vourvourou

← Thessaloniki 107km ← Polygyros 45km

A seaside tourist resort in eastern Sithonia, with a mix of privately owned houses, hotels and rented rooms. It is also home to the holiday complex for professors at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Dotted around the bay are nine tiny islands, the largest known as Diaporos.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The bay of Krifotos (hidden bay) is of great interest. Hidden on the north side of Diaporos, it used to be pirates' heaven in the old years.
- The reef of Vourvourou seems to be very impressive for divers, since the coral reef -at a depth of approximately 18 to 22 meters- is unique to the Greek sea world.
- The "Great Wall" (Megas Tichos), a small peninsula north of Vourvourou, which received its name from the section of an ancient wall, still preserved today.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Go fishing in the wetland "Livari" or in the shallow gulfs of "Vourvourou"

Ormos Panagias

← Thessaloniki 107km ← Polygyros 45km

The Byzantine church located here gave its name, Panagia, to the district. In the picturesque harbour of Ormos you will find tavernas, bars, cafes and a few rented rooms.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

The Byzantine Temple dedicated to Virgin Mary, which was destroyed and rebuilt many times.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Daily cruises start here for Mt. Athos



Agios Nikolaos

← Thessaloniki 107km ← Polygyros 45km



This is one of the oldest villages in Halkidiki, traditionally thought to have been created by a union of people from smaller communities. South-west of the village, at Vetrinos, there are traces of a prehistoric settlement. In the 14th century the area of Pyrgos was also inhabited, to the north-east; in classical times it evolved into the city known as Singos. Here too was the Monastery of Agios Chrysokamaros, a dependency of the Xenophontos Monastery of Mt. Athos. Documents from the 14th century also refer to a community known as Fourneia, the remains of which can still be seen in the area known as Paleofournos.

SIGHTSEEING

- The tower on the coast of the little peninsula. Here was situated the prehistoric settlement Siggos and later on the monastery dedicated to Agios Nikolaos (St. Nicolas).
- The hill Vetrino, with prehistoric and ancient acropolis.
- The Chapel dedicated to Agios Georgios (St. George).

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Enjoy a romantic walk to the picturesque paved alleys and admire the traditional houses of the 19th century that constitute samples of folk architecture.

Pyrgadikia

← Thessaloniki 97km ← Polygyros 36km



The village lies on the northern coast of the Bay of Singos, the waters separating Sithonia from Mt. Athos. Also known as Agios Dimitrios, the village is built on an outcrop of rock. Its name is believed to be derived from a Phrygian word gordos, meaning town or city. It was founded by refugees from Athoni in Asia Minor, in 1922. In the church of Panagia Kastrella you can still see the icon of the Virgin brought by the settlers that arrived from Asia Minor. According to an old story the Turks threw the icon into the sea, but it was later recovered by the local people inside a castle – hence the name Kastrella.

Explore the area some more and take the road from Agii Theodori to the Chapel of the Transfiguration. Here you can enjoy a panoramic view; the location was used as a lookout point by the Ottomans.

SIGHTSEEING

- The church dedicated to Agios Dimitrios (St. Demeter), built in the middle of the 17th century. It gave the village its second name.
- The tower dating from the 14th century AC in the area called Kambos, which was part of the monastery property.
- Remains of a Byzantine castle among the village's houses.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Stop for lunch in one of the fish tavernas with build-in balconies offering amazing view to the sea and to the amphitheatre style village architecture.



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DID YOU KNOW THAT?

In Sithonia there are a lot of organized camping sites for visitors who want to get close to the amazing nature of the peninsula. Those camping sites are famous for their location, the events and activities specially organized for their guests, as well as for their popular beach bars and the live bands performing mainly during the summer season.

The most popular beaches in Sithonia are: Agios Giannis, Kalogria, Spathies, Elia, Vourvourou (Karydi), Armenistis, Platanitsi, Sarti, Sykia, Kalamitsi, Toroni, Tristinika, Azapiko.

SOURCES:

<http://sithonia.in-chalkidiki.com/>
www.greeka.com
www.halkidikiguide.gr

Ruins in Ancient Akanthos



DREAM NOT

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bays next to Olympiada

East coast villages



DREAM NOT

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Olympiada

← Thessaloniki 91km ← Polygyros 66km



Olympiada lies on the north-eastern coast of Halkidiki, on the road to the Athos peninsula. It was built by refugees from Asia Minor on the site of the ancient *Stagira*. At that time the location was known as *Limbiada*, because according to tradition it was here that Kassandros exiled the mother of Alexander the Great, *Olympiada*. The modern village, set in a natural harbour and stretching along a fine beach, is surrounded by green mountains and magical coastline, attracting large numbers of tourists the summer.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- **Ancient Stagira:** Ancient Stagira located about 500 meters southeast of the current settlement of Olympiada, on a small, mountainous and beautiful peninsula called "*Liotopi*". The city occupied the two hills of this peninsula, i.e. the coastal North and a greater South, which are separated by a low strip of land. The location of the city is known as the birthplace of Aristotle. The excavations in the region began in 1990. The most impressive piece that was brought to light is the wall, at the top of the hill that was built in the classic years.
- The privately-owned island of Kapros (or Kafkanas), opposite Olympiada at a distance of about 2 miles. Behind its port there are traces of a small settlement. One can see two water cisterns and the ruins of a structure which must have been a two-storey building, which -according to legend- was a church.

- An exhibition center with photographs, archaeological findings, and folklore items.
- Between Olympiada and the picturesque mountainous village Varvara, the 15m high Varvara's waterfalls.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

Each year, at summertime (7 July), cultural events are organised here. The "Aristotelia" take place within the archaeological area, continuing this age-old feast.

