



SUNFLOWER

Paxos

and Antipaxos



1 DRIVE

25 WALKS/GPS

ONLINE UPDATES

This is a sample from the
PDF edition of

Landscapes of
PAXOS

a countryside guide
Eighth edition



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This shorter sampler includes some of the introductory text, and an example car tour and walk. There is a total of 64 pages, plus a pull-out island map, in the full book.



SUNFLOWER BOOKS



Preface

Paxos, measuring about 8km long by 4km at its widest point, is little more than a broken fragment of hills sitting anchored off the southern end of Corfu. The hills of Paxos are cloaked in a cool mantle of olive trees. Dark groves of cypresses pierce this silvery-green mantle. In the shade of these wooded hills lie sprinklings of rustic hamlets. But the real beauty of Paxos is the dazzling necklace of turquoise-green coves that collar the eastern coastline.

The moment you step foot on this island you can feel that your stay here is going to be both peaceful and restful. The sleepy fishing villages and the timeless countryside have cast their spell upon you.

You begin to notice just how small the island is when you keep bumping into the same people on your daily jaunts. This creates a certain friendliness amongst the tourists themselves — a friendliness that is further enhanced by the warmth of the islanders. It was this ‘neighbourhood’ atmosphere that outshone, for me, all the other pleasures of my time on the island.

On Paxos everything is accessible — either a few minutes



by public transport, or an hour or two on foot. Outside July and August, when there is little traffic on the island and a freshness in the air, the charm of the countryside draws you out into it — usually on foot. Everyone seems to go out for a stroll.

Here's where *Landscapes of Paxos* will come in handy. There are a number of well-known beauty spots to be seen, and this book leads you to them ... and to other, more hidden corners that most visitors miss.

Being just that little bit out of the way, Paxos up until now has remained free of those obscene multi-storey apartment buildings and hotels that so badly scar the face of many tourist centres. But *do remember* that during July and August Paxos does become very crowded. Most of the visitors, fortunately, are only day-trippers from Corfu ... we have the mornings and evenings to ourselves.

Happy holiday.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to my sister, Sharon, for her splendid drawings, to the many users of the book who have helped keep me on my toes and the descriptions up-to-date — and in particular to Mike Longridge and my publishers, Sunflower, for their thorough revision work.

Loggos — as perfect as a picture postcard





Picnics and short walks

Who needs an excuse for picnicking on this island, when there are so many out-of-the-way coves to explore? All of them offer ideal swimming conditions and all the solitude you could possibly ask for, in addition to a sylvan backdrop which provides the much-needed shade on a hot day.

There's only one picnic spot among my suggestions where you will find tables and benches — Picnic 5 at Ag Apostoli. The rest are natural, untouched beauty spots. Some are at exhilarating viewpoints, others are in rustic countryside surroundings, but most are at beaches, since that's where you're likely to be heading.

Note that picnic numbers correspond to walk numbers: the location of the picnic spot is shown on the map by the symbol P. Please remember to wear sensible shoes and take a sunhat (the symbol ○ after the title indicates a picnic in full sun.

1a MOGGONISSI INLET (photo opposite) ○

🚗 by car: park near the church of Ag Marina (Ⓢ) at the end of the Moggonissi road; then 15-20 minutes on foot; 🚌 by bus: to Gaios only; then 50-55 minutes on foot, at first along the motor road

From the parking area near the church of Ag Marina, follow the lane shown on the facing page. It is now mostly concreted and leads round to the causeway and over to the taverna and beach. But don't cross the causeway; instead, keep along the shoreline and climb the western sea-cliffs, to sit on the magnificent limestone shelves that create an amphitheatre in the face of the cliff. No shade. This would be a wonderful place for an evening picnic, watching the sun go down.

1b MOUZMOULI BAY OVERLOOK (photo on page 14)

🚗 by car: park by the church in Vellianitatika; then 30-35 minutes on foot; 🚌 by bus: alight at the taverna just above the Ozias turn-off; then 25-30 minutes on foot

If you're travelling by bus, use the notes for Walk 1 (page 26) to reach this lookout. If you go by car, from Vellianitatika head behind the church and down past the campanile, where you meet a junction (Ⓜ). Turn right, then refer to the second paragraph on page 28: 'Once through the houses ...'. This is a very impressive viewpoint; shade nearby.

