

Brian and
Eileen Anderson

SUNFLOWER
LANDSCAPES

Samos

car tours and walks



This is a sample from the
pdf edition of

Landscapes of SAMOS

a countryside guide

Fifth edition



Brian and Eileen Anderson

This short sampler includes some of the introductory text, the Introductions to each of the main sections (Picnicking, Car Touring and Walking) with an example of each. There are a total of 136 text pages in the complete book.



SUNFLOWER BOOKS



Getting about

The independence and flexibility gained from a **hired car** makes it a popular form of transport. **Taxis** are economical, particularly if you can share the cost, but they are strictly limited by law to carry no more than four passengers. There are different tariffs for day and night, collection from airports, ports, etc, and a small charge per item for luggage. Prices should be displayed. Local journeys are normally metered (you should insist on this) and subject to a minimum charge, but for longer, unmetered journeys, it is important to establish a price before you set out, to avoid the possibility of being overcharged. There is generally not much scope for bargaining on long journey fares, but it does pay to ask around first to establish a norm. Taxi services are concentrated around the towns so, if you are visiting a remote area, do make sure that the taxi will come to collect you at an appointed time. If you have cause for complaint about taxis, report any incident to the tourist police (171), quoting the taxi number.

For many, **coach tours** offer the most comfortable and enjoyable way to see the island.

The **local bus** is the cheapest and most practical way of getting about and, due to the helpfulness of the bus conductors, it soon became our favourite mode of transport when we first visited the island many years ago to research this book. As you can imagine, we used the service so frequently that we eventually became well known to the conductors and drivers alike, and it was not unusual to get a cheery wave as they passed us out walking, or even for them to stop the bus for a quick handshake! What may surprise you, too, is the efficiency and reliability of the service: it is always best to arrive early, to be sure of catching the bus. All the walks in this book (except Walks 19 and 20 and Walk 14 outside high season) can be reached by local bus. Complete summer and winter timetables for all the island's buses are given on pages 129-133. Check them at www.vathi.gr/syginon/programaktel-eng.html before you travel. There are more hints on using the local bus service on page 129.

8 Landscapes of Samos



- SAMOS TOWN**
- 1 Tourist information
 - 2 Main square
 - 3 Tourist and town police
 - 4 Olympic Airways terminal
 - 5 Port
 - 6 Post office
 - 7 Telephone (OTE)
 - 8 National Bank of Greece
 - 9 Museum
 - 10 Bus station
 - 11 Taxi rank
 - 12 Park
 - 13 Market
 - 14 Port police and customs
 - 15 Hospital
 - 16 Stadium



- KARLOVASSI**
- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Tourist information | 5 Telephone (OTE) | 9 Port police and customs |
| 2 Main square | 6 National Bank of Greece | 10 Stadium |
| 3 Port | 7 Bus station | 11 Hospital |
| 4 Post office | 8 Taxi rank | |



Picnicking

There are many pretty and varied places to picnic on Samos. The island's official picnic sites are heavily wooded and provide tables and children's play areas. For most of the year they are very quiet, but this changes during the summer months, when the islanders come out to play and picnic (which they love). The shade these sites provide is then much sought after.

For those of you who prefer a more unspoilt, secluded location, try some of the picnic spots along the routes of our walks. We have endeavoured to give you a wide-ranging choice.

All the information you need to get to these picnics is given on the following pages, where picnic numbers correspond to walk numbers. (The picnic suggestion prefixed 'CT' is specifically linked to Car tour 3.) You can quickly find the general location on the island by looking at the fold-out touring map inside the back cover, where the walks are outlined in green. We include transport details (🚌: how to get there by bus; 🚗: where to leave your private transport), how long a walk you'll have, and views or setting. Beside the picnic title you'll find a map reference: the exact location of the picnic spot is shown on this walking map by the symbol **P** printed in green; 🚌 and 🚗 symbols indicate the nearest access by bus or private transport. Finally, to help you choose a setting that appeals to you, many of the picnic spots are illustrated.

Please remember that if more than a few minutes' walking is required, you should wear sensible shoes and take a sunhat (☉ indicates a picnic in full sun).

If you are travelling to your picnic by bus, refer to the timetables on pages 129-133, but remember it's always a good idea to get up-to-date timetables from the bus station as soon as you arrive on the island.

If you are travelling to your picnic by hired transport, be extra vigilant off the main roads: children and animals are often in the village streets. Be careful where you park: don't damage the vegetation and flowers, and be sure not to block a road or track.

All picnickers should read the Country code on page 44 and go quietly in the countryside.

10 Landscapes of Samos

Picnic food suggestions

It isn't always easy in a strange country to know what to take on a picnic, so here are a few ideas. Buy your bread fresh each day; most villages, except those well off the beaten track, have a *fournos* (baker's oven). The small ovens are best, as the bread is coming out fresh all the time.



