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Lesvos

walks and drives



5 DRIVES

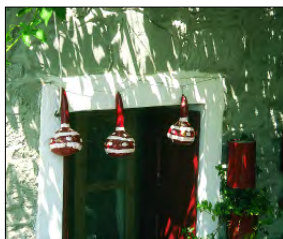
65 WALKS/GPS

ONLINE UPDATES

Landscapes of
LESVOS

a countryside guide

Fifth edition



Brian and Eileen Anderson
updated by Sunflower Books



SUNFLOWER BOOKS



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Getting about

By far the best way to get around on the island is to hire a car. There are bus services operating on Lesbos, but these are of little practical help.

There are in fact two types of **bus service** — a frequent local service operating around Mytilene, the main town, and an intercity service. On this large and under-populated island, the intercity service is generally timetabled to take people into Mytilene in the morning and return them to their villages when the shops close after lunch. But for all services see the website **ktel-lesvou.gr**. It is very easy to use.

There might be the odd occasion when a bus is helpful but in practice, **a car is essential**. With that in mind, and because we used a car ourselves, most of the walks in this book are circular.

For one or two walks, a **taxi** is a better and more economical option, and this will be indicated in the 'Transport' section at the start of each walk. Taxis are especially economical when there is a group sharing and the fare can be split four ways. But remember, distances on Lesbos are generally long and, depending on where you are based, the cost may be considerable in any case. *Always check the taxi fare before a journey.*

There is a small **ferry boat** operating along the north shore in summer, between Petra, Molyvos and Skala Sikaminias. This is detailed in Walk 21 on page 107.

The few buses of possible use are listed on page 136.

Further reading

Lesbos usually gets no more than a chapter in most of the general guidebooks for Greece. At the moment, the only other books dedicated to the island are the Crossbill Nature Guide *Lesbos* by Alex Tabak and our own *Lesbos: A Visitors Guide*. Both are available from amazon.co.uk. Our *Visitors Guide*, with more information about the history, places and

customs of the island, makes a good companion guide for 'Landscapers'.

Also from Amazon, two specialist books: our own *The Orchids of Lesbos* (2018), is available as a paperback, while, for bird-watchers there is *Birding on the Greek Island of Lesbos* by Richard Brooks, also available as a paperback.

A country code for walkers and motorists

Regular walkers love and respect the countryside, but different countries sometimes have different requirements. The following is just a reminder.

- It is illegal to light fires in the open countryside from May 1st until the end of October, except at official barbecue sites.
- Leave all gates in the countryside as you find them. Many 'gates' are nothing more than brushwood, but are there to stop animals from wandering. Pass through and repair them.
- Do not frighten animals. There are plenty of goats and sheep around, but they are not tame, so do not treat them as such.
- Leave the flowers where you find them, in the wild, for everybody to enjoy. Remember, orchids and cyclamen are protected species.
- Take all your litter away with you.
- Do not take risks. If walking alone, be sure to tell a responsible person of your plans.
- Switch off your mobile phone except in an emergency, when you should call 112 (the all-European emergency rescue number).
- Should you need to report a forest fire, telephone 199.



*Marbled white butterfly seen on a
thistle (Silybum marianum)*



Touring

Two large gulfs, three distinctly different upland areas, barren volcanic landscapes, eleven million olive trees, forests of pine, oak and chestnut, and vast stretches of unspoilt coastline — every single road offers new and unexpected vistas. There are no two corners of this large island anything like the same.

The car tours are designed to highlight the very best aspects of the island and to bring to your attention features or places that would otherwise be easily missed. Our experience from decades of exploring this island is distilled into these tours — and the walks. Each tour deserves a full day, and it is possible you may want to return to some of the places to enjoy a little more time there.

Most of the **roads** on the island are well surfaced now and relatively free of potholes, but a single winter can change all that. There are still a number of roads on the island which are nothing more than **stabilised tracks**. The locals use these (they mostly have no alternative), but hire car conditions may exclude their use on unmade roads and damage to the underside of the car. You will need to check with the insurers if it is possible to take your hire car on stabilised tracks, or you must use your own judgement. There is just one car tour, Car tour 3, which uses a fairly long section of stabilised track.