Stagira

← Thessaloniki 108km ← Polygyros 52km



Stagira is a Greek village situated at the foot of the Argirolofos hill. The village stands approximately 8km southwest of the ancient Stagira, the birthplace of Aristotle. The village's former name was Sidirokafsia and dates back from the Byzantine Era. The area is mentioned already in the beginning of the 10th century AC, when the mines were in full operation. Later on, monasteries from Mount Athos took over their management. From the 15th century and through all the years of the Ottoman Occupation, the mining and elaboration of the minerals became more intense, mainly when the village was under the control of Madem Agas. In the 16th century a castle was built, of which there are still remainders to be seen. During mint century the village also had its own mint.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- **Aristotle's park.** The Theme park is located in a most beautiful area with a marvellous

Stagira - Aristoteles Park



DREAM NOT

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East Coast - Villages

view towards the gulf of Ierissos and the whole peninsula of Athos. When the weather is good you can see some of the monasteries on Mount Athos using a telescope. It also includes a series of other instruments which when used properly will show the phenomena of nature. All of this is dedicated to the famous philosopher and his work called "the Natural". The instruments include a prism, optical discs, sounding bars, a compass, sundial and pendulum – all illustrating important phenomena studied by the great philosopher. >

- The fortress complex, of which only three partly ruined towers exist today as well as the ruins of the public bath that Ishak Pasha constructed in the 15th century.
- The central temple dedicated to the "Birthday of the Virgin Mary", built in 1814. Also interesting is the small chapel dedicated to the "Virgin Mary the Spilotissa" built in rock.
- The ruins of Sidirocaussia. Many ruins exist around the hill of St. Demetrios (the site of the bath).

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

Walk in the evergreen paths and admire a panoramic view.

Stratoniki

← Thessaloniki 111km ← Polygyros 63km



Very close to Stagira is the village Stratoniki. Stratoniki is one of the mountainous villages, with a panoramic view towards the gulf of Ierissos and the peninsula of Athos. It is one of the

"mademohoria" and the locals' - mainly during the old days - main occupation was mining. It is believed that the village was built by the king of Macedonia Perdikas, in honour of his brother Stratonikis.

Stratoni

← Thessaloniki 111km ← Polygyros 63km



Stratoni, a coastal village built in the gulf of Ierissos, numbers today approximately 1000 residents. In this region, ruins of the Roman Period have been found. The foundation of Stratoni as a constituted settlement dates back to the mid 19th century but has always had an unbreakable tie with the mining activity. In 1932 the village was extensively damaged by an earthquake. In the following years, the village was almost entirely rebuilt from the start.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

An ancient war memorial, which was found in the region (1st century b.c.) presenting impressive statues, tomb, vessels, e.t.c, indicates the position where the city Stratonikia flourished. From this, two statues clearly stand out, a man's and a woman's (the woman has been named "Lady of Stratoni"), which can be admired in the Museum of Polygyros.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

The cultural events that the residence of Stratoni organize, such as: Carnival festival, St Varvara's feast which lasts 5 days (in beginning of December)

Gomati

← Thessaloniki 102km ← Polygyros 41km

Gomati is a village located north of Siggitikos Bay and at the foot of Mount Athouli. This large village, set among low hills and olive groves, was founded in 1932 when the Byzantine village of the same name was flattened by earthquakes and its residents moved here to a safer site.

SIGHTSEEING

- Close to the village there is an attractive stone bridge, with two arches.
- St. George of Gomati's place of asceticism. On the way to old Gomati, starting from the St George country chapel and hiking up the footpath that runs alongside the stream, after walking a stone-paved footpath for approximately half an hour, there is the cave in which St George was sanctified.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

Swim in the blue waters of Develiki beach



Ierissos

← Thessaloniki 124km ← Polygyros 50km



The main town of the municipal district of Aristotelis and one of the largest market towns in Halkidiki, Ierissos stands on the site of ancient Akanthos, a colony of settlers from Andros, and was first inhabited in prehistoric times. Its modern name is derived from the Latin *ericius*. It was a member of the Athenian Alliance. The town was burned down by the Ottomans in the 1821 uprising. The prytaneum of ancient Akanthos can be seen at the Ierissos archaeological site, and the Krounas tower is an impressive sight to visit. Modern Ierissos is a well-equipped resort, an ideal destination for unforgettable holidays.

SIGHTSEEING

- The ruins of the castle and the Byzantine church: The only visible trace of Akanthos is a section of the ancient wall which has been excavated on the east side of the acropolis.
- The Tower of Krouna, approx. 2km west of Ierissos. It had a Byzantine fortification which protected the property.
- On the road to Nea Roda you will pass the Ierissos boatyards, where they build and repair fishing and leisure craft using traditional methods. Only timber is used and the skills are not formally taught but passed on from generation to generation.
- The dependency (metochion) of the Life-Bearing Spring, which belongs to the Monastery of Hiliandary.
- In May 2005 the town constructed an aquarium, where visitors can see a variety of fish and shellfish from the local waters, including gildhead, mullet, perch and lobster. The 40 cubic metre tank contains sea water continually renewed by a special pump connected to the sea.
- The amphitheatre and the Cultural Center are unique in Greece and project stereoscopic- 3D movies on a curved screen, housing also lots of exhibitions of great cultural interest.

✓ (CAN'T MISS THIS!)

Walking through the bay of Ierissos you will locate the beach Kakoudia. Its main characteristic is some relief rocks which adorn its waters and sand.

Ierissos "Kakoudia"



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North of Ierissos



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Nea Roda

← Thessaloniki 130km ← Polygyros 55km



The village was built at the narrowest point of the Athos peninsula, where Xerxes had a channel dug in 480BC to allow his great fleet to pass. Nea Roda is the largest of all the refugee villages of northern Halkidiki, founded immediately after the Asia Minor catastrophe at the location known as Provlakas, by forty refugee families. It is now a resort town with a fine beach, hotels and camping sites, bars and tavernas.

SIGHTSEEING

The channel was 12 stades in length (about 2,900m) and was wide enough to fit two triremes. It can just barely be made out today but it will be reformed soon.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Admire the sunset while walking around the beautiful village

Ouranoupolis

← Thessaloniki 139km ← Polygyros 64km



Another village built by refugees from the Marmaronisia islands and Caesarea, just after 1924. The land was owned by the Vatopediou Monastery as early as 1018 and was known as Prosforion. It was named Ouranoupolis in 1946, to commemorate the ancient city which once stood nearby. The main gateway to Mt. Athos, Ouranoupolis is now a busy town resort with large hotels (2-3km outside the city center), rented rooms, small guesthouses, cafes, bars, restaurants, folk art shops, etc.



SIGHTSEEING

- "Prosforios" Tower, the symbol of Ouranoupolis, which is a high imposing Byzantine tower, built in 1344.
- The Frangocastro (Frankish Castle or *Monastery of Zygos*), on the border of Mount Athos, a building dating back in the time of the Frankish Domination (9th century).
- The guardhouse of Mount Athos.
- Mount Athos. A cruise with the ferry boat around Athos peninsula is a "must" for every visitor of Ouranoupolis.
- The *Drenia islands*: a collection of uninhabited rocks bathing in the mid-day sun. A paradise of lonely coves and golden beaches. The larger island is called "The Donkey Island" after its only inhabitants, there. Drenia are just 2 miles from the coast of Ouranoupolis, near Ammouliani island.