Spit roasting

From the local market buy fresh *angouri* (cucumber), *domates* (tomatoes), *marouli* (lettuce), *feta* (goat's milk cheese; this is best bought directly from the tub where it is stored covered in brine, since it becomes strongly flavoured and dry when left uncovered). There is also a good selection of cooked sausages and meat available in the supermarkets. Don't forget some olives (the variety on Samos is especially good) and the Greek specialities *tzatziki* and *taramosalata*. Fruit in season is another good choice.

You can also buy take-away food from tavernas; good choices here are *kotopoulo* (spit-roasted chicken), *souvlaki* (veal on a skewer), and *horiatiki* (Greek salad). Buy the night before if you have a fridge.

Last but not least, don't forget something to drink. Besides mineral water there is the commonly seen *Samaina sec* wine (not to be confused with the famous sweet muscat wine; see page 14). On Samos it is possible to take an empty container and buy wine, *retsina*, *ouzo* and brandy straight from the barrel, sold by weight. It's much cheaper too!

1 AG. MATRONA, KAMBOS (map on reverse of touring map, photograph page 46) ○

by car or taxi: 15-25min on foot

by bus: 6-8min on foot

🚗 Park at Kambos, in the lay-by opposite the Vourliotes road junction (the road is too narrow to park closer). Walk west along the coast road for about 1km, then follow Walk 1, page 45.

🚌 Samos-Karlovassi bus to the Paleohori/Kambos junction (Timetables 1, 1 A). Follow Walk 1, page 45.

Views over the plain to the sea; backdrop of steeply terraced hill-sides. The church (interesting frescoes) is surrounded by wild flowers in spring.

2 AG. KONSTANTINOS (map on reverse of touring map, photograph page 39)

by car or taxi: no walking

by bus: no walking

🚗 Park by the picnic spot on the coast road at the edge of the village.

🚌 Samos-Karlovassi bus to the Ano Ag. Konstantinos junction (Timetables 1, 1A). The picnic spot is by the bus stop.

Ample shade; sea views; picnic tables; children's play area.

6a STONE SHELTER (map pages 66-67, nearby photo pages 16-17)

20-30min on foot from the stadium in Samos town

Use the notes for the start of Walk 6, page 66.

Picnic on a shaded terrace with lovely views out over Samos town and beyond. A peaceful setting on the edge of a pine wood.

Touring

Samos isn't a large island and at present has limited surfaced roads, although the situation is continually improving. Hiring a car is useful if you want to see a good selection of the island's landscapes. With this in mind we have put together four car touring itineraries.

Car hire charges are moderate, with a higher rate for jeeps. Beware when renting: many of the cars, and particularly the motorbikes, are not serviced regularly, and breakdowns are not uncommon. Before setting out, check the car and clarify the rental conditions/insurance coverage. Insurance on hire cars often excludes their use on tracks and unmade roads. There are still many of these on Samos and some, especially those crossing the mountains, are unsuitable for cars under any circumstances. If you intend to use your hire car off surfaced roads, be sure to check out the insurance situation first. Some of the lower-level, well-used tracks offer less risk and this becomes a matter of driver judgement. Motorists are also strongly advised to make sure that they have 'collision damage waiver' insurance cover, and not just standard third party cover. They are liable for any damage to their own hired car under third party insurance and could find themselves in jail until the repair costs are forthcoming. Always carry the agency's telephone number with you, and take some water, food and warm clothing in case of breakdown.

The touring notes are brief: they include little history or information about towns: all this is freely available from the tourist offices. Instead, we concentrate on the 'logistics' of

View across Samos Bay to the Ambelos range after unseasonal snowfall (Picnics 6a and 6b).

Lazarus (Walk 13) stands out as the distinct peak against the skyline in the centre of the photograph, while Profitis Ilias (Walk 13) is the broad, flattened summit to the left of Lazarus.