2a GALAZIO BAY OVERLOOK (photo on page 32)

🚗 by car: park by the church in Vellianitatika; then 25-30 minutes on foot; 🚌 by bus: alight at the taverna just above the Ozias turn-off; then 20-25 minutes on foot

Travelling by bus or car, follow the notes for Walk 2 on page 32 from the 15min-point (the church in Vellianitatika).

2b AVLAKI BEACH (photo on page 32) ○

🚗 by car: park off the side of the road at Makratika; then 20-30 minutes on foot; 🚌 by bus: alight at Makratika; then 20-30 minutes on foot

Following the notes for Walk 2 from ⑤ on page 34, set out from the church (Il Conde/Pantokratoras, with its noteworthy campanile) in Makratika to descend to Avlaki Beach. Swimming in the inlet is safe, but there is no shade.

On route to Picnic 1a, leave the car at the end of the Moggonissi road, near the 6th-century church of Ag Marina, and follow the lane round to the causeway.



10 Landscapes of Paxos

3 GEROMONACHES (photo on page 38)

☎ by car: park at the start of the concrete lane to Klonatika (the first right when descending northeast from Bogdanatika on the New Port road); then 20-30 minutes on foot; 🚌 by bus: alight at the New Port road junction in Bogdanatika and follow notes for motorists; then 25-35 minutes on foot
Six minutes (500m/yds) after turning off the New Port road fork left into an alley that descends to the hamlet of Geromonaches — cool, shady, and timeless.

4 KIPOS BEACH

☎ by car: park above Kipos Beach; then 10-15 minutes on foot; 🚌 by bus: alight at the Koutsis turn-off, 100m/yds below the lane to the beach; then 20-30 minutes on foot
A very pleasant, secluded spot, with shade from olive trees.

5 AG APOSTOLI (photos on pages 20-21 and 45) ☎

☎ by car: park at the end of the lane to Ag Apostoli (well signed from Magazia); then 5 minutes on foot; 🚌 by bus: alight at the Ag Apostoli road junction in Magazia; then 20-30 minutes on foot
This is an excellent setting in the shade of cypress trees, with a picnic table and benches. From the churchyard balcony, you have a splendid view of the Eremitis Cliffs bursting up out of the sea.

6 ABOVE LOGGOS (photo on page 52)

☎ or 🚌 to Loggos; then 10-15 minutes on foot
Follow Walk 6 (page 48) to the ruins of a windmill. Shade of olive trees. There are too many new villas in this area to get more than a glimpse of the coast. Pity!

7a CAPE LAKKA (photos on pages 18 and 56-57)

☎ or 🚌 to Lakka; then 20-30 minutes on foot
Following Walk 7 (page 54), picnic anywhere beyond the second beach. From the top of the crest you have stunning views of the harbour and inland hills. Some shade. You could also visit the relatively unfrequented beach on the north side of the promontory (Missorachi; photo on pages 56-57), where it is safe to swim, and there is shade from the cliffs.

7b IPAPANTI CHURCH (photos on pages 14 and 47)

☎ by car: Coming from Lakka, turn right after a little over 1km on a signposted concrete lane. Just over 0.7km along turn right on a narrower lane; it ends after 100 metres (parking space for a couple of cars). Allow 5-10 minutes on foot to the church; 🚌 to Lakka; then 30-40 minutes on foot (follow notes for motorists above).
Picnic on the walls below the grand campanile. Peaceful spot; ample shade.

8 ANTIPAXOS (photo on pages 62-63)

🚤 by taxi boat; 10-20 minutes on foot
Leave the taxi boat at Vrika and follow the track towards Vigla. Take the first turn-off left (a track, one minute uphill). This track/path leads down to a lovely small cove called Messovrika (no shade). Most people continue to Voutoumi Beach — the real beauty spot — so it is likely to be crowded in high season. You can easily get to Voutoumi by taking the track inland from Vrika. Follow it round to the left at the top and then down around the headland. At the bottom turn left to Voutoumi. Bella Vista bar, above the beach, has a wonderful view from the hillside overlooking the beach, with shade nearby. But it can still be very hot.



Touring

Paxos is not an ideal island for touring by car — there are no great sights or sites to see and, besides, it's only 9.5km long by 3km wide.

Cars can be rented through the tour companies or the agency in Gaios but, unless you consider a car essential for your holiday, I advise against it. You can tour on **mopeds** or **motorbikes** and, yes, people of all ages get about this way on the island. Moreover, nearly all the scenic spots on the island are within a short stroll from the bus route.