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

Easter in Ouranoupolis is celebrated with great reverence and the Epitaphs are real masterpieces

Ouranoupolis "Prosforios" Tower



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Ammouliani island

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Ammouliani island

← Thessaloniki 119km (to Tripiti port)

← Polygyros 57km (to Tripiti port)



This is the only island in Halkidiki with a permanent population since its formation. About 600 people arrived as refugees from Asia Minor after the catastrophe. Until 1925 Ammouliani was a dependency of the Vatopediou Monastery of Mt. Athos; two or three monks lived here to administer the monastery's estates. The island has a surface area of 4.5km. There are hotels here, as well as rented rooms

and studios, camping sites, picturesque tavernas (serving fresh fish), cafes, bars, night clubs, supermarkets, etc. The island has wonderful beaches with picturesque bays. It can be reached by ferry from Tripiti and lies just two nautical miles from the coast.

👁️ SIGHTSEEING

- The majestic church of Agios Nikolaos, built in 1865 on the island's central square.
- The old shipyard or "Arsanas" is an important landmark of Ammouliani. It is a typical example of the distinctive architecture of Mount Athos, where the monks used to shelter their boats when the weather would not allow them to sail safely.
- The building of the old school (the oldest school in Chalkidiki, dating back to 1871).

✓ CAN'T MISS THIS!

The most beautiful beaches of the island are Alikes, Megali Ammos, Ai Giorges, Karagatsi, Faka, Tsaska, Nisakia







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DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Aristotle was a Philosopher, Mathematician, Astronomer, Scientist, Biologist, Zoologist, Botanist and made valuable contributions to Meteorology, Logic, Aesthetics, Psychology, Rhetoric, Poetry, Politics and Ethics.

SOURCES:

www.stagira.gr

www.learngreekonvacation.com

www.gtp.gr

www.gohalkidiki.com

www.visitammouliani.com



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Mount Athos state

According to the old customs and the bill of rights, Mount Athos is a self-governed territory of the Greek state (regarding its religious aspect it is subject to the Ecumenical Patriarch). The executive authority is exercised by the four members of Holy Supervision, whereas the legislative authority is exercised by the twenty members of the Holy Assembly, to which all monasteries are subject. The Superior of the Holy Supervision represents the first monastery in hierarchical order and is called Protos (First) or Protoepistatis (Fist Supervisor). All members are elected by absolute democratic procedures by the monks. The political leader of Mount Athos is elected by the Greek State and is subject to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Karyes is the administrative of Mount Athos. Karyes is a peculiar small picturesque

area, located at an altitude of 370 meters. In fact, it is the capital of the monastic community of Mount Athos, home of Proton (First), Holy Supervision, Holy Assembly. Also, Karyes hosts a Police Station, a Local Clinic, a post office etc. In the middle of the peninsula and with a magnificent view over the eastern Aegean coasts, Karyes is a community of residences (konaki) with workshops, shops, hostels and restaurants.

The monks follow the old Julian calendar (13 days later) and the Byzantine time (O during the sunset, apart from the monks of Monastery Iviron, who count the hours based on the sunrise). At sunset all monasteries are closed. They open again at sunrise. Before sunrise, the bell-ringer of every monastery sounds the bell rhythmically, to call his brothers to the matins.

Mount Athos' s architecture & art



The architecture of the monasteries is of the typical Byzantine monastery morphology. All of them have great walls to protect them from invasions either by pirates or other conquerors. The buildings have cells at the top part and are built in safe places with extra walls and towers. In the middle of the building complex there is a courtyard, which includes

the "katholiko" (cardinal monastery), the "trapeza" (refectory), "phiale" (the basin for the blessing of the waters) and chapels. Next to them the bell-towers, the domes and the cypresses pierce high in the sky. The "archontaki" (hostel) is a neat, typical place, found in every monastery. Every monastery has an "arsanas", a small port, to which the monks have access via a really picturesque, but tiresome path.

For almost one thousand years Mount Athos remains the greatest, authentic Byzantine Greek cultural center. Many hagiographers, such as Manuel Panselinos, Theophanis the Cretan, Michael Astrapas, created masterpieces of art. Besides the paintings there are also numerous portable icons in the cultural treasure of Mount Athos. Some of them are extremely old and it is believed that they are miraculous or that they were not made by humans. There are also mosaics and sculptures. Some miniatures are unique, made of jewels, ivory, wood, gold, etc. It is also worth-mentioning that the treasures of Mount Athos include other pieces of art, such as holy crosses, unique covers of the Evangel, golden and silver chalices, holy vessels, epitaphs weaved or quilted with gold, valuable vests, etc.









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Monasteries & sites

Karyes

The most impressive buildings in Karyes are the offices of Holy Community and Protaton (10th century). In the sanctuary lays the miraculous icon of Virgin "Axion Esti", the Virgin Mary of Mount Athos. At the library there are 117 codes and lots of valuable printed books. Here is kept the first Typiko (religious script) of Mount Athos, written on goat leather and signed by the Emperor Ioannis Tsimiskis.

1. Megisti Lavra

← Karyes 35km (7 hours)

Megisti Lavra is the most ancient, first in order and biggest monastery of all. It was founded in 963 by the monk Athanasios Athonitis with the financial support of the emperors Nikiphoros Phokas and Ioannis Tsimiskis. The monastery is dedicated to its founder, Agios Athanasios Athonitis and

celebrates on the 5th/18th of July (according to the old style calendar of Mount Athos). Megisti Lavra is a big complex of buildings, built on a picturesque cliff on the southeastern edge of Athos. The mountain seems to protect and guard the monastery from the west, whereas to the east it looks to the endless Aegean Sea. Among the group of buildings of the monastery one can easily spot out the superb Tower of Tsimiskis.

☎ +30 23770 23241, 23786

2. The Monastery Dionysiou

← Karyes 20km (4 hours)

The Monastery Dionysiou (14th century) stands on a bluff cliff in a deep wooded ravine at the western coast of Athos. The monastery was founded by Agios Dionysios, it is dedicated to the Holy Prodomos and celebrates on June 24 and July 7.

The Refectory of the monastery is also impressive and has a nice wooden door and interesting wall paintings.