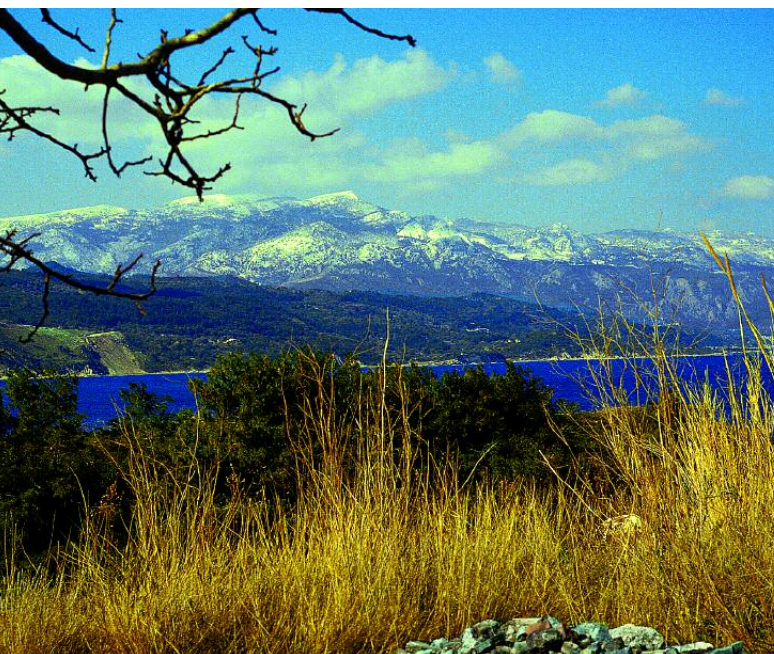


touring: times and distances, road conditions, viewpoints, and good places to rest. Most of all, we emphasise possibilities for **walking** and **picnicking**. (The symbol **P** is used to alert you to a picnic spot: see pages 9-14.) We've also highlighted some short circular walks (labelled 'CW') for motorists.

The tours start in Samos town, but you can join them easily if you are staying at one of the other main resorts. If you only hire a car for one day, try Tour 1, which will give you a good preview of the island's landscapes.

The large touring map is designed to be held out opposite the touring notes and contains all the information you will need outside Samos town. **Allow plenty of time for stops:** our times include only short breaks at viewpoints labelled (📷). Note that some **petrol stations** are closed on Sundays. Card-operated **telephones** are located near post offices, by the telephone exchange (OTE), and at some kiosks. A card is useful for calls home and also for walkers who require a taxi (particularly out of season). Hotels, tavernas, cafés and shops will let you use their phones at the local rate. **Public toilets** are available in the larger towns; others are found in bars and cafés. Don't rely on toilet paper being available; carry your own.

Distances quoted are cumulative kilometres from Samos town. The key to the symbols in the notes is on the touring map. **All motorists should read the Country**



1 ROUND THE ISLAND

Samos town • Manolates • Karlovassi • Marathokambos • Votsalakia • Pyrgos • Koumaradei • Chora • Mytilini • Samos town

126km/78mi; about 4 hours' driving; Exit A from Samos town

On route: Picnics (see pages 9-15) (1), 2, (9a), 16a-b, (16c-d, 17a-b); Walks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9-12, (13, 14), 16-21; Circular walks (CW) 1, 2, 3, 4, 7

The road from Samos town to Karlovassi is good. Petrol is available in Samos town, Kokkari, Karlovassi, Chora and Mytilini.

The sights of Samos lie not in the abundance of popular ancient ruins, but in the variety and flavour of its ever-changing landscape. If you only have a car for a day, then this tour will give you a sample of as much of its beauty as possible. You will see lush green valleys reminiscent of a more temperate climate and towering mountains, some verdantly clad, others stark and impelling. Pine forests will shade your way, and the clear turquoise sea will beckon enticingly. Sleepy villages, basking in the sun, are waiting for you to stop and stretch your legs. How will you be able to resist exploring this wonderland on foot?

Leave Samos town along the coast road to Karlovassi (Exit A). For this tour we suggest you drive without stopping through **Kokkari** (11km 🚗🏠🌲🌊🚰🛖). It is a picturesque spot and definitely worth a visit, but it is easily accessible by bus. However, if you're ready to stretch your legs, try the circular walk below: park about 1km further on, just as you leave the village.

Continue along the coast road through **Avlakia** (🌊) to pass the Vourliotes junction (17.5km). Less than 1km later, the narrow concrete trail up left, off the old road, is the start of Walk 1 and heads up to Vourliotes by an old route (P1).

Platanakia (20.4km 🌊) is reached as you turn inland

🚗 Circular walk (CW) suggestion

CW1: 4.5km/2.8mi; 1h; easy. This is a gentle walk that quickly gets you into the countryside behind **Kokkari**. Start by following the narrow road at the end of the bypass, 1km west of Kokkari. As it reverts to concrete track, keep left at the next junction. Stay on the main track as it winds uphill and then eastwards, back behind Kokkari. In 25min you reach a path off to the left. Now you have joined the final section of Walk 11. Use the notes from the 1h32min-point in that walk (page 86) to return to the centre of Kokkari. From there turn left and follow the coast road for 12min to return to the starting point and your car. **Map on reverse of touring map.**

again and cross a bridge, after which you turn left up the lush green **Valley of the Nightingales** (photograph page 24), towards Manolates. For Circular walk 3 (see page 24) park just beyond the taverna on your right, after about 1.6km. As you clear the woodland, enthuse over the views (📷) of awe-inspiring vineyard terraces. Walks 2, 4 and 5 pass through sleepy **Manolates** (24.2km 🚶🚰📷; photographs pages 60, 62) perched on the mountainside. Park at the entrance to the village or in the car park further uphill. There are plenty of tavernas and an interesting fountain near the top of the village.