As in much of Greece, **car hire** on Lesbos is relatively expensive. It is often cheaper to hire from a reliable agency at home before travelling. Do be sure to check the tyres, the general condition of the car, locate the spare wheel and the tools, and try the lights. If there is any light damage on the car, like scratches, be sure to have them marked on the hire documents. Take time to study the rental conditions/insurance cover. It is *imperative* in Greece to make sure that CDW (collision damage waiver) is included. Check the insurance for exclusions (usually tyres, windscreen and the underside of the car). If these exclusions are on the list, look at the tyres, windscreen and undercarriage before accepting the car. (To cover exclusions, take out a policy with a company such as insurance4carhire.com — much cheaper than paying for insurance on arrival.) In any case, *do not hesitate to reject a car if you are not satisfied with its condition*.

Petrol is internationally priced and freely available in all parts of the island. Unleaded is *amólivthi* and diesel, *deézel*. At most stations you are still expected to wait for service and,



Oak trees are associated with churches on Lesbos, much as cypress trees are on other islands.

Picnicking

There are plenty of opportunities to find picnic spots all over the island. The Greeks themselves like to ‘picnic’, but on Lesbos this often means going to a taverna on the coast or in the country. There are one or two sites with picnic tables provided, and some of the churches which hold celebrations for their saint’s day have picnic areas.

Picnic places by the sea are always popular and, with so much coastline, they are not too difficult to find on Lesbos. In the countryside, small white churches often make ideal stops. They are mostly shaded by oak trees and are provided with stone seating.

Look at the top of the car tours to find some of our suggestions for particularly pleasant picnic spots.

should you want a receipt, you may need to ask, and it may be handwritten. On the other hand, if you need an air line for your tyres, just help yourself.

The wearing of **seat belts** is compulsory, and there are regular police checks. You may not necessarily see the locals wearing them, but the law will be harder on *you*.

If the **motoring laws** seem to be only laxly applied, this leniency does not necessarily extend to tourists. The same applies to **parking**. No matter how the locals behave in parking and even double parking, it is wiser to stay within the law, even at inconvenience to yourself.

The **speed limits** are 50 km/h in built-up areas and 90km/h on other roads. Hand-held radar traps are frequently in use on long stretches of road where speeding is possible, so it pays to be aware. **Police checks**, too, take place all the time, but not always in the same place. Be sure to carry your car hire documents, your passport, and your driving licence at all times when out in the car. Light-flashing by oncoming drivers, although illegal, usually indicates some police activity ahead.

Take great care driving outside town. There are some large flocks of sheep and herds of goats on the island, and they are often free to roam. When the weather is hot, sheep in particular gather on the roads under the shade of trees. Sometimes flocks are moved along the road, and car drivers are expected to wait or exercise great caution.

Should you need to **telephone** for help, there is fairly good coverage for mobiles. Otherwise, head for the nearest bar or taverna. A basic local sim card or esim (you need your passport to buy one!) costs about € 10 — ‘pay as you go’.

The **fold-out touring maps** are designed to be held out opposite the touring notes and show all the roads followed in our tours, as well as the location of all the walks, picnic spots and other useful information. **Symbols** used in the text are explained in the map keys. Distances (in kilometres) are given cumulatively from Skala Kallonis, where all the tours begin. Skala Kallonis was chosen as the starting point for its central location; motorists joining the tours from the other main tourist centres — like Molyvos — may find that they can sometimes pick up the notes nearer to their own resort.

The notes are largely restricted to route directions, with occasional descriptions to give a sense of place or comments on points of interest. For more detailed background comments on the history, culture and places, see ‘Further Reading’ on page 9.

Car tour 1: WAY OUT WEST AND PETRIFIED

Skala Kallonis • Parakila • Agra • Eressos • Skala Eressou • Sigri • Andissa • Skalohori • Filia • Kalloni • Skala Kallonis

135km/84mi; about 3 hours' driving

Walks en route: 25, 26, (27, 28), 30; **Picnic suggestions:** Skala Eressou (48km), Sigri (75km), the Petrified Forest (85.3km)

Generally good, surfaced roads are followed throughout this tour.

A catastrophic event occurred 20 million years ago which changed Lesvos forever. Lava rising from huge volcanic eruptions beneath the Aegean Sea poured over the western side of the island. The existing forest was smothered with a deep layer of fine ash, preserving it from total destruction, and the whole of the western landscape was reshaped on a grand scale.