☎ +30 23770 23237, 23689





3. The Monastery Dohiariou

← Karyes 15km (3 hours)

The Monastery Dohiariou is located in the most northern offshore area of the western side of the Athos peninsula. It was initially founded close the port of Daphni at the end of the 10th - early 11th century, by a "dohiaris" (a person who makes "dohia", meaning pots and fonts), student of Athanasios Athonitis. This is why the monastery was later called Dohiarios. Later on, it was destroyed by pirates. The monks who survived, built the present monastery. The high tower was built in the early 17th century.

The monastery is dedicated to the Archangels Mikhail and Gabriel and celebrates on the 8th / 21st of November. ☎ +30 23770 23245

4. The Monastery Esphigmenou

← Karyes 25km (5 hours)

The Monastery Esphigmenou is built in a bay of the northeastern side of Athos peninsula, right on the shore. In this monastery disembarked the leader of the Macedonian Revolution of 1821, Emanuel Papas. The reunion of the principals of all the monasteries was held here. In particular, the leader of the reunion, Eythymios, was a member of the "Society of Friends" (a well known Greek association during the War of Greek Independence). ☎ +30 23770 23282

5. The Monastery Gregoriou

← Karyes 20km (4 hours)

The Monastery Gregoriou is an imposing building above the offshore rocks of the southwestern side of Athos, a wonderful area between Simonos Petra and the Monastery Dionysiou. It was founded in the 14th century and is dedicated to Agios Nikolaos. It celebrates on the 6th / 19th of December.

It was built by the monk Gregorios Sinaitis, who also gave his name to the monastery. The present "catholicon" was built in 1768. ☎ +30 23770 23218, 23669

6. The Monastery Helandariou

← Karyes 30km (6 hours)

The Monastery Helandariou is located in the northern part of Mount Athos. It is like a fortress far away from the sea, surrounded by tall trees. Initially, in 1198, the emperor Alexios III, offered it to a Serbian governor called Stephanos Nemanian and his son, Ratsko, who proved to be powerful men carrying out important responsibilities with great success.

Between the monastery and the "arsanas" (harbour) there is a high, impressive, isolated tower.

The monastery is dedicated to the day of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary and celebrates on November 21 / December 4. ☎ +30 23770 23281

7. The Monastery Iviron

← Karyes 7,5km (1 and 30' hour)

The Monastery Iviron is built on the coast, in a picturesque area in the middle of the eastern coast of Mount Athos. It was founded in the 10th century (980) on the location, where, according to tradition, Virgin Mary stopped to ask God to dedicate Mount Athos to herself.

This is why the monastery is dedicated to the Assumption and celebrates on the 15th of August (or August 28). Ioannis Tornikios, the consultant of the emperor Vasillios II, is supposed to be its founder. The monastery was named after the monks (Georgians) from Iviron, students of Athanasios Athonitis. The buildings of the monastery





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are extremely big and imposing. Two towers, one in the courtyard (1626) and another in the cardinal monastery (1725) protected Iviron from the raids of intruders during the Ottoman Occupation. During the War for Independence in 1821 several monks, such as Patriarch Gregorios V, fought as simple soldiers for freedom.

☎ +30 23770 23203, 23641

8. **The Monastery Karakalou**

← Karyes 17km (3 and 30' hours)

The Monastery Karakalou, with a high and imposing tower, is located in the southeastern side of Athos peninsula, in a picturesque area with view over the Aegean Sea.

The monastery was founded in the 11th century, probably by a monk named Karakalas. Some people also argue that the monastery was named after a Roman Emperor, Karakalas, who had built here a tower by the sea (211-217).

The monastery is dedicated to the Apostles Peter and Paul and celebrates on the 29th of June / 12th of July. ☎ +30 23770 23225

9. **The Monastery Konstamonitou**

← Karyes 15km (3 hours)

The Monastery Konstamonitou is situated in the northern part of Mount Athos, in an extremely wooded area with unique natural beauty, almost one hour on foot from the sea. According to the tradition, it was founded in the 4th century either by Megas Konstantinos or his son, Konstantas, who also gave his name to the monastery. Other people argue that the founder was a monk named Kastamonitis.

The monastery was burned in the 11th century and then rebuilt with the financial support of the Emperor Andronikos. In some golden bulls of the Emperors Ioannis Paleologos VI and Manuel Paleologos II the monastery is referred to as Konstamonitos. ☎ +30 23770 23228, 23278

10. **The Monastery Koutloumousiou**

← Karyes 1km (10 minutes)

Close to Karyes in the northeastern wooded area of Athos, is located the Monastery

Koutloumousiou, which was founded in the 10th century. Since 1393 it is the patriarchal monastery. It is dedicated to the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ and celebrates on the 6th / 19th of August. In 1821 the leader of the Revolution in Macedonia, Emmanuel Papas, was declared in this monastery governor and supporter of Macedonia. ☎ +30 23770 23226

11. **The Monastery of Agios Panteleimon**

← Karyes 15km (3 hours)

The Monastery of Agios Panteleimon, also known as a Russian monastery, is built next to the sea, in the middle of the western coast of Mount Athos.

The monastery was founded in the 11th century in a more eastern area. The present building complex was built later on (1765), when the old monastery of Agios Panteleimon was transferred from Paleomonastiro in the present position. It is dedicated to Agios Panteleimon and celebrates on the 27th of July / 9th of August.

The new monastery has really impressive buildings with a lot of floors, high vaults, big bells, etc. ☎ +30 23770 23252

12. **The Monastery of Agios Pavlos**

← Karyes 25km (5 hours)

The Monastery of Agios Pavlos is the most southern church of the ten monasteries of the western side of Athos peninsula, built in a short distance from the sea. However, it is the only monastery that is close to the mountain Athos, with several strong castles and towers protecting it.

Monk Pavlos Xiropotaminos probably built the monastery in the 10th century on the location of an older church.

☎ +30 23770 23355, 23250

13. **The Monastery Pantokrator**

← Karyes 7,5km (1 and 30' hours)

The Monastery Pantokrator is situated in a rocky cliff by the sea, in the middle of the eastern coasts of Athos peninsula. The monastery was founded in the 14th century

by the Byzantines Alexios and Ioannis with the support of Emperor Ioannis Paleologos V. The monastery is dedicated to the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ and celebrates on the 6th/19th of August.

☎ +30 23770 23253

14. **The Monastery Philotheou**

← Karyes 12km (2 and 30' hours)

The Monastery Philotheou is built on the location of an ancient Asclipiion, in a picturesque plain in the eastern part of Athos, nearly one hour away from the harbour (arsanas).