If and when you hire a vehicle, there are important things to remember: always check it out before taking it on the road and report any dents and scratches, etc, lest you find that you get the blame for them. Have you got the necessities: spare tyre, jack, enough petrol, the telephone numbers of the rental firm (both for office hours and after hours)? Do the lights work? *Read* the rental conditions and the insurance coverage documents.

Important: On Paxos some of the mopeds and bikes (or outboard motorboats, for that matter) **may not be insured**. You are liable for any damage you incur, and *it is always their estimate*. Be warned, too, that some of the mopeds and motorbikes may not be in good condition, especially by the end of summer. Drive carefully, as there are a lot of novice riders on the roads, and in July and August getting around can be akin to a Shanghai rush hour. One final caution: there are only two **petrol stations** on the island, one just outside Gaios and the other at Magazia (both likely to be closed Sundays/holidays).

Pistacia lentiscus



Phlomis fruticosa
(Jerusalem sage)



Punica granatum
(Pomegranate)



Sarcopoterium spinosum
(Thorny burnet)



Nicotiana glauca
(Tobacco shrub)



Car tour: AROUND THE ISLAND

Gaios • Moggonissi Island • Gaios • Ozias • Gaios • Ag Apostoli Church • Fontana/Platanos • Loggos • Lakka • Ipapanti Church • Magazia • Fontana/Platanos • Gaios

Distance: 35km/22mi; about 2-3 hours' driving

On route: Picnics 1-7 (see pages 8-10); Walks 1-7

The roads are generally narrow and twisting: sometimes we follow very small and rather bumpy lanes. Passing on these lanes is a problem. Drive slowly at all times, watching for livestock (and pedestrians near the villages). During high summer mopeds and motorbikes (and Italian tourists who have come by ferry in their own cars) jam the roads. Drive with care! There are only two petrol stations on the island, one just outside Gaios and the other in Magazia (usually closed Sundays and holidays).

Paxos is an island more suited to walking than to driving. I don't wish to discourage would-be motorists, but rather to encourage would-be walkers. Of course, if you have only a day or two, then you will want to see as much as possible. But here again, many of the beauty spots on Paxos are only accessible on foot or by sea. Perhaps that is why the



island remains so special. Under normal conditions, 35km could be covered in half an hour or so, but this is Paxos ... where you will give the sheep and goats right of way on the tangle of lanes, stop to admire the beauty spots, and let time take care of itself.

Before heading to the north of the island from Gaios, I recommend two short 'side' excursions — to Moggonissi Island and Ozias.

To reach Moggonissi, squeeze past the waterfront houses at the southern end of Gaios and follow the coast. You pass the bronze statue of Georgis Anemoyiannis, a local hero who was burnt alive by the Turks during the 1821 Greek Revolution. He was captured after his failed attempt to set fire to the Turkish fleet. Your route runs close to the seashore for most of the way. Tiny secluded coves lie ensconced in the limestone-collared coastline. Olive groves cascade down the

Gaios





Ipapanti, the oldest church on Paxos (Walks 5 and 7; Picnic 7b). There's a photograph of the campanile on page 47.

Middle: Picnic 1b: the outlook over Mouzmouli Bay, a 20-30 minute walk from the church in Vellianitika.

Bottom: Old windmill below Koutsí (Short walk 3-3)



gentle inclines to the edge of the sea. Barely one kilometre out of town, you pass the rather discreet Paxos Beach Hotel (🏠), sitting above a cove on a hillside, amidst olive trees.

Approaching **Moggonissi Island** (4km ✂) the olive groves subside and *maquis* takes over the countryside; the greenery intensifies. The island sits across a shallow beryl-green inlet that narrows to a hair's breadth, only just making Moggonissi an island. Through this V one can see Antipaxos rising up out of the sea in the background. Moggonissi's small sandy beach and taverna shown on pages 30-31 are very popular with those staying in Gaios, and taxi boats ply frequently between Gaios and the beach.

You *can* drive all the way to the beach and taverna on a mostly concreted lane which crosses the causeway, then heads steeply uphill. But I recommend parking near the 6th-century church of Ag Marina (photo on page 9).



Walk along the concrete lane, cross the causeway, then follow the shoreline along to the left. Walk 1 visits Moggonissi, and Picnic 1a is an especially pleasant setting for evening ‘dining’ in the open air.