When you can tear yourself away from this tranquil spot, return to Platanakia and turn left towards Karlovassi. Two minutes later you reach **Ag. Konstantinos** (🏠🚰🚶P2). Walk 2 ends here, near the church shown in the photograph on page 39. The road hugs the coast almost all the way to **Karlovassi** (41.4km 🚶🏠🏠🚰🚶📷🚰WC; P16a-b), the starting point for Walks 16 and 18. Circular walk 7 (page 31) also begins here, at the port. If you have time, you can make a quick trip to Potami Bay (P16c-d, 17a-b); see Car tour 2, page 25. It's the starting point for Walks 17 and 19, as well as Circular walk 4, described on page 25.

Otherwise, continue on the road ahead and keep left when it reaches the river bed. To go into Neo Karlovassi, take the next left turn, up the road opposite the bridge (just after turning alongside the river bed), but keep straight on for Marathokambos. Although Karlovassi isn't a very attractive town, our walks take you into magnificent countryside within a surprisingly short time.

As you leave Karlovassi behind and head south, the views open up, and you will marvel at the awesome Kerkis range (📷) across to your right. At **Ag. Theodori** (50.2km) turn sharp right. Your route now takes you through a fire-ravaged pine forest, which is fortunately regenerating, and on to **Marathokambos** (56.6km 🚶🏠🏠🚰📷). Walks 20 and 21 visit this village, which sprawls across a hillside. To reach the centre, continue down between the houses until you reach a square, where you can park. Then walk left into the town.

Or continue down the spaghetti-like road towards Ormos Marathokambos, enjoying the seascapes (📷) as you descend. On reaching the bottom, follow the main road down to the coast, bypassing Ormos Mara-

20 Landscapes of Samos

thokambos (61.5km) on the way. The beach (shown on pages 120-121), gently lapped by the invitingly clear turquoise sea, stretches ahead of you as far as Votsalakia and beyond; choose your own picnic spot. A backdrop of stark mountains and undulating hills completes the setting (📷).

The almost magnetic quality of the impressive Kerkis range draws you on to **Votsalakia (Kambos; 65.5km 🏔️🏔️🏔️🏔️🏔️)**. It's from here that challenging Walk 15 begins. Can you spot the white monastery, Evangelistria, set amid trees on the side of Kerkis? There's a close-up photo of it on page 98.

With the mountains behind you, now retrace your route, enjoying fine views of Marathokambos slumbering on the hillside. When you reach **Ag. Theodori** again (80.8km), turn right towards Pyrgos. The road undulates and winds around the hillside, passing (after 2km) the road up to Platanos, where Walk 14 starts, and the right-hand turn-off to Balos. Forest fires have decimated much of the pine forest in the **Pyrgos** area (94.3km 🏔️🏔️🏔️🏔️🏔️), but it is still worth while stretching your legs here. Park at the side of the road near the taxi stand and bus stop, on the edge of the village. The centre is just across the road, beyond the taverna.

Possible detour (12km): If you were to drive up the road on your left here (by the taxi stand), you would come to Pandrosos, which is the starting point for the circular walk below. You can park at the entrance to the village at an obvious car park (just past a chapel on the left, by a narrow concrete road). This car park is also convenient for Walk 13.

Wend your way in a leisurely fashion to **Koumaradei** (99.2km 🏔️). On arrival, park where the road widens, a little past the craft shops (which are worth a visit). As you leave and wind down the road, there is a good vantage point (📷) from where you look back at the village and can appreciate to the full its strategic position. You are now descending along the hillside in

🚗 Circular walk (CW) suggestion

CW2: 7km/4.4mi; 1h36min; moderate. There is some stiff climbing from **Pandrosos**, as you follow part of the route up towards Profitis Ilias (the highest peak in the Ambelos), but the views make the effort worthwhile. Follow Walk 13 (page 88) as far as the 50min-point, where the main walk turns right. Instead, turn left to follow the track back to Pandrosos. **Map on reverse of touring map; photographs opposite and page 90.**

the direction of Chora, with views (📷) down over the plain to Ireon.

Suggested detour (3km): When you have travelled 3.7km from Koumaradei, there is a road off sharp left which leads up to Mavratzei. It's well worth the detour, especially for the extensive views on the climb up to the village (📷). You can park on the outskirts of the Mavratzei. When you leave, the road continues through the village and back down to the main road, passing the monastery of Timiou Stavrou on the way. Turn left at the main road.

Chora (109.3km 🚧📷) is soon reached, where Walk 12 begins. Here you turn left back towards Samos town (past the road off right to Moni Ag. Triades; P9a, photograph pages 1 and 78). Heading north now, with the foothills of the Ambelos range to your left and the plain of Mytilini on the right, you pass the Museum of Palaeontology on the left as you enter **Mytilini** (112.9km 🚧🚧📷📷). The museum is open daily from 09.00 (10.00 on Sundays) to 14.30. Mytilini is very much a working village; Walks 9-11 begin here. Should you want to look around, it's easier to park at either end of the village rather than in the centre

Climb up
through the
narrow village
streets at
Pandrosos, to
the square with
this colourful
church. Walk
13 begins here.