The monastery was founded probably by a monk called Philotheos in the 10th century. It is dedicated to the Evangelism of Virgin Mary and celebrates on the 25th of March / 7th of April.

The monastery was financially supported by the Emperors Andronikos II, Andronikos III and Ioannis Paleologos VI. In this monastery, Agios Kosmas the "Etolos" also stayed. ☎ +30 23770 23256

15. **The Monastery Simonos Petra**

← Karyes 18km (3 and 30' hours)

The legendary Monastery Simonos Petra or Simonopetra is an extremely imposing seven-floored building, situated on a bluff cliff of the southwestern side of Athos. The monastery itself is an architectural miracle, the most peculiar and special building in Mount Athos, with a view over Athos from the southeast and the superb colours of the sun and the sea from the west. The monastery was founded in the 13th century by Simonas Myrovlytis, who, according to tradition, was driven to this rocky area by a light he saw on a night at Christmas time! There, he managed to build this monastery, which is considered an architectural miracle. He named it New Bethlehem, but in the end the monastery was named after the stone he used to build it: Simonos.

The monastery is dedicated to the Birth of Jesus Christ and celebrates on the 25th of December / 7th of January.

☎ +30 23770 23254, 23700

16. **The Monastery Stavronikita**

← Karyes 5km (1 hour)

The Monastery Stavronikita is a high, imposing building with a high tower, as its guard, situated in the middle of the eastern side of Athos peninsula, with a nice view over the Aegean Sea.

According to the tradition of Mount Athos, founder of the monastery is the officer of the Emperor Ioannis Tsimiskis, Nikiphoros Stavronikitas (10th century), who gave the monastery his name.

There are also other interpretations for the foundation and the name of this monastery, which is dedicated to Agios Nikolaos and celebrates on the 6th / 19th of December. According to the ancient tradition, fishermen found the mosaic icon of Agios Nikolaos: an oyster was stuck in the forehead of the face of Agios Nikolaos; when the fishermen took it out, the icon bled! ☎ +30 23770 23255

17. **The Monastery Vatopediou**

← Karyes 15km (3 hours)

Vatopediou is a big monastery, built like a fortress on the beach, which is situated in the middle of the eastern coast of Athos. The monastery was founded in the 10th century by Athanasios Athonitis' students. According to tradition, the founder of Vatopediou is the emperor Megas (Great) Theodosius (4th century). Furthermore, the monastery is dedicated to the Evangelism of Virgin Mary and celebrates on March 25 and April 7.

The buildings of the monastery reflect influences of many different periods of time, due to the great number of necessary repairs and renovations that had to be done.

☎ +30 23770 23219, 23343

18. **The Monastery Xenophontos**

← Karyes 15km (3 hours)

The Monastery Xenophontos is built in the middle of the western side of Athos peninsula by the coast. Agios Xenophon founded it in the 10th century.

The monastery is dedicated to Agios Georgios and celebrates on the 23rd of April / 6th of May. Like all the other monasteries it suffered a lot of raids by pirates, as well as

Mount Athos

fires, so it lost a lot of valuable treasures.

The present "catholicon" was built early in the 19th century (1809-1819). It is extremely big with a marvelous marble iconostasis. However, the first "catholicon" from the 10th century, with wall paintings from the 16th and 17th centuries is still preserved. Most of the wall paintings were made by the Cretan painter Antonios.

In the monastery there are a lot of chapels, the oldest of which is the chapel dedicated to Agios Dimitrios, (Saint Demeter) with a wooden impressive iconostasis from the 17th century. The wall paintings of the Refectory were made in the 16th century.

The bell-tower was built in 1814, and the "phiale" in 1908. Finally, the library includes 300 handwritten and 4.000 printed books.

Two mosaic icons of Agios Georgios and Agios Dimitrios, pieces of Holy Wood, relics of Saints, the icon of Transfiguration of Jesus Christ, gold-embroidered vestments and holy vessels constitute the valuable heirlooms of the monastery. ☎ +30 23770 23249, 23630

19. The Monastery Xiropotamou

← Karyes 10km (2 hours)

The Monastery Xiropotamou is built in a small plain, in the middle of the southwestern side of Athos, in a beautiful area close to Daphni.

Founders of the monastery are the Empress Poulheria (450-457) and the Emperors Romanos Lekapinos and Konstantinos Porphyrogennitos VI. The monastery Xiropotamou is the second oldest after Megisti Lavra; it was founded in the 10th century, it is dedicated to the Agii Tessarakonta Martyres (Fourty Martyrs) and celebrates on the 9th /22nd of March. The first abbot, Pavlos, was probably the son of the Emperor Mikhail I.

☎ +30 23770 23251

20. The Monastery Zographou

← Karyes 18km (3 and 30' hours)

The Monastery Zographou is the northern part of the ten monasteries of the western side of Athos peninsula. It is a wooded area, nearly one hour walk from the sea.

The monastery was founded in the 10th century, in the reign of Leontas Sophos VII. According to tradition, three siblings from Ahrida, in their attempt to dedicate the church to someone, they left a board in the "catholicon" and returned to their cells to pray. When they came back, a miracle had happened. The face of Agios Georgios stood on the board. So, the monastery was dedicated to Agios Georgios, the "Zographos" (Painter) and celebrates on the 23rd of April / 6th of May. Although the "catholicon" of the church was built in 1801, its wall paintings were done in 1817. The wooden iconostasis is exceptional.

☎ +30 23770 23247

Skites (daughter houses of the main monasteries)

The 12 skites are:

- 1) Agia Anna
- 2) Agia Triada
- 3) Theotokos
- 4) Agios Dimitrios (Lakos)
- 5) Agios Dimitrios (Vatopedion)
- 6) Timios Prodrornos (Layreotiki)
- 7) Timios Prodrornos (Iviron)
- 8) Agios Andreas
- 9) Agios Panteleimon
- 10) Kimisis Theotokou (The Assumption)



Mount Athos hospitality

The daily number of visitors is restricted to 120 Greeks and 10 foreigners. Accommodation in the monasteries is free. The host monk of every monastery welcomes the pilgrims in the "archontariki" and takes care of their accommodation. All visitors should be decently dressed, respecting the holiness of the area. Residence without the residence permit, songs and dances, filming, smoking in public areas, meat eating and the export of historic heirlooms are prohibited.