Return to **Gaios**, then continue to **Ozias**: leave Gaios on the road signposted to Makratika (go left at the fork on the outskirts of town, at the left of the channelled river bed). Pass the petrol station (🛢️) and climb into a small rocky valley stepped with olive groves. Barely a kilometre uphill you reach the Ozias turn-off, opposite the Paxos Club (🏠) and swimming pool. Turn left for Ozias (✂️). Colourful roadside gardens enliven the countryside here. Each garden has its complement of citrus, fig and pomegranate trees — and the enormous old ribbed water jars (see title page) which were once used for water storage, but are now only a decorative feature. Walls crippled by old age and derelict buildings sit back amidst the trees. The road meanders through this arcadian countryside, always in the shade of olive trees. In autumn the hillsides are flecked with carmine-coloured cyclamen, and you’ll spy pockets of bright yellow *Sternbergia*; spring brings its own floral extravaganza, with deep blue bellflowers, lily-white arums, violet hyacinths and a variety of anemones.

Ozias (10km) is a pleasant country village straddling the top of a ridge. Small cottages line the side of the road. This area was the first part of Paxos to be inhabited, and the settlement once spread as far as Vellianitika. Turn left just past the church to descend back to **Gaios**.

Now, to begin the ‘real’ tour, once again head up the Makratika road, beyond the Paxos Club passing the turn-off to Vellianitika (Walk 2) on your left. If you were to park by the church in Vellianitika, you could walk to two superb viewpoints: the outlook over Mouz mouli Bay shown opposite (Picnic 1b), and the equally fine overview of Galazio Bay shown on page 32 (Picnic 2a).

Just beyond the Vellianitika turn-off, the 18th-century roadside church of Il Conde (also called Pantokratoras; ✚) in **Makratika** catches your attention with its fine campanile. The church door was made to order — the last Venetian mayor wanted to be able to enter on horseback! To enjoy Picnic 2b at Avlaki Beach, you would set off through the archway of the campanile in years past — today a good motor track leads to the beach ... and a huge new ‘oligarch’s’ house.

The large, drawn-out village of **Bogdanatika** (13km 🏠✂️⊕; Walks 2-5) follows. Two more roads from Gaios join you from the right here. (Were you to fork off right along

the New Port road, you could walk to the setting for Picnic 3 — the enchanting, partly ruined hamlet of Geromonaches, shown on page 38.) As you leave Bogdanatika, you pass the turn-off left to Vlachopoulatika, a picturesque scattering of houses where you could potter around and stretch your legs, using the notes for Walk 5 on page 44.


Climbing the cypress-wooded slopes, you circle below the island's highest point — a hillock 233m/764ft high. The imposing 19th-century belfry of Ag Charalambos on the 'mountain' towers over the roadside. Rising high above the trees, it stands like a sentry post, looking out to the south of the island. You, too, look back to the south over undulating hills to Antipaxos and Lefkada beyond it.

Descending the 'mountainside', you enter **Magazia** (16km ✕📍; Walk 5). Just past the petrol station, turn left on a tarmac lane signposted 'CHURCH OF THE AYIOI APOSTOLOI'. A kilometre down this narrow lane, at a sign for 'ERIMITIS', turn right up a concrete track squeezing between a garage and a house. **Ag Apostoli**★ (17km 📍🗺️✕📍; Walk 5) is a very simple church and is kept locked, unfortunately, due to thievery in the past. But you have really come for the view of the **Erimitis Cliffs**★ — one of the 'sights' of Paxos. These glaring white limestone cliffs, shown on pages 22-23, plummet hundreds of feet into an aquamarine sea — a spell-binding sight. The bar/restaurant next to the church is a very popular place from which to see the sunset. Earlier in the day, the table and benches here allow you to picnic in comfort (Picnic 5). Before leaving, be sure to stretch your legs by strolling from the church down to the superb viewpoint (📍) over Ahai Bay and its cloistered caves, shown on page 45. Use the map or the notes on page 45 ('Detour to Pounda Point') to reach this nearby viewpoint.

Back on the Lakka road in **Magazia**, turn left and take the second right, signposted to 'LONGOS'. A flock of sooty-faced and -socked sheep may be grazing amidst the trees (photo pages 22-23). When you're out walking here, bells always alert you to their presence. **Fontana/Platanos**, half a kilometre further along, is where you turn left (again signposted to 'LONGOS'). This village boasts three *cafeneions* and as many churches. Walk 4 skirts the back of this village, and Walk 3 passes through it. Notice the olive press on the roadside, as you pass by the village (see drawing on page 2). Depending on the season, heaps of olive residue may lie across the road from the press. You can't miss the resinous aroma. Paxos has only two modern olive presses, but there are still a number of the old ones about. In your strolls over the island you'll

venture upon the remains of derelict presses. The process for making olive oil has remained unchanged. The olives are crushed with stone grinding wheels, and the pulp is then strained by pressing it through a layered sacking-like material, to rid it of lumps and foreign particles. At first the drained oil is dark and cloudy, but eventually it clears. The final product is a very high-grade olive oil.