22 Landscapes of Samos

Touring hint

Drive carefully; the road is regarded as a pavement, especially in country areas. In towns, take extra care in the one-way systems which tend to be abused, especially at night. During the high season there are also many first-time drivers of mopeds and motorbikes on the road and, as in most parts of Greece, a correspondingly high accident rate. If you do hire a moped or motorbike, crash helmets are mandatory, but life goes on without them ... and they are not supplied by the hire companies. Check your holiday insurance cover.

From here it is little more than 13km back to Samos town. There are panoramic views (📷) behind you as you climb up and away from Mytilini, and ahead you look out over Samos Bay (📷), as you descend to end the tour in **Samos town** (126km).

Blue Chairs taverna in Vourliotes (Car tour 2; Walks 1-4 and 13)





Walking

The only real way to enjoy the superb landscapes on Samos is, as the Greeks would say, 'me ta podia', with the feet! And it's your feet we want to direct into the hills, through carpets of pink and purple anemones, down valleys to coves and inlets, and through all the varied landscapes that the island offers. All the groundwork has been done, so there is no need for you to waste any time. Straight from day one of those all-too-short holidays, you can be out in the countryside enjoying every moment.

Combining all the footpaths, trails and tracks into walks which have character, highlights and variety gave us a lot of pleasure. But there is scope for even further variation. Look at the walks and the maps, and see if you can come up with new combinations. A number of walks, for example, maybe joined end-to-end, taking you across large stretches of the island. A word of caution: never try to get from one walk to another across uncharted terrain! Only link up walks by following paths described in these notes or by using roads and tracks; don't try to cross rough country (which might be dangerous) or private land (where you may not have right of way). Never attempt to cross military areas. (And never attempt to take photographs in such areas, even if you are only pointing your camera at the ground to photograph flowers. At the very least, you may have your film confiscated, resulting in the loss of some treasured pictures.)

There are walks in this book for everyone.

If you are only a **beginner**, or just in the mood perhaps for gentle walking, then go for the walks graded 'easy'. Be sure to check all the short and alternative walks, too; some are easy versions of the long hikes. If you are looking for walks of two hours or less, then browse through the circular walks for motorists (see pages 18-31 and the dotted purple routes on the walking maps). Many of these can be reached by bus just as easily as by car. For very easy walks to take you almost instantly into beautiful countryside, you need look no further than the picnic suggestions on pages 9 to 14.

Experienced walkers should be able to tackle any walk in the book, taking into account, of course, the season and the weather conditions. Don't attempt strenuous walks in high summer; do protect yourself from the sun and carry ample water and fruit with you. Always remember that storm damage or forest fires could make some of the walks described in this book unsafe. Always err on the side of safety: if you haven't reached one of our landmarks after a reasonable time, you must go back to the last 'sure' point and start again.

There is probably only one challenge that **expert walkers** will be anxious to notch up: Vigla on Mt Kerkis. From sea level to 1440m/4725ft is a tough walk, and it is essential that the weather conditions are perfect. As an appetiser, you can flex your muscles in the Ambelos range where, at times, you can almost imagine that you are tackling the Dolomites!

Guides, waymarking, maps

There are no official **guides** on Samos, but none is needed for any of the walks in this book. If you wish to do any further explorations on the Kerkis range outside the scope of this book, then an experienced companion with local knowledge is essential.

Most of our walks are easily followed, and many are now **waymarked**. In fact, waymarking is now so profuse that it has become confusing, so do follow our directions at all times and ignore other route markings that you might chance upon. Refer to the maps in the book if you are unsure about your onward route. Remember too: signposts can disappear!

Source material for the **maps** in this book has slowly improved over the years, as better information has become more readily available. Ordnance Survey standard is still not an option, but a recently published map for Samos comes closer than anything else on the market: Road Editions has published a Samos map (No 210) at a scale of 1:50,000. This can be purchased on the island or from your usual map supplier. This map may be usefully used in conjunction with the maps in this book for some walks. It also offers possible track alternatives, but it is not 100% accurate.

Note our use of terminology: a track is wide enough to be motorable; trail has been used to denote a narrower route, whether grassy, cobbled or concreted. A footpath is obviously very narrow.

Many hands

Secateurs can be purchased very cheaply on Samos and make a handy tool for the rucksack. Just a clip here and there where bushes and shrubs try to invade the path will help to keep the footpaths open. Many of the footpaths on Samos are now only used by walkers, and walkers must share responsibility if they are to be kept open.

ask you ‘**Pooh pah-tay?**’ — at the same time turning a hand over in the air, questioningly. It means ‘Where are you going?’ and quite a good answer is ‘stah voo-na’, which means ‘to the mountains’.