Each monastery has a special day of celebration, honouring in this way the name of the saint they are dedicated to (agios). However, the most important celebration is on August 15, which is dedicated to Virgin Mary (15th / 28th of August with the old calendar). During these two days

all monasteries are neat and specially decorated. The bells keep ringing, calling the monks and other believers to celebrate all together. After the service, all monks are offered a great meal, with fresh bread, special fish and a wine of a unique, rich flavour, which is kept in the storage rooms for this special occasion.

A great variety of grapes are cultivated in the vineyards of Mount Athos: Reditis, Athiri, Asyrtiko, Limnio, Xinomavro, Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenach Rouge. The local Athonite Wines are produced on this blessed piece of land with the mild climate, the amazing sunshine, the mountain breeze and the sea humidity. They are pleasant, white wines, spirited and old, fruity rosé and young, fresh red wines, rich in flavour.



Halkidiki

Suggested Routes



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A journey around the Kassandra peninsula

At the 35km point of the road from Thessaloniki there is a sign to Agios Pavlos (+1km) and Nea Kallikratia. You can stop off at Agios Pavlos to visit the vineyards and *winery of «Evangelos Tsantalis»*

At the 40km point along the road there is a sign for Nea Kallikratia (+3km), Nea Syllata (+5km), Nea Triglia and **Petralona** (+12km), where you can visit the famous **cave**, and Geoponika (+2km). At the 46km point a sign marks the turning for Sozopoli (+1km) and a little further on, Nea Playia and Triglia (+3km).

At about the 50km point there is a turning for Nea Moudania, home to the fascinating **Museum of Fishing Vessels and Equipment**.

60km along the road from Thessaloniki is the intersection where you turn right for Sithonia or carry straight on for Kassandra. Another 6km and you come to the bridge over the **Nea Potidea canal**, with fabulous views both left and right. Another 9km along the road, you come to the turning for the Sani resort (+9km). On the main road, a kilometer after the lights for Sani, you come to Nea Fokea, with the distinctive **Byzantine tower of Agios Pavlos** standing out on the hill.

Take the turning for **Athytos** (Aphytos), one of the most traditional of all the Halkidiki villages, with stone houses and cobbled streets. Half a kilometer outside the village you will see on your right a sign to Kassandra (+4.7km), where the road leads you over the western coast of the peninsula.

You now arrive at **Kallithea** (84km from Thessaloniki), a village which probably took its name ('fine view') from the excellent view enjoyed from the village square. There is plenty of entertainment on offer here. Also worth visiting is the sanctuary of **Zeus Ammon**, with its links to **ancient Athytos**. Five kilometers on from **Kallithea** and you come to Kryopigi, built on a hillside just 1.200m from the sea.

Polychrono is buzzing with life in summertime. 3km to the west of the village is **Lake Mavrobara**, a site of great ecological interest. Another busy summer resort is Hanioti, built on the site of the ancient city of Aiyi (or Aiyai).

Pefkochori, also known as Kapsohora, is believed to be the site of the ancient city of Neapolis.

At the south-eastern end of the peninsula is Paliouri, said to have been the site of the ancient city of Theramvos, mentioned by Herodotus. After driving through pine-trees for 6km, with a great view of the western and southern coast of Kassandra, you come to Agia Paraskevi, famous for its **healing springs**.

About half way along the road from the springs to Nea Skioni (after 3km) you should definitely stop at the **Chapel of Panagia Faneromeni**, with its supposedly miracle-working icon of the Virgin.

After another 3km you come to Nea Skioni, formerly known as Tsaprani. You pass through Mola Kalyva, the site of **ancient Mendi**, once a place of great affluence thanks to its famous local wine, and then you come to a sign for Kalandra (+1km) and Possidi



(+2.7km). After 2km you arrive at a junction: to the left (coming from the southern end of the peninsula) you head down to Skala Fourkas and to the right the road leads to the village of Fourka (+2km) and the mountain village of Kassandrino (+4km).

8km along the main road and you come to **Siviri**, where the renowned Kassandra Festival is held every summer, offering a full programme of art events.

Kassandria, also known as Valta, is the main service center for the peninsula. At the traffic lights you can take the turning up the forest road, which will bring you, after 17km, to the turning to Sani.

Carrying on along the road from Kassandria, after 6km you arrive at the main junction with turnings to both eastern and western coasts. You should estimate a complete tour of the peninsula will involve about 175km of driving, starting at Nea Potidea.

A tour of the Sithonia peninsula

Starting again from Thessaloniki, 60km along the road you come to the junction that leads right to Sithonia and straight on to Kassandra. 4km along the road you come to a sign for Agios Mamas, and then a turning left to Olynthos (+2km) and right to the prehistoric settlement of Agios Mamas (+1km). At **Olynthos** you can visit the site of the **ancient city**, the most important political center in Halkidiki in classical times.

Drive through Kalyves and after 3km you will come to the Polygyros junction. The turn to the left takes you up to Polygyros, the administrative capital of Halkidiki (+12km) and that to the right leads to the town's harbour, Gerakini.

Drive on past signs for **Psakoudia**, **Ormylia** and **Metamorfofi** and you will arrive in Nikiti, essentially the starting point for the tour of the peninsula.

2km along the road you come to a junction with roads leading to the eastern and western coasts of Sithonia. To the right the road heads west to Neos Marmaras (+18km), Porto Carras (+20km) and Porto Koufo (+44km), while straight ahead the road takes you east to Agios Nikolaos (+8km), Vourvourou (+11km), Sarti (+40km) and Sykia (+51km).

Taking the road to the western coast you will drive past a number of beaches and small resorts until you arrive at the busy town of Neos Marmaras. 5km outside town you can drive up the hillside to the traditional village of Parthenonas. 2km along the main road you come to the Porto Carras hotel complex, covering an area of 18,000 hectares, with 10km of beaches and 34 private harbours. Drive another 14km along the coast road, through air rich with the fragrance of pines, and admire a landscape. This magical scenery is enjoyed to the fullest with the car roof down, admiring the sights and scents of the glorious landscape.