Winding down to Loggos, you pass the turn-off right to Kipos Beach (Picnic 4). Over to your left, in Koutsis, there is a ruined windmill in a clearing amidst olive trees. Short walk 3-3 passes by this mill, shown on page 14. Notice the extraordinary shape of the olive trees on these inclines. They have massive twisted and twirling trunks, and are pitted with ‘eyes’. Nearer to the sea, colonnades of cypress trees line the roadside. Soon Levrechio Beach appears through the hillside trees. This white-stone cove is very popular, since it’s the closest beach to Loggos.

Rounding a corner, you overlook a tight horseshoe-shaped bay and descend into **Loggos**★ (22km ; Walks 3, 4, 6; Picnic 6). To me, this village, shown on pages 4-5 and below, is the most appealing of the three fishing ports on Paxos. The pastel-coloured houses lean up against one another — as houses should in a real fishing village. And how’s this for authenticity: you have to sidle past the houses and squeeze between the tables and chairs of the waterfront restaurants to drive out of the village. Where else in the world would you drive straight through a restaurant? It’s even more fun when you go through by bus — the diners quickly tuck in their toes! Loggos also seems to have more cats per capita

Loggos — watch your toes if you visit a waterfront restaurant!





Lakka: from Picnic 7a you'll enjoy a similar view.

than anywhere else in the world, so drive through with your foot on the brakes.

The enclosing hills make for good exploring. There are tucked-away hamlets, derelict windmills, beaches to suit all tastes, and most important of all, peace and quiet — outside July and August, that is. Climbing out of the deep valley that curves back inland behind Loggos, you meet a junction after just under 2km. Bear right for Lakka, your next port of call. Charming old villas grace the cool, shady olive groves.

Signs of mass tourism are non-existent on Paxos; however, coming into **Lakka**★ (25km 🏠🏠🚧; Walks 5-7), one can't help but notice a couple of ominous-looking apartment buildings. These days Lakka caters more for tourists than for fishermen. Two pincers of land embrace the shallow sandy-bottomed bay here, keeping it sheltered and calm — hence the deluge of sailboats and paddle boards. Somehow they even manage to water-ski amidst the confusion of craft. But if it's solitude you're after, you'll find it on Cape Lakka, where you can revel in superb landscapes and fine swimming spots. For children, the two beaches on the left side of the bay are ideal. Explore this headland using the notes for Picnic 7a (see photos above and on pages 56-57).

On your return towards Gaios, take the wide Magazia road that disappears into a large valley burrowing into the hills

behind Lakka (it's signposted, but not till you're about 50 metres along!). A forest of olive trees fills the valley floor. A kilometre along, turn off right on a concrete lane, to visit **Ipapanti Church** ★ (✠) in **Grammatikeika**. Just over half a kilometre up this shady country lane, turn right on a narrower lane and then follows signs to the church. *Note:* The lane only goes a couple of hundred metres towards the hamlet and then ends; *there is only parking space for a couple of cars*. You've come this far to see the church, not because it's an architectural masterpiece, but because it is the oldest on Paxos and atypical: two brothers built the church in 1601; the Ionian baroque bell-tower was added in 1772. And one cannot ignore its fine setting — high up on a densely wooded hillside deep in the tail of the valley, quite out of touch with the rest of Paxos. This is the setting for Picnic 7b; see photos on pages 14 and 47.

Heading home, return to the main road and turn right. At the Loggos/Magazia junction keep right again. Ascending back over the island's backbone of hills, you look down into tree-clad valleys that wind their way seaward. You will have noticed that, on Paxos, the rural villages are made up of dispersed scatterings of houses, rather than forming a tight nucleus, as they do on Corfu, for example.