Walkers’ checklist

The following points cannot be stressed too often:

- **At any time a walk may become unsafe due to storm damage, forest fires or bulldozing.** If the route is not as described in this book, and your way ahead is not secure, do not attempt to go on.
- **Walks for experts** may be unsuitable in winter, and all mountain walks may be hazardous then.
- **Never walk alone.** Four is the best walking group.
- **Do not over-estimate your energies.** Your speed will be determined by the slowest walker in the group.
- **Transport connections** at the end of a walk are vital.
- **Proper shoes or boots** are essential.
- **Mists** can appear suddenly on the higher elevations.
- **Warm clothing** is needed in the mountains; even in summer take some along, in case you are delayed.
- **First-aid kit, compass, whistle, torch** weigh little, but might save your life.
- **Extra rations** must be taken on long walks.
- **Always take a sunhat with you**, and in summer carry a cover-up for your arms and legs as well.
- A **stout stick** is a help on rough terrain and to discourage the rare unfriendly dog.
- **Do not panic in an emergency.**
- **Read and re-read** the important note on page 2, the Country code on page 44, and the specific guidelines on grade and equipment at the beginning of each walk you plan.
- **Carry at least one litre of water per person in hot weather.**

Organisation of the walks




























The 21 main walks in this book are grouped in three general areas: the east, the centre/north, and the west. You might begin by considering the large fold-

out touring map inside the back cover. Here you can see at a glance the overall terrain, the road network, and the exact orientation of the walking maps in the text. Quickly flipping through the book, you will find that there is 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: here you'll find our walking times, grade, equipment, and how to get there and back. If the grade and equipment specifications are beyond your scope, don't despair! There's almost always a short or alternative version of a walk and, in most cases, these are less demanding of agility and equipment. If it still looks too strenuous for you, turn to the car tours, where the circular walks for motorists describe walks generally of less than two hours' duration or the picnics (pages 9-14), where very short walks are suggested.

When you are on your walk, you will find that the text begins with an introduction to the overall landscape and with comments on special points of interest, before describing the route in detail. The large scale maps (all 1:50,000 and all with north at the top) have been overprinted to show current routes and key landmarks. Times are given for the overall walk and for reaching certain landmarks. Note that we are fairly fit walkers and that our times average between 3km/h and 6km/h. Also note that the times given are pure walking times and include only brief pauses. The most reliable way to use this book is not to try to match our times minute-by-minute, but to note the time difference to the next point on the route. A walk may well take you at least twice as long as the stated time. Don't forget to take bus connections at the end of the walk into account. You'll soon see how your pace compares with ours and make adjustments for your stride.

These symbols are used on the walking maps:


	main road		spring, well, etc		church, chapel
	minor road		picnic suggestion (see pages 9-15)		shrine
	concreted road/track		best views		cave
	jeep track		bus stop		cemetery
	circular walk for motorists		car parking		stadium
	path, steps		building enclosure		picnic tables
	main walk		ancient site		monument
	alternative walk		castle or fort		hospital
			quarry		museum
					factory


14 PLATANOS • KONDEIKA • YDROUSSA • KONDAKEIKA • AG. DIMITRIOS

Distance: 15.4km/9.6mi; 3h15min (allow 4h30min)

Grade: moderate. There is not too much uphill walking, although we do start with a climb of 150m/500ft. The normal ups and downs follow, but usually on tracks and paths which are good underfoot.

Equipment: stout shoes or walking boots, telescopic walking poles, sunhat, suncream, sunglasses, long-sleeved shirt, long trousers, fleece, raingear, picnic, water

How to get there:  (or taxi) from Samos to the Platanos road junction (Samos-Karlovassi bus, inland route, Timetable 2; journey time 1h25min). Departures weekdays only, summer and winter. Alternatively (or on weekends) take the Samos-Karlovassi bus along the coastal route (timetables 1, 1A) and a taxi for the 10km journey to the Platanos road junction or up to Platanos.

To return:  from Ag. Dimitrios or Karlovassi to Samos (Karlovassi-Samos bus, coastal route, Timetables 1, 1A; journey time 50min-1h). Daily departures in summer; in winter there are no suitable buses on Sundays.

Short walks: Both start at Ydroussa, the 1h52min-point in the main walk, and both require equipment as above. Only the summer bus timetables are suitable; otherwise take a taxi to start. Take the Samos-Karlovassi bus via the coastal route (Timetables 1, 1A) and then the bus from Karlovassi to Ydroussa (Timetable 8).

1 Ydroussa — Ag Dimitrios (6.5km/4mi; 1h20min). Follow the main walk from Ydroussa.

2 Ydroussa — Platanos road junction: 8.7km/5.5mi; 1h50min; easy. Follow the main walk in reverse by referring to the map, and catch the early afternoon bus for Samos (Timetable 2).