Eventually you come to a small sign for the beach at Tristinika, while carrying on along the main coast road will bring you to Toroni. Just two more kilometers and you have arrived at the beautiful natural



harbour of Porto Koufo. Another 11km of beautiful coast road brings you to the sign for Kalamitsi. You are now approaching the eastern side of the peninsula. Passing Kriaritsi and Klimataria you come to the beach of Sykia. The village itself is 2km from the coast road. The next stop is bustling Sarti, full of visitors every summer. From now on the road runs through a lovely pine forest, with small roads turning off to magical beaches. As you approach Vourvourou you will be struck by the amazing view of the nine islands. You now come to the picturesque harbour of Ormos Panagias, the embarkation point for daily cruises and another 3km of road brings you to Agios Nikolaos, one of the oldest settlements in Halkidiki. Continuing east you pass by the Salonikiou beach and arrive at Pyrgadikia, where you can take the road up into mountain Halkidiki and the villages of **Mt. Holomontas**. The distance to Arnea is 35km and then another 16km through the magical mountain landscape will bring you to Taxiarchis.

A visit to Mt. Athos peninsula

The largest part of the third peninsula is occupied by the monastic community of Mt. Athos, comprising 20 individual monasteries with their official administration in the town of Karyes. The monastic community is off limits to women, while men have to secure a special permit to visit. Our exploration

of the third peninsula will take us as far as Ouranoupolis, known as the gateway to Mt. Athos. From here the boats depart taking visitors to the monasteries.

Choice of itineraries around Athos region

There are three possible routes for this trip. Starting from Thessaloniki you can take the road to Polygyros and the left-hand turning to Agios Prodomos, a village famous for its tavernas and souvlakia. If you want a faster route, avoiding Agios Prodomos, wait until you come to a second sign on the main road, to Arnea, and follow that route.

The second route involves driving to Polygyros (60km) and then following the signs to Vrastamas and then on to Gomati. This will bring you to Ierissos, from where you can reach your final destination.

The third option is to take the Egnatia Motorway from Thessaloniki to Kavala, turning off at the Mt. Athos exit. The road will take you down to Ierissos, Ouranoupolis and Mt. Athos.

The distance you will drive is about the same on all three routes, i.e. 127km from Thessaloniki to Ouranoupolis. The difference is that while the first route is a winding road it does take you through picturesque Arnea, Paleochoi, Stagira, birthplace of Aristotle, and then Stratoniki. The second road is easier, but with some winding sections, while the third route is definitely the easiest of the three. If you take the first route, after 41.5km you come to the sign for Arnea, Ierissos and Mt. Athos. 500m farther on you reach Agios Prodomos. You arrive in Arnea after a drive of 72km from our starting point. Drive through



the town square, with its cafes and shops selling fabrics, honey and *tsipouro*, and carry on driving to Paleochori (+5km). From here you can turn right to Megali Panagia, Pyrgadikia and Agios Nikolaos, or straight on through Neochori (+3km). 2km farther on there is a road to the left for Varvara, Olympiada and Stavros. Carry straight on for **Stagira, birthplace of Aristotle**, with the park containing the statue of the philosopher. Just on from Stagira is Stratoniki, and then Stratoni, from where the road goes straight to Ierissos, site of the **ancient Akanthos**. As you come out of Ierissos you will pass the old boatyards and after a drive of 6km you will arrive at Nea Roda, a village built on the narrowest point of the peninsula. 2km farther on you come to Tripiti, where ferries leave for the little island of Ammouliani. Drive on another 7km and you come to Ouranoupolis, built at the foot of Mt. Athos.

Tour of Mountain Halkidiki

Start from Thessaloniki and take the road to Polygyros until you come to the turning to Paleokastro (55km). Here you should leave the main road and turn left, drive through Paleokastro and then uphill along the winding road through the forest. After 9.5km you come to a junction: the road ahead takes you to Taxiarchis (4km) and Polygyros (12km).

Just before you get to the right turn down to Taxiarchis (+3km) you can stop at the

little rest area, where there is a chapel and some wooden benches for forest picnics. There is a path starting here which takes you 800m to the little Chapel of Agia Paraskevi.

Just below the main road is the forestry office and the facilities of the **Forestry Department of the University of Thessaloniki**. The road to the right at the junction leads to the center of Taxiarchis, to the left the road goes to the villages of Riza and Paleochora, and the beautiful location of Agios Panteleimonas with its little chapel. Straight on, the road heads up Mt. Holomontas, ending at another very pretty village, Arnea (+16km).

At the junction there is a wooden sign pointing the way to the Panagouda Chapel, a wonderful walk of 360m through the forest.

Taxiarchis-Arnea

Leaving Taxiarchis behind (and taking the junction as our starting point for measuring distances) we set out on a magical mountain drive. After 1.5km we come to Psili Rahi, with a café and taverna, and then after 2km the Chapel of the Prophet Elijah, scene of a local festival on July 20, attended by people from all the villages around the area. There are two tavernas here. As we drive farther on, there are signs pointing to mountain trails and paths through the forest.

After 9km we come to a rest area, ideal for picnics. All along the route the trees grow close to the road; the forest scenery is magnificent at any season of the year. Total distance from here to Arnea is 16km.



Routes of Central Macedonia

Central Macedonia is an area of cosmopolitan towns and cities, with a contemporary tourist infrastructure, conference centers and internationally acclaimed cultural events. It has all the elements that make a holiday destination an unforgettable one.

Thessaloniki – Many stories, one heart

Thessaloniki is a symbolic city – a modern, European, cosmopolitan, cultural and economic center of the Balkans, which has played an important role in the history of the region for centuries without interruption, ever since the city was founded by the Macedonian King Cassander in 315 BC. Therefore there are plenty of unique archaeological remains from the Roman and the Byzantine era. Thessaloniki has been home to a mosaic of ethnic groups – Ottomans, Jews, Europeans, Balkans – whose legacy is exhibited in a number of important Museums. It is a city rich in entertainment, shopping and dining options, and has a full calendar of artistic and cultural events. Being the major city of the region, Thessaloniki has lively commercial, trade fair and conference sectors.



White Tower - Thessaloniki

Imathia – Journey through history and culture, into the beauty of nature life itself

At the feet of the Pieria Mountains, where modern Vergina now stands, the ancient Macedonians built their first capital city, Aiges. Visitors can inspect the remains of the city as well as the Royal Tombs with the unique archaeological finds – the best known being the Tomb of Phillip. There are also magnificent Macedonian Tombs in the vicinity of Naousa, while ancient Mieza was the site of the School of Aristotle, where the young Alexander was taught.

Another important city in the region is Veroia, referred to as the first Macedonian assembly. In the 1st century AD Apostle Paul visited Veroia twice, preaching to its people from the Bema.