Passing the Olive Press Museum, you are soon back in **Magazia** (32km). Turn left for 'PLATANOS, GAIOS'. In **Fontana/Platanos**, keep right for 'NEW PORT, GAIOS'. Keep straight ahead through the village, to take the coastal route back to Gaios. This road drops down to the coast, passing a reservoir in the valley on your right. You reach the sea at Kaki Langada Beach (Walk 4) — an ideal spot to finish up the day with a refreshing dip. Winding around the eastern flanks, you pass above a couple more delectable coves, before joining the New Port road and descending back into **Gaios** (35km).



Cercis siliquastrum
(Judas tree)



Sternbergia



Acanthus spinosus



Walking

Paxos is ideal for strolling, a place where you can amble along ... oblivious of time and with no particular destination in mind. The countryside is gentle and friendly, the cove-indented coastline irresistible and fun to explore.

G Grading, waymarking, maps, GPS

We've tried to give you a quick overview of each walk's grade in the Contents. *All the walks in this book are graded with the inexperienced walker in mind.* And if you can't summon up the energy for several hours of rambling, have a look at the short walks (where the grade is likely to be less energy-sapping) and the picnic suggestions (*very* short, generally easy walks, especially suitable on really hot days). Experienced ramblers will no doubt find all the walks in this book quite easy.



- easy-moderate — ascents/descents of no more than about 100-200m/330-650ft; good surfaces underfoot; easily followed
- moderate-strenuous — ascents/descents may be over 200m/650ft; variable surfaces underfoot; possible route-finding problems

Either of the above grades may be followed by:

- ⚠ possibility of vertigo — for those with no head for heights; you must be sure-footed and agile

Important: All walkers should check the Sunflower website for updates *before* embarking on any walk. See the 'UPDATE' tab on the Paxos page. Note also that *times* are given in the heading for each walk but, in summer particularly, a pleasant amble may — perhaps should — take twice as long. Take this into account when planning bus connections.

There is virtually *no waymarking* on Paxos, and no signposting for walkers (although attractions like churches *are* well signposted). You may see waymarks on some stretches of the walks, but it is *important that you follow the notes in the book*.

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 our map, which we have found to be *very* accurate on the ground, will be helpful. We have reproduced it at 1:28,000 to fit our format, but you could enlarge it by photocopying (some walkers even buy both the paperback *and* a pdf file of the same book from our website to print out maps at a larger size). On page 6 we recommend other maps.

Free **GPS track** downloads are available for all these walks: see the Paxos page on the Sunflower website. Bear in mind, however, that GPS readings should

Picnic 5 gives you this fabulous view over the Erimitis Cliffs



Walk 1: CIRCUIT FROM GAIOS VIA TRIPITOS ARCH AND MOGGONISSI ISLAND

See also photos on pages 9, 14 and the cover

Distance: 11km/6.8mi; 3h50min

Grade: ● fairly easy, if you exclude the descent to the Tripitos Arch. If you do the whole walk, the grade is ●: moderate to strenuous, with ups and downs of about 250m/820ft overall. The descent to the Tripitos Arch follows a goats' path, with the **possibility of vertigo** — *only recommended in dry weather*.

Equipment: sturdy shoes or walking boots, sunhat, suncream, long-sleeved shirt, long trousers, fleece, rainwear, bathing suit, picnic, water

Access/starting point: 🚗 to Gaios or the Vellianitika turn-off; GPS coordinates for starting point 39° 11.802'N, 20° 11.060'E

To return: 🚗 from Gaios

Short walk: Tripitos Arch circuit: 6.6km/4mi; 2h30min; ●: moderate to strenuous; access/return as above. Follow the main walk to **Tripitos Arch** (6). Once back on the main path, turn off left after a few metres/yards, to make for **Ozias** (7), from where you can follow the road back to Gaios.

Alternative walk: Variation on the main walk circuit: 10.6km/ 6.6mi; 3h50min; ●: moderate to strenuous; access/return as above. Follow the main walk to the edge of the cliffs overlooking **Mouzmouli Bay** (4). Instead of retracing steps, continue to the left from here, contouring more or less at 80m above the sea, until the path bends left and rises another 20m to the 'DOOR IN THE WALL' junction (5), then continue the main walk.

Tripitos Arch is one of the island's natural wonders. It takes you by surprise: you peer over the sheer sea-cliffs and see not far below you an impressive archway of rock hanging off the island. It requires a bit of a scramble to reach the arch but, if you're sure-footed, don't miss this descent. Otherwise, just enjoy the peace and quiet of the shady mule tracks we follow. Then cross the short causeway to Moggonissi Island and take a dip in the beautiful inlet that lights up this picturesque corner of Paxos. Of all the walk in this book, this is the one most beloved of 'Landscapers'.