The event may have been a disaster at the time, but it created an exceptional tourist attraction, unique in the Mediterranean region — a petrified forest. This is now protected as a natural monument. The Petrified Forest Park lies east of Sigri, but this tour heads first into Sigri — to visit the Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest, which is an excellent interpretation centre. The park is then visited on the return. The discovery of giant redwoods and unknown pine trees gives a remarkable insight into the climate of 20 million years ago.

There is another winner on this tour, too — the landscape. The rosy-hued barren mountains resemble something more akin to a moonscape. Dramatic views unfold around every corner, and it is like no other part of the island.

At Skala Eressou you can take your first real break from driving and have some refreshment or even lunch at one of the many restaurants which line the beach. Eressos was the birthplace of one of the island's most famous lyric poets, Sappho. Although much of her poetry has been lost, there is enough remaining to pick up on the themes of her work. It has been widely assumed, rightly or wrongly, that her orientation was towards the female sex. The Lesbian, Sappho, at some time in history became Sappho, the lesbian, and the world gained a new word. Although Eressos has tried hard to keep a family image, disciples of Sappho still like to make their pilgrimage to the resort.

Sigri is the other major stop, both to visit the town and its museum and, of course, to see the Petrified Forest Park.

Start out from the seafront in **Skala Kallonis** (🚶🏠🌳🌳; Walk 27) by heading out west, keeping the sea on your left. Stay left on

meeting the main road from Kalloni, to cross a bridge and very shortly drive along the edge of the **Gulf of Kalloni** (also known as

‘Aristotle’s Lagoon’). Gulf views stay with you until the road heads a little more inland to pass **Parakila**★ (7.5km ☞🚗). There is an old Turkish mosque and minaret to see just beyond Parakila (☞; photo on page 17). It lies fairly close to the road, but is not easily spotted through the trees. Look for a trail forking diagonally down to the left, opposite a track on the right. Park at the start of the track and walk down the trail (two minutes) to find it.

The road stays fairly close to the gulf for a time, before turning more inland. Around now a fairly large village can be seen high in the mountains, clustered tightly on a steep hillside. This is **Agra** (27km ☞🚗) — gateway to the volcanic west. The main road skirts below the village, to continue as a high level road further on. The views now encompass an unfolding vista of pink mountains and green valleys (📷; photograph page 18) which lasts well beyond **Mesotopos** (☞).

Gradually the road descends towards Eressos, to a T-junction. Turn left here and drive the short distance into **Skala Eressou** (48km ☞🏠🏠🏠☞; Walk 30). Park in the car park immediately on reaching the resort. Skala Eressou is a ribbon development running alongside a very fine beach of golden sand. It has a very good atmosphere in the main season, but tends to be quiet otherwise. Exploring the resort does not take long, but it does make a good lunch stop.

The onward route to Sigrí requires going back inland to pick up the road near Andissa before going west again. Maps show a coastal track between Eressos and Sigrí, but this can get into an extremely rough state at times and



Figures from history

The island flourished in early antiquity and produced a number of people of lasting fame. The earliest one was perhaps the 7th-century BC poet Sappho, who was greatly admired for the beauty of her writing. There is a statue of Sappho to be seen on the promenade in Mytilene, and one of the island’s ferry boats is named after her. The other boat is named after Alcaeus, another poet, a contemporary of Sappho, whose work was also highly esteemed.

Theophrastus, born in 372 BC, was a Greek peripatetic philosopher, regarded as the father of botany. His work included a nine-volume *Inquiry into Plants* and a six-volume *Growth of Plants*.

Photograph: statue of Sappho in Mytilene



Above: harbour at Skala Kalloni, where all the tours begin.

Left: windmill outside the Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest at Sigri

activity 20 million years ago, an island of limestone remained untouched. On reaching the Sigri junction at a roundabout, turn left and left again. Soon you pass a symmetrical volcanic cone on the left, with **Moni Ipsilou** (✚📶) sitting on the top. There is an access road to the top. The small monastery may not be open, but the views are fine.