As you walk along the high-level road between Platanos and Kondeika, a breathtaking panorama opens up the very moment you can see from coast to coast from Karlovassi to Ormos Marathokambos. Onto this canvas a master artist has brushed in the whole of the Kerkis range. Raise your camera, as you surely will, but somehow the grandeur of this scenery defies capture as a mere photographic image. And it is the same with Petaloudes, a little-known beauty spot encountered later in the walk; but this time it is the intimacy of the place which eludes a good photographic angle. Huge plane trees dwarf the already-tiny white church. As always, there is plenty of botanical interest, but look out for one Samos speciality in particular: the small, bristly haired shrub with blue long-tubed flowers called *Lithodora hispidula*. It grows in a number of places on the island, but seems to be especially common around Ydroussa. It has such a limited geographical distribution (being found elsewhere only on Crete, Karpathos and Rhodes), that it is worth seeing while you have the chance.

Walk 14: Platanos to Ag. Dimitrios 95

Alight from the bus at the **Platanos** ROAD JUNCTION and **start the walk** by heading up the road to Platanos. After only **2min** take the old trail leading off to the right (just past a track on the right). When the trail is interrupted by the road, the continuation is usually just a few paces to the right but, when you emerge on the road in **13min**, you must turn right along it, round a bend, and then look for the waymarked trail on the right a full minute later. Already the views of the Kerkis range are

Petaloudes, an enchanting glade (Picnic 14)



impressive as you reach higher ground, and they improve once you have turned left on rejoining the road (**18min**) and are walking the final stretch into Platanos. The village square at **Platanos**, with its kafeneions, is reached in **21min**. Cross the square, and leave by the Kondeika road on the left. Magnificent views more than compensate for this stretch of road walking. Cut off two loops in the road by keeping ahead on a narrow track (at **35min** and again at **44min**).

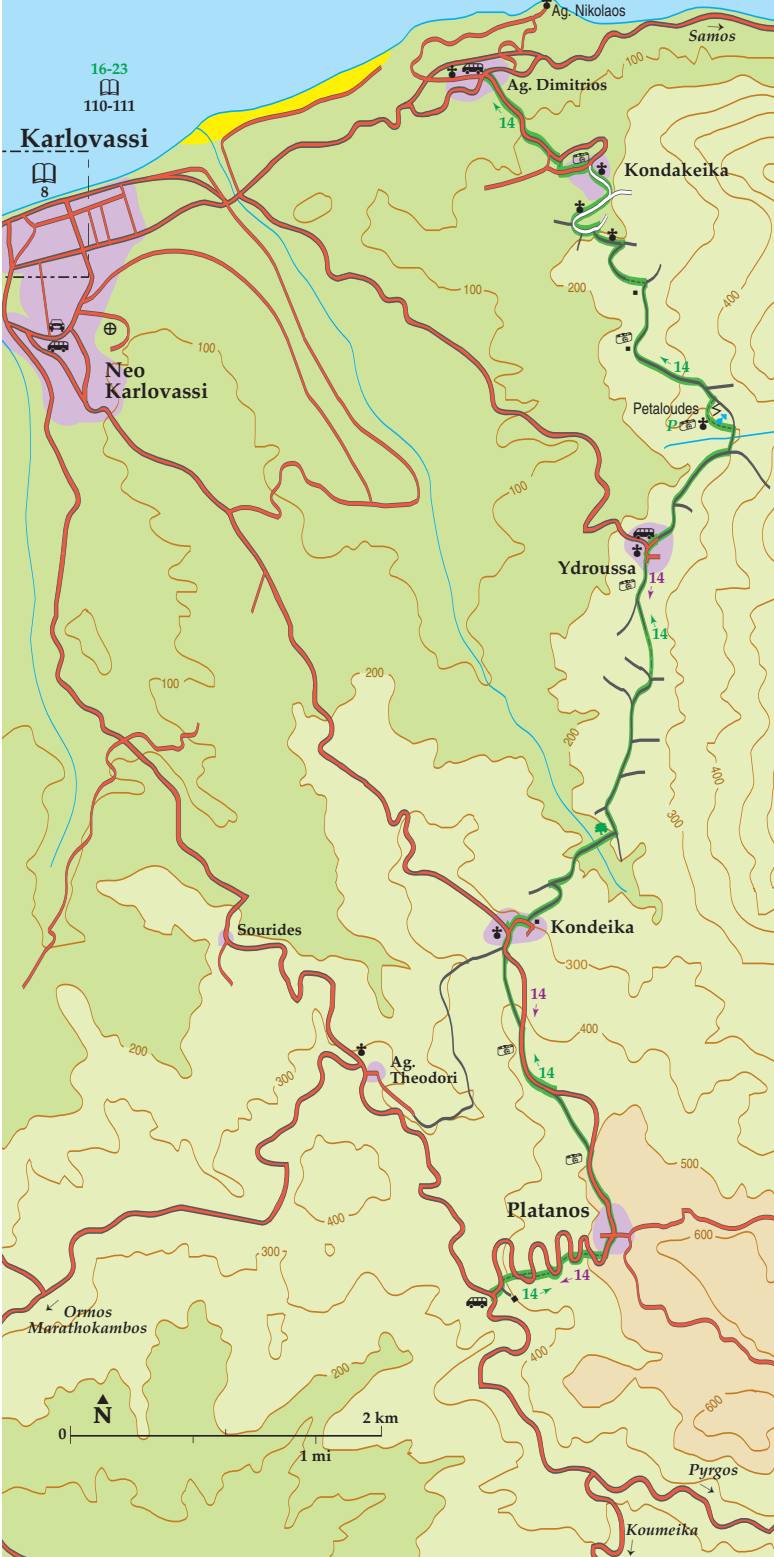
As you enter **Kondeika (54min)**, the CHURCH is uphill on your left. Take the second right turn to the village square. Continue downhill on this road and within two minutes descend a concrete trail on your left. Then continue along a track, past buildings. Skirt to the right of a VINEYARD (**1h04min**) and meet another track four minutes later. Turn right and head down towards a stream in the valley floor (**1h15min**).