Start the walk from the **MAIN SQUARE** (*platia*) in **Gaios** (1): leave on the road signposted 'MAKRATIKA/VELLIANITATIKA'. When it forks almost at once keep left (at the left of the river bed channel). This country road ascends steadily into the spine of modest hills that runs down the centre of the island. Twisted old olive trees lean out over the road. Paxos seems to be one extended canopy of olive groves — they cover most of the island and have done so since the Venetian era. It's estimated that the island supports some 300,000 of them. It is said that a well-nurtured tree is able to produce up to 20 kilos of olive oil in a good year.

Crumbled stone walls terrace the rocky limestone hill-sides. Around **10min** uphill, opposite the **PAXOS CLUB**, you pass the **OZIAS TURN-OFF**. Barely a minute beyond it, reach a **STEAKHOUSE** (1) on the left, on a curve. Leave the road here

and take the path round the back of the steakhouse (walking through the table area), soon passing a CHURCH on your left. Just before you reach the Ozias road on the left, keep along a path above the road, on the right, and then turn right uphill on a mule track. This wide cobbled trail climbs to

Tripitos Arch



Vellianitatika; a high stone wall lines the right-hand side of the trail, and terracing litters the slope.

At the **JUNCTION BELOW THE CAMPANILE** (2) in **Vellianitatika**, turn left. (Beyond is the church itself, which backs onto the *platia*.) Once through the houses, curve left on an earthen path. Circling a solitary house with a garden on your left, you come to a junction and turn right along a lane. Then branch off the lane onto the first path heading off to the right. Stone walls hem you in. When a **SQUARE-LIKE JUNCTION** with an **OLIVE PRESS** (3) brings you to a halt, head right (at the left of the **OLIVE PRESS**), towards the coast. Ignore the narrow alleys leading off the path.

Suddenly you're at a **VIEWPOINT** (4) on the very edge of the cliffs rising to the south of **Mouzmouli Bay**. This gaping bite out of the coastline, shown on page 14, is the setting for Picnic 1b. **Cape Chiros** lies below. Approach the cliffs with care, especially if you are picnicking — it's a fairly precarious perch so near to the cliff-edge. A footpath leads off towards the headland, but after 10 minutes it peters out in a mass of boulders and old terraces. It is better to leave the cape to the seagulls and reserve your energy for the Tripitos Arch.

To continue the main walk*, return to the **SQUARE-LIKE JUNCTION** with the **OLIVE PRESS** (3), three minutes back from the picnic spot. From here head along the alley to the right, to take a concrete lane which ends metres further uphill. A garden — often flooded with colour — sits at the end of the lane. Follow the paved path that heads along the right-hand side of the garden. But before you reach the adjacent house, turn right up steps (do not continue straight ahead). Follow the main path, and you pass through a friendly cluster of houses buried amidst the olive groves high on the hillside. Tired stone walls age the face of the countryside like wrinkles.

Minutes along, you descend onto a wider track and keep right. A minute uphill you're faced with a three-way junction, where a **DOOR IN THE WALL** (5) ahead is a useful landmark. (*Note:* Two minutes up the alley on your immediate right (just past the high metal gates and where there may still be a blob of red paint on the wall) lies one of the best-preserved windmills on the island (a). Inside it are the remains of a staircase. *With care* one can clamber up these stairs for an excellent panorama over the centre of the island — worth a detour!)

Your ongoing route to Tripitos lies along the major track to the left; there is usually a small 'TRIPITOS' sign here. The

*Or continue to the left (Alternative walk)



A typical stone-laid mule track

broad track soon swings right towards the coast and the arch. Just after passing a green metal gate on your right, a (perhaps faded) sign again points the way to ‘TRIPITOS’, down a foot-path on the right-hand side of the track. Follow this path downhill. In autumn pink-flowering heather brightens up the countryside on this descent. Edging around the inner slopes of a small, narrow valley, you come to the plummeting coastline. More dramatic seascapes unravel; the island topples off into the sea.

Descending further, bear right — you might have to step over a flattened bit of fence. A goats’ path takes you down the steep hillside. *Go carefully; the cliff-edge is very close by on the left!* Shortly **Tripitos Arch** (6; 1h30min), is in sight: a towering limestone rock joined to the island by a thin arch. At least it looks very narrow, until you are actually crossing it. The descent is more awkward than vertiginous and soon you’re high above the sea, crossing the arch. (But *don’t* attempt this crossing on windy days!)

