

# Daily Guided Walks



## Forestry Walks €35pp



Duration:

6hrs

We begin this walk in the serene mountain village, as we make our way through the quiet streets, you might notice the interesting mix of Italian and traditional Greek architecture.

This Italian influence stems from the Italian occupation of the island from 1912 to 1948. Don't worry there will be time to have a look around on our return. The walk begins with easy strolling along a good track through pine trees that give way to broadleaves and a pleasantly cool picnic spot much loved for the abundance of butterflies that gather here at certain times of the year. However, it is perhaps too early in the day to stop for long, so after only a brief stop, we continue.

Further along as the broadleaved trees are slowly replaced by natural pine stands, devoid of the straight lines and machine like precision that dominates most modern forestry, we emerge from the trees and stumble across a chapel. This makes a good excuse to stop for a drink, take some photos and adjust boots. Your welcome to have look inside the chapel, you will come across many in Rhodes and they are often highly ornate inside. Before we leave, if you look up onto the flanks of Mount Profitis Ilias (the objective of one of our mountain walks) you will see two large buildings perched on the hillside. These are another remnant of the Italian occupation, hotels reputed to be the summer residence of Mussolini.

As we carry on our way the abundance of trees provide welcome shade as the day progresses and the sun climbs in the sky, making this walk an excellent option for some of the hotter days we experience in Rhodes. We reach the first hill of the day which takes a zigzagging route and helps justify all that delicious Greek food. Our experienced leaders know all the best places to stop on the route ensuring pleasant views and cooling shade. The

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track levels off before long and we ramble on past some farm small holdings and a collection of bee hives. Rhodes is famous for its honey, as the bees from these countryside hives visit wild herbs and pine trees creating a flavoursome and unique honey, perfect drizzled over thick Greek yoghurt and fresh fruit.

***“...The wind blowing through the tops of the trees and the aroma of pine gives a calming sensation that soothes the soul. I always come away from this walk in a calmer state of mind...”***  
***(Stephen, Walking Rhodes Director)***

Our path continues winding its way through the forest passing occasional cliffs and clearings; with gentle ups and downs, we make good progress eventually a restaurant by the name of Taverna Foundoukli. Popular for its food made with home grown ingredients and also eco-cabin accommodation the entire place is ‘off-grid’, unfortunately it only opens at weekends. We press on just a short way for our own lunch.

We stop for lunch at one of the islands favourite cultural attractions, the church of Saint Nikolaos Foundoukli, (St Nicholas of the Hazelnuts) This beautiful church was built in the 13th century and you can still see some of the original frescoes on the walls within. You may well have noticed that of the two churches we have seen today neither had any chairs or pews in them. We have recently discovered that in the Greek Orthodox Church - which is the dominant religion of the island - people stand throughout ceremonies. This a lovely place to stop for lunch, there is plenty of shade, picnic benches, swings for the kids (whatever age) and toilet facilities. With everyone suitably fed and watered, we set off for the afternoons walking.

Before long, we reach the high point of the ridge where we are greeted by splendid views of the surrounding countryside, well worth the climb. If the weather is fine (which it usually is) then over to your left you will see Mount Profitis Ilias and the Mediterranean Sea and too your right the Aegean Sea and the hills of Turkey on the horizon.

From here, we descend past trees and herbs, which give of a wonderful aroma in the heat of the day, to a point where we leave the track for a short way. Following an almost non-existent path known to very few people, we find our way through this pleasant open forest landscape.

We emerge from the forest on to a good track that soon puts us within sight of the mountain village with level walking remaining. Arriving back there will be time to have a look around and stop in the friendly taverna for a glass of juice, freshly squeezed from local oranges or cold beer in a frosty glass.

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## Equipment:

You will require adequate foot wear for walking on forestry roads. It is advisable to wear light long sleeve shirts and light trousers in addition to a sun hat, sun cream sunglasses. You should bring a rucksack or similar, as it will be necessary to carry your lunch, personal items and at least two litres of water.

## Food:

This is a reasonably long walk and you should bring sufficient food and water to last the day; there are no shops on route to buy food and water. The best rule of thumb is always to come away from a walk with some food spare.

## Walking conditions:

This walk is mostly on good tracks, there is one trackless section but the terrain is not too severe. As this is a forestry walk, there is plenty of shade. The landscape is rolling hills so there is some uphill walking, however the hills are fairly short and well spaced.

## Stops & Breaks:

We will stop for lunch at a famous church; there are picnic benches and a toilet here. Throughout the day, there is plenty of opportunity to stop for a rest, to admire the view or to take photos.



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