The track crosses the stream diagonally, to ascend the opposite side. In three minutes, on coming to a junction by a plane tree, go left. Keep on the main track, and stay left at a concreted junction (**1h28min**). At **1h32min**, when the main track swings left at a junction, turn right immediately; there are large METAL GATES on your left. Follow the track in a bend to the left.

You rise to a track junction two minutes later: go left, then immediately turn right on a path. In less than three minutes, the path merges with the end of a woodland track. Follow this to a crossing track (**1h38min**), where you turn right. Soon you glimpse the rooftops of Ydroussa, then enter the village. After passing a small CHURCH on the right, fork left down Odos 28th October to reach the platea and kafeneions by the main CHURCH in the centre of **Ydroussa (1h48min)**.

Leave Ydroussa just past the main church by walking uphill along Odos Dimitriou. Turn left into the wide entrance of Odos Kapetan Laxana. At the end of this street go right (signposted to PETALOUDES). Stay on this track, concreted at first, and rise to a crossing track (**2h09min**). Descend to the left, to cross a stream bed. Pass a track coming in from the right, and turn left to **Petaloudes (2h13min; Picnic 14)**. Take a minute to see the fine old frescoes inside the church lower down.

Follow the track out to the right, past the SPRING. Meet a track two minutes later, with an electricity SUB-STATION to the right, and stay left. Just keep along the track now; in eight minutes views open up to the left.



98 Landscapes of Samos

Ignore tracks left and right. Beyond some farm buildings on the left, as the main track sweeps uphill to the right, take the minor track off left (**2h31min**). This track reverts to path by a vineyard, then becomes a minor rough track and rises to a crossing track (**2h35min**).

Turn left and follow this track towards and then below a white CHURCH. Meet a concrete road six minutes later and turn left. The road loops right and through the middle of **Kondakeika**, to a T-junction (**2h52min**). Turn left (right is the main route out of the village) and stay ahead to a square, from where there are good views. Cross the square diagonally to the left, descend steps, then turn right along a stepped street. Keep downhill and, at a T-junction, go left on a concrete trail. At the bottom of the trail (**2h57min**; beware of the steep drop here!), go right here to the main road. Turn left along the road to Ag. Dimitrios (**3h15min**), where there is a BUS STOP.

Walk 15: Moni Evangelistria





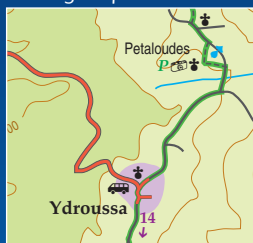
SUNFLOWER
LANDSCAPES
**'The hallowed
blue books'**
— SUNDAY TIMES

Samos
Fifth edition

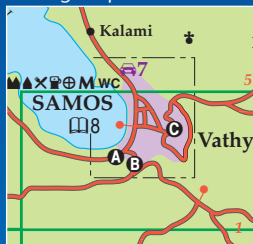
area covered by this book



walking map



touring map



Beyond the beautiful beaches lies a verdant island with landscapes of unimagined beauty. Discover the best of Samos with the **walks** and **car tours** in this book. Brian and Eileen Anderson have been leading walking tours on Samos for many years, and they help you explore all the island's hidden corners, whether on a short stroll to a picnic spot by a chapel or on a day-long hike in the mountains.

- **walks for all ages and abilities**
- **topographical walking maps**
- **car tours and fold-out touring map**
- **short strolls to idyllic picnic spots**
- **timetables for public transport**
- **update service for the latest information**

"There was no escaping the 'Little Blue Book', Landscapes of Samos, on that enchanting island. We saw it wherever we went." — SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

Published in the UK by
Sunflower Books

UK £10.99 USA \$15.99

ISBN 1-85691-288-4



9 0 1 0 0