

**Dear Visitor**

*This brochure will guide you to discover and explore a walking trail in one of the island's still undiscovered regions. This trail showcases the area's most noteworthy and interesting sights including its magnificent landscape, rural activities, and architectural elements.*

*The trail connects the village of Drakopoulata - a representative traditional village with many pre-earthquake houses - to Themata Monastery and terminates at Pylaros' major town of Makriotika.*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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**USEFUL INFORMATION**

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**Tourist office:** +30 26740 61774-5

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# MUNICIPALITY OF PYLAROS



## WALKING TRAIL DRAKOPOULATA THEMATA MONASTERY MT. AGHIA DYNATI - MAKRIOTIKA







### For a better understanding of the region

The Municipality of Pylaros is located on the northeastern section of Cephalonia. It comprises of the communities of Aghia Efimia, Makryotika and Divarata. It is 34 kms from Argostoli, the capital, 35 kms from Lixouri, 28 kms from Fiskardo and 9 from Sami. It is bordered by two mountains, Aghia Dynati [1,131 m] and Kalon Oros [900 m] and coasts to the east and west.

The Municipal headquarters are at Aghia Efimia from where our hiking track begins.

Owing to its geographical position, Pylaros is an ideal location for visitors to explore the entire Island.

The people of the region are warm and hospitable, devotees of the traditional dances and festivals.

The tourism infrastructure of Pylaros meets all the requirements for the visitor to enjoy the landscape, hospitality and products of the region.

It is the birthplace of Marinos Antypas a fighter for the farmers rights in Greece, and of Themis Potamianos, writer of sea stories. Themata Monastery is a place of worship and meditation of unparalleled beauty with a unique Holme oak forest.

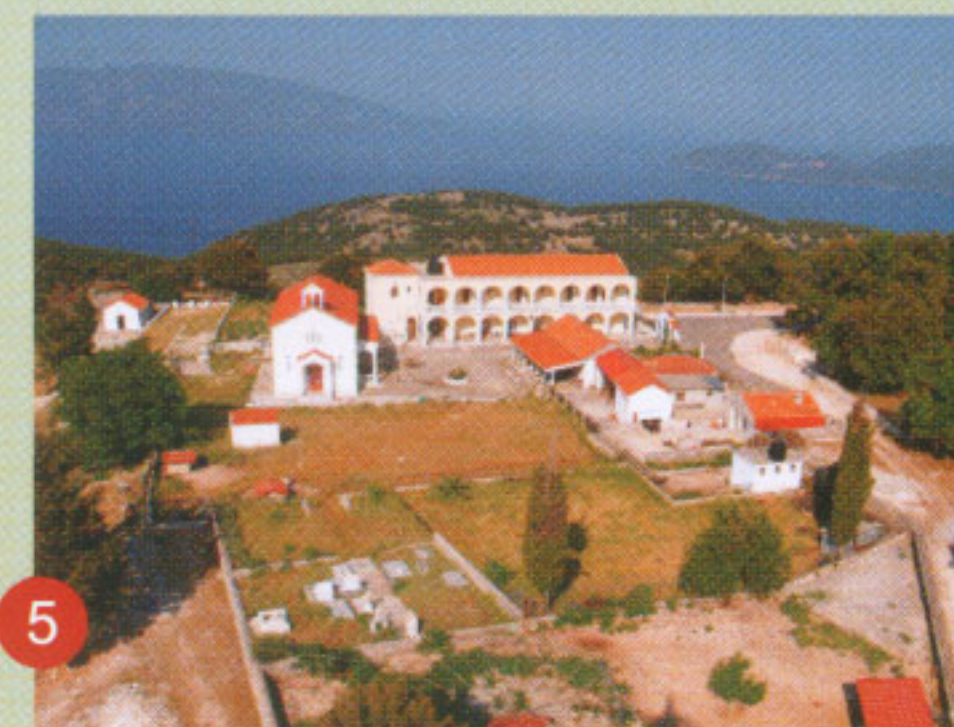
The most breathtaking sight of Pylaros is Myrtos beach which attracts thousand of tourists to its scintillating waters and lovely stretch of beach. It is one of the most beautiful beaches in the world with easy and safe access.

The history of the region goes back a long way.

In antiquity it was the gateway to North Cephalonia the name "Pylaros" meaning the guard of the gate.

During the Mycenaean period it must have played a part in the broader Odyssean kingdom. In the classical period it was part of the city state of Sami and probably was of specific significance. Ruins at Aghia Efimia and Drakopoulata bear testament to the existence of towers for the purpose of controlling entry and exit to the valley. Roman ruins provide a glimpse of the valley's Roman history. During the Frankish occupation and the first Venetian period various movements of population occurred and new settlements were formed.

From information dating back to 1678, 15 villages were registered: Makryotika, Anomeria, Divarata, Logarata, Ferendinata, Hamolagos, Themata, Megalogenata, Marketata, Gouleleta,



Vasilopoulata, Bekatorata, Lekatsata, Ano & Kato Raftopoulata. At the same time numerous monasteries and churches were built.

During the English occupation of the Ionian Islands Pylaros played a role in the struggle for union with Greece. Members and executives of the Radical Party, with its headquarters in Argostoli, came from this area.

Citizens of Pylaros participated in the 1821 Revolution against Turks. Also provisions were sent to areas of the mainland in revolt from the port of Aghia Efimia.

Lord Byron passed through Aghia Efimia via Dilinata and Falari on his way to Ithaca. Following the union of the Ionian Islands with Greece in 1864, Pylaros was subsequently able to play a significant role in the political, social and economic development of Cephalonia.

From the late 19th to the early 20th Century the citizens of Pylaros struggled for the development of the region with many turning to the sea. Aghia Efimia became the commercial centre for the broader region. The majority of the population were occupied with agriculture and livestock. The cheese producers of the region spread their expertise not only throughout Greece but to the Balkans and Southern Italy.

Unfortunately this progress was abruptly interrupted with the outbreak of the 2nd World War.

Then, just as the people were trying to reorganize their lives, Civil war broke out in 1950, to be followed by the tragic devastating earthquake of 1953, causing the total disruption of the social and economic structure. Immigration became a widespread, with those remaining, persisting in rebuilding their lives.

However, a relative improvement has taken place during the last decades of the 20th Century. Development programs have been implemented, revitalizing