Beyond the monastery you pass a tiny wind farm (⬆), followed by the road off left to the Petrified Forest Park (which we visit later on our return from Sigri). As you descend into **Sigri** (75km ✚🏠✚M), look for the wide road off left just as you enter. This leads up to the Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest, where there is some parking space. After visiting the museum, return to the main road and turn left. Park near the harbour and explore

is not recommended unless you are driving a 4WD. Set off inland, drive through **Eressos** (✚✚📶M), and notice the limestone quarry on the right. Amidst all the volcanic



*Above: the beach at Skala Eressou.
Left: old Turkish mosque and minaret
near Parakila, with iris (Iris
germanica) in the foreground*

the village on foot. Sigri is just a small fishing village with a harbour, beach and castle. Unlike many of the fishing villages on Lesbos, Sigri was fortified and was able to maintain its position on the coast. From the fishing harbour, wander the narrow streets through the village, to find the castle and beach on the far side.

Leave Sigri the way you came in, and be ready to turn right to the **Petrified Forest Park★** (85.3km 📍 🚶 🚗). Located on an open hillside, the park can be extremely hot, so it's a good idea to take a hat with you — or even an umbrella, for shade on very hot days. There are refreshments on site.

Return to the main road to continue, and turn right to start the return leg of the journey. *Be prepared to stop* on meeting the road from Eressos, regarded as the major road. Go straight over the



roundabout. Just after passing to the left of **Andissa** (⚡ 🚶 🚗), there may be a sign off right inviting you to visit its *platea* (village square). This short diversion of

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2km along a wide road brings you to the lower edge of the square. Park here and walk uphill a short distance into the *platea*. It has a good atmosphere, with a church and one or two cafés. Village squares are less common on this island than on other Greek islands. Other villages on Lesvos tended to develop an *agora* (market) street, rather than a square — a legacy from the Ottoman occupation.

Leaving Andissa behind, watch carefully on the left to see a COLLAPSED VOLCANIC CRATER. The road runs along the right-hand edge of it, but passengers should be able to get glimpses into the canyon created by the collapse. Unfortunately, the roads are rather narrow and twisting through the crater and no provision has been made for viewing.

A right turn at **Vatousa** (✠) leads to the island's only winery, at **Hidira** (☿; open July-September). **Skalohori** (✠✠✠) follows, and then **Filia** (✠☿✠). Walks 27 and 28 begin at Anemotia, 4.3km southwest of this village.

One of the most important monasteries on the island, **Moni Limonas** (✠✠✠M; Walks 25 and 26), lies along the next section of the journey, and you enjoy excellent views down over the whole monastery complex, with its satellite chapels and churches. We don't visit it at the end of this long day, but save it for Car tour 2.

Turn right on reaching the Kalloni/Molyvos road, to head into **Kalloni** (✠✠✠☿☿; Walk 25, Alternative walk 27-2), and from there follow signs to **Skala**

The mountain landscape beyond Mesotopos





Walking

The Greeks were always a little bit perplexed when they saw walkers striding up some narrow footpath or along an old trail. If they were within speaking distance, they would probably call out to advise you of a better route ... the road! Nowadays walking and bird-watching have become an accepted form of tourism, especially among the younger generation.

There are plenty of *kalderimi* (old donkey trails), footpaths and tracks throughout Lesvos. Discovering them the hard way, by trial and error, has been great fun, and assembling all the sections of paths and trails we found into interesting walks has been challenging at times. We wanted our selection of walks to reflect the island's diversity of geology, landscapes and vegetation. That was the easy part. We also wanted to bring you into contact with the island's people, culture, history and customs — and bringing all these together in the walks was a little harder.

Little has changed on Lesvos for decades, so many villages still pursue a traditional way of life and rarely see a tourist. Some of these villages feature in our walks, and it is always interesting to see the slow pace of life and how it slows to a halt in siesta time. You will have to be lucky even to get a drink in the afternoon! Agiassos is perhaps the exception; while it remains a traditional village, it has always been an important place of religious pilgrimage, so the people provide a better service to tourists.

While under Turkish rule for 400 years, Lesvos hung on grimly to its Greek Orthodox religion, and Moni Limonas became a secret school of language and religion. This, now one of the most celebrated monasteries on the island, has been incorporated into two of the walks. Ancient sites are visited, too, especially where they are difficult to reach by car.

You can travel by car and see a lot of the island, but walking unlocks so much of the hidden Lesvos. This is the way to see the many faces, the green valleys, the wooded hillsides and find the endless array of spring flowers. All that to the sound of bird song.

Publisher's note

As on page 8, we've left the authors' walking introduction much as they wrote it for the previous, 4th Edition. They developed all these walks over the years themselves, only

realising on their last trip to Lesvos that red diamond waymarks were appearing on most of their routes. This development, a real boon for walkers, is the ‘Trekking Trails Network of Lesvos’. Read about it at www.lesvostrails.gr.

There are trails all over the island — and excellent maps (reduced from information boards, so a bit small and difficult to read). The trails are usually waymarked with red diamonds and signposted with a walker icon on a yellow ground *and* a red diamond. We have tried, in this edition, to show where we follow or *leave* the waymarked trail by using the initials ‘LT’ in place of Lesvos Trekking Trail.



‘LTT’ signpost on the Short walk for motorists featured on page 22

The walks

While the Lesvos Trekking Trails website gives you as a walker much more scope, the Andersons worked out a selection of walks which are within relatively easy reach of the main resorts. Some areas, like Agiassos, have a higher concentration of walks than others.

There are walks in this book for everyone. If you are not a dedicated walker but still want to get out and explore the countryside, look for the walks graded ‘easy’ (●). Be sure to check all the shorter and alternative walks too; some are easy versions of longer hikes. More experienced walkers can tackle all the walks in this book, taking into account the season and the walking conditions. If a walk is very long, do be sure of your fitness before you attempt it. *Do not tackle strenuous walks in high summer and always carry plenty of water — at least 1 litre per person — more in hot conditions.*

Grading, waymarking, maps, GPS

We’ve given you a quick overview of each walk’s **grade** in the Contents. But for full details, see the walk itself. Our gradings are based on the ascents/descents, the length of the walk and the condition of the paths. *We also assume that walks will be done in spring and autumn*, when the weather is not

too hot. Here is a brief overview of the two gradings:

- easy-moderate — ascents/descents of no more than about 200-300m/650-1000ft; good surfaces underfoot; easily followed

- moderate-strenuous — ascents/descents may be over 300m/1000ft; variable surfaces underfoot — you must be sure-footed and agile; possible route-finding problems in poor visibility

Blue cross waymarks to churches were an early form of **waymarking** on Lesvos. Now there are the Lesvos Trekking Trail red diamonds mentioned above. We tell you where our walk leaves the waymarked route (although the waymarked route may change in future); *always follow our walking notes*. Of course you can, if you wish, follow the waymarked trail if you have the information on grade and where it goes!

The **maps** in this book are based on Openstreetmap mapping (see page 2), very heavily annotated from our notes and GPS work in the field. We hope that these maps, which we have found to be *very* accurate on the ground, will be a boon to walkers. It is a pity that we have to reproduce them at only 1:50,000 to keep the book to a manageable size; some walkers buy both the paperback *and* download a pdf file of the book from our website to print out the maps at a larger size — or you can enlarge them on a colour photocopier.

Free **GPS track** downloads are available for all our walks: see the Lesvos page on the Sunflower website. Please bear in mind, however, that GPS readings should *never* be relied upon as your sole reference point, as conditions can change overnight. *But even if you don't use GPS while walking*, it's great fun opening our GPX files in Google Earth to preview the walks in advance!

Weather

The kindest times for walking on Lesvos are those either side of summer — **March, April, May, September and October**. Although Lesvos is quite a northerly Greek island, spring flowers arrive quite early. The first orchids can usually be seen in February, along with anemones and other spring favourites, and by March the flowers are approaching their best. Unfortunately, the weather is not always good in the early months. It *can* be good, but it is by no means reliable. March is the earliest month to consider a walking holiday, and even then some wet days can be expected. April is a popular month, especially with bird-watchers and walkers. The weather is still not wholly settled, but there are usually plenty of fine sunny days. Temperatures are usually pleasant, and it is often warm enough to air the shorts. In May the weather starts to settle into its summer pattern.