Returning from Tripitos, follow the track back the way you came. After six minutes, where the track swings left, turn right along a narrow path between stone walls. (*Note: If you are doing Short walk 2, or if you wish to get back to civilisation and a bar as soon as possible, take the turn-off to the left after a few metres/yards.*) After two minutes, the path passes a roofless building on the right. Continue along the path for another two minutes, to meet a wide, stony track running between walls. Turn left along this track and, after cresting a small rise (with a house on the right), continue downhill into

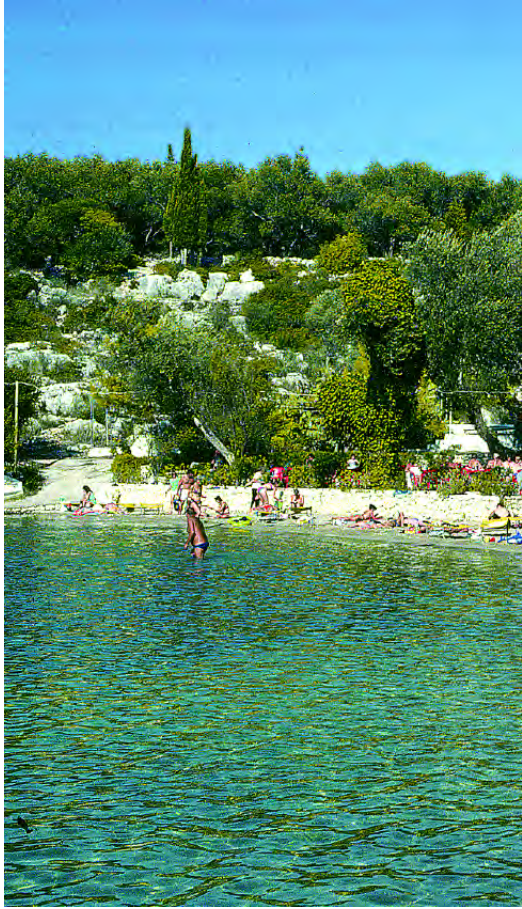
The sandy beach on Moggonissi Island is very popular (and safe for young children); a taverna hides in the trees.

the olive trees. Keeping down this partly concreted track, you reach a tarmac road in six minutes. Follow this to the right to reach **Ozias** (7; 2h10min), where you can pause by the church before deciding whether to press on to Moggonissi.

To make for Moggonissi from Ozias, descend the concrete track opposite the corner of the CHURCH (where the road bends round the building). At the bottom of the dip there is a CISTERN on the right. Beyond it rise the hills

overlooking Moggonissi Island. Keep straight ahead at a crossing lane/ track (leading to Yftika and Agorakatika) and continue along a minor road through attractive open countryside.

After 10 minutes or so, Moggonissi — a low mound of trees and *maquis* — comes into view, and the road descends towards the coast. A shallow turquoise-green inlet separates the island from Paxos. Reaching the shoreline, turn right along the main road coming from Gaios, soon arriving at a small beach with the remains of the early Christian basilica of **Ag Marina** (8) behind it. Walking along the water's edge, you look down into the limpid green sea. When the sealed road ends, follow the concrete lane leading off it (this lane leads to Picnic 1a; see the photo on page 9). You circle the base of a hillock which is thickly wooded in cypress trees. Minutes on, a causeway takes you across the inlet, which is narrow at this point.





Once over the causeway and on **Moggonissi Island** (📍; **3h**), a rocky shoreline path to the left leads in a couple of minutes to the taverna and a beach of imported sand. To the right, both sides of the inlet offer good views of the cliff-bashing sea and Antipaxos. On the north side of the inlet, you can scale up the sea-cliffs to your right, to see the striking limestone rock formations. The precipitous and curving coastline resembles a succession of ancient Roman amphitheatres: a particularly fine spot to wind up the walk.

Return to Gaios along the coast road. Although tarmac all the way, it does not carry much traffic and provides pretty views along the shoreline. Soon after passing the **PAXOS BEACH HOTEL**, you can take a short-cut round the back of the **PLAKES BEACH**. Give yourself 50 minutes or so to reach **Gaios** (📍; **3h50min**). Or, if your legs won't carry you any further, there is a late afternoon taxi boat from the beach at Moggonissi back to Gaios, but only when the taverna is open.

Paxos and Antipaxos

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