Kilkis – Gateway to Greece

Kilkis is located near the northernmost border of Greece, and combines ravishing mountain landscapes with many lakes and rivers. There are all sorts of choices to be enjoyed by nature lovers: the mountains of the Paiko Range, the Emerald Lake, the Kroussia Mountains with the famous Balkan Botanical Garden, Lake Doirani – an important wetland site and Mouria forest – a listed natural monument. The Kilkis area is rich in customs and traditions, famous mainly for the popular Goumenissa Brass Band. Goumenissa is also known for its famous wineries.



Macedonian treasures - Vergina

Pella – Quality destination for nature, history and culture enthusiasts

Pella is combining a landscape of great natural beauty with a rich history and cultural heritage. The main feature of the region is the ancient city of Pella where Alexander the Great was born and raised.

Edessa city is of great archaeological interest while it offers alternative activities such as bird-watching or hiking. Close to Aridea are the Loutraki healing springs; there are equally important and attractive spa facilities at Loutrochori, Skydra.

Pieria – Mount Olympus

Some of the most interesting archaeological sites are: the Neolithic settlement of Makrygialos, the ancient Pydna and most important, Dion the holy city of the ancient Macedonians (equivalent to Delphi and Olympia for Southern Greece). It is a powerfully wall-surrounded city, with perfect town planning. Temples and other sanctuaries, statues of gods, of wise men, of kings and heroes adorn the city with public and private buildings, theatres, baths and early Christian basilicas.

In Pieria, dominates the imposing Mount Olympus, “home” of the ancient 12 Greek Gods of the mythology. Mount Olympus is famous for the wide variety of plants, with several endemic species. Special Flora, fauna, geological formations and other features led UNESCO to declare the region a biological reservation.

Serres – Natural Beauty

The most important archaeological site in this region is Amphipolis, where one can visit the Archaeological Museum and the imposing Lion of Amphipolis, a symbol of power.

Lake Kerkini and the surrounding countryside, is one of the most important wetlands in Greece, protected by Ramsar Convention. It offers all sorts of opportunities for bird and animal watching, fishing and boating. Close by, the healing springs at Angistro and Sidirokastro offer facilities for relaxation and spa therapy.

www.verymacedonia.gr/



Greece - Central Macedonia



Mount Olympus



Ancient Pella

Region of Central Macedonia

Regional Unity of Halkidiki

☎ +30 2371 351245 - ✉ i.giorgos@pkm.gov.gr

➤ www.halkidiki.pkm.gov.gr

➤ www.verymacedonia.gr

Associations & Municipalities in Halkidiki

Municipality of Polygyros

☎ +30 23713 50701 - ✉ info@polygyros.gr

➤ www.polygyros.gr

Municipality of Nea Propontida

☎ +30 23733 50200

✉ mayor@nea-propontida.gr

➤ www.nea-propontida.gr

➤ www.visit-neaproponitida.gr

Municipality of Kassandra

☎ +30 23743 50100

✉ otakas1@otenet.gr

➤ www.kassandra.gr

Municipality of Sithonia

☎ +30 23753 50100

✉ dimarxos@dimossithonias.gr

➤ www.sithonia.gr ➤ www.dimossithonias.gr

Municipality of Aristotelis

☎ +30 23773 50000

✉ info@dimosaristoteli.gr

➤ www.dimosaristoteli.gr

Chamber of Halkidiki

☎ +30 23710 24300 - ✉ info@epichal.gr

➤ www.epichal.gov.gr

Halkidiki Hotel Association

☎ +30 2310 429020 -22

✉ info@halkidiki-hotels.gr

➤ www.halkidiki-hotels.gr

Federation of Holiday Rooms & Apartments in Halkidiki

☎ +30 23710 24992 - ✉ fedhalk@otenet.gr

➤ www.halkidiki-holidays.gr

Camping Association of Halkidiki

☎ +30 23710 24600

✉ association@campsite.gr

➤ www.campsite.gr

Useful telephones

POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Police station 100 & +30 23710 23227 & 21617
adchalkidikis@astynomia.gr

Polygyros +30 23710 21657 & 21650

Arnea +30 23720 22205

Kassandria +30 23740 22204

Nea Kallikratia +30 23990 21202

Nea Moudania +30 23730 65580 & 65583

Agios Nikolaos +30 23750 32410 & 32411

Galatista +30 23710 31400

Nea Triglia +30 23730 52291 & 53370

Ormylia +30 23710 42266

Megali Panagia +30 23720 31751

Mount Athos +30 23770 23212

FIRE DEPARTMENT 199 & +30 23710 22798**HOSPITAL** +30 23713 50100

➤ www.hospitalchalkidiki.gr

HEALTH CENTERS

Nea Moudania +30 23733 50000

Kassandria +30 23743 50000

Agios Nikolaos +30 23753 50000

Paleochori +30 23723 50000

Mt. Athos +30 23770 23217

Nea Kallikratia +30 23990 21232

PORT OFFICES

Ierissos +30 23770 22666

Nea Moudania +30 23730 21172

Neos Marmaras +30 23750 71933 & 71943

Dafni +30 23770 23682 & 23300

Ormos Panagias +30 23750 31000

RADIO TAXI +30 23710 22460

23750 71500 - 23730 25060

TAXI

Kassandra +30 23740 91777

Polygyros +30 23710 24700

Sithonia +30 23750 31429

Sarti +30 23780 94621

BUS STATIONS

Thessaloniki +30 2310 316555 & 316565

Polygyros +30 23710 22309

Nea Moudania +30 23730 21228

Arnea +30 23720 22278

Kassandreia +30 23740 22214

Nea Kallikratia +30 23990 21048

Kavourotrypes



DREAM NOT

GO LIVE!



halkidiki

inside your dreams



- City - Community
- Village
- Settlement - Toponym
- Motorway EGNATIA ODOS
- Main roads
- Provincial road
- Secondary road
- Unpaved road
- Borders of Halkidiki

- ✈ Airport
- ⚓ Port, Marina
- 🏥 Hospital - First Aid
- 🏛 Museum
- 🏨 Hotel - Rooms, Apartments
- ⛪ Monastery
- 🏛 Archaeological site
- 🏡 Traditional Villages Monuments
- 🕒 Cave
- 🍷 Visitable wineries
- 🎭 Theater Cultural Events
- 🏄 Water sports
- ℹ Information
- 🏕 Camping
- 🏖 Beach
- 👣 Hiking tracks

DREAM NOT
GO LIVE!

AEGEAN SEA



halkidiki

inside your dreams