Organisation of the walks

We hope this book is set out so that you can plan walks easily, depending on how far you want to go, and your abilities and equipment. The 'Where to stay' section on pages 47-48 briefly outlines the major tourist resorts and the walks nearby. Or you can look at the fold-out touring map inside the back cover. Here you can see at a glance the overall terrain, the road network, and the location of all the walks, which are highlighted in green. Quickly flipping through the book, you'll find that there's at least one photograph for each walk.

Having selected one or two potential excursions from the map and the photographs, look over the planning information at the beginning of each walk description. Here you'll find distance/hours, grade, equipment, and transport requirements. If the walk sounds beyond your ability or fitness, see if there's a shorter or alternative version which is less demanding.

When you are on your walk, you will find that the text begins with an introduction to the overall landscape and any special points of interest and then quickly turns to a detailed description of the route itself.

The **timings** given in the walks relate to a steady walking pace with just occasional pauses to catch your breath. They do *not* allow for longer pauses to take photographs, explore a church, watch birds or any of the other activities which make walking an enjoyable overall experience. Please bear this in mind when following these walks. You are *not* meant to match the times minute-by-minute throughout the walk, but to use the frequent time checks to calculate the ***time difference to the next waypoint***.

To estimate how long any walk will take you, it is wise to increase the time by *at least* 50% and, in hot weather or if you plan to botanise, picnic or bird-watch, ***double it***.

Below is a key to the symbols on our walking maps:

	main road		spring, waterfall, etc		good picnic spot
	secondary road		walk start.waypoint		castle, fort
	tertiary road		watermill		specified building
	motor track/narrow road		church.chapel		quarry, mine
	track, wide trail		shrine or cross		stadium
	path, narrow trail		cemetery		charcoal burner's pitch/threshing floor
	main walk		picnic tables		campsite
	alternative walk		best views		local facilities (see touring map key)
	height in metres		bus stop		map continuation
			car parking		

Walk 5: CIRCUIT FROM AG DIMITRIOS VIA AGIASSOS AND KARINI

Distance: 14.2km/8.8mi;
3h35min

Grade: ● strenuous. The climb from Ag Dimitrios up to the top of Agiassos village is some 300m/1000ft; overall ascent/descent about 430m/1410ft. The walk is mainly along footpaths; all on signposted Lesvos Trekking Trails
Equipment: hiking boots, sunhat, sunscreen, water, picnic (or have lunch in a taverna)

Transport: 🚗 (Car tour 3). Ag Dimitrios is on the *old* road to Polichnitos/Vatera from Mytilene. After passing the left turn to Agiassos, take the next left turn, signposted to 'Old Prov Road'. Or, *coming from Vatera*, after passing the road off right to Ambeliko take the next right (same signposting). To park, take the road/track signed to the Tsigos Springs (where the narrow road through the hamlet

turns right by a café); park where the track widens out (39° 6.065'N, 26° 21.202'E)

Shorter walks

1 Ag Dimitrios — Agiassos — Ag Dimitrios (7.6km/4.8mi; 2h).

● Moderate (strenuous in hot weather). Follow the main walk up to **Agiassos** (5) and return the same way.

2 Karini — Ag Dimitrios — Karini (12.9km/8mi; 3h). ● Moderate.

Mainly an undulating track walk along two valleys. Karini is north-east of Ag Dimitrios on the main Mytilene/Polichnitos road. Follow the main walk from the **Karini** (5; the 2h04min-point) to the end and retrace steps. Parking is tight at Karini, especially in summer, when the tavernas are busy. Skilled pathfinders (or those with our GPS tracks) could do this walk in reverse to avoid parking there.

This triangular walk has three distinct legs, each very different in character. Better still, there is at least one taverna at the junction of each leg, so there are plenty of opportunities for refreshments! The first section, up to Agiassos, is all uphill and follows an old route to the bottom end of the village. Agiassos is one of the most fascinating villages on the island, full of narrow streets and jumbled houses. It is well worth visiting in its own right, and Car tour 3 gives more detail. A broad cobbled trail leads downhill from Agiassos to Karini. It is a pilgrims' way in August, when pilgrims make the journey up to the church of the Virgin Mary of Agiassos to celebrate the saints' day of all Marias, August 15th. The final section follows tracks through wooded valleys and olives groves, all in quiet seclusion.

Start the walk in Ag Dimitrios (●): with your back to the CAFE, turn right along the road towards MYTILENE (LTT SIGNPOST). Take care along this road section. Pass another CAFE on the right and then the cobbled trail down left to the church of Ag Dimitrios. Less than

four minutes later, just before the road sweeps sharply left and uphill, fork right onto a LTT-SIGNPOSTED TRAIL (●) at the start of the road barrier. (The track heading uphill to the right just before the barrier leads to the path we follow, joining it by a fingerpost to AGIASSOS. This



Agiassos, where the church of Zoodochou Pigis is seen over to the right

Agiassos (**53min**) and turn right to the PLATEA (**58min**) and tavernas.

To continue, stay ahead up into the centre of **Agiassos**, and keep left at a fork, to rise to a T-junction (**1h**). Turn left, then bend round to the right, beneath the wisteria-covered *agora* (market). You pass the entrance to the church of **Ag Triada** (**3**) on the right and an interesting bakery on the left. Stay round right, through the village hub and, in less than four minutes, turn left up the street signposted to the POST OFFICE. Start into a steady ascent, to where the road to the *Sanatorio* crosses overhead (**1h08min**). This is the highest point in the walk.

From here keep ahead to begin the second leg: the LTT-SIGNPOSTED DESCENT TO KARINI. Follow the cobbled trail downhill. Keep steadily downhill on this lovely old trail through yet more olive groves. Meet the ASOMATOS ROAD at an LTT SIGNPOST (**4**; **1h37min**) and cross it diagonally to the left to continue. (Asomatos is ten minutes to the right.) At a signposted fork in front of an OLIVE OIL FACTORY (**2h03min**), take the lesser trail to the left. This leads to the main road. Cross the road and walk into **Karini** (**5**; **2h04min**). The painter Theophilos once spent time living in the large hollow plane (*platanos*) tree over to the left of the complex. Karini is also the base for Walk 1.

To complete the final leg of this walk, continue through Karini and leave along the track on the far side. The track winds up the hillside and, shortly after reaching a high point, meets a JUNCTION ON A BEND (**6**; **2h11min**). (*Walk 4 joins at this point.*)

track is a good route if the rivers are high.) Soon fenced on the left, the path leads through olive groves and may become vague as it descends diagonally left to cross a stream bed (**8min**). (If the stream is full, head further along the bank to an easier crossing point.)

With the stream now on your right, you pass the alternative stream crossing point a little over a minute later. Then you cross bedrock and a further stream bed. There follows a short section of fenced/walled trail, but this is soon left behind, as the route again crosses the main stream (**11min**). From here the way becomes a distinct cobbled trail. Climb steadily uphill, to meet a track (the one you passed by the road barrier). Continue uphill to the left. When the track forks, stay right, uphill. Then continue along the trail (around **40min**).

When you meet the LTT-SIGNPOSTED TRAIL TO KASTELI, on a bend (**2**; **45min**), stay ahead to reach a high point a minute later. Emerge on the main road to



Stay round left here, on the main track through olive groves; the track skims the left-hand flank of a broad valley. Ignore tracks off to the right and stay ahead. At a fork right across the river bed (INFO BOARD; 7; 2h26min), stay ahead along the track which rises into woodland. (*Walk 4 goes off right over the old bridge here.*) The shaded undulating track stays above the river bed down right. Continue ahead, to reach a rough concrete track (2h40min).

Turn left; then, almost immediately, turn right to continue along another track. The track undulates through woodland and around 12 minutes later crosses a stream bed on a concreted section. Stay along the track which rises to reach an LIT-SIGNPOSTED JUNCTION OF TRACKS (8; 3h11min) — by a board on the left which commemorates local men killed in 1947. (A

left turn here leads to the main road near the Agiassos junction.)

Keep ahead (right), and stay with the track as it weaves across the stream three times, before rising out of the valley. Ignore a track joining from the right and continue uphill.

The track becomes concreted and, soon after passing a small CHURCH (9) down to the left, the church of Ag Dimitrios itself comes into view over to the left. Rise to meet the signposted bypass around Ag Dimitrios and cross carefully.* Go right, then immediately fork left downhill in a U bend, to walk back into Ag Dimitrios (3h35min).

*To see the church in Ag Dimitrios, turn left and then immediately right; a *kalderimi* beyond the church leads to the old main road near the start of the walk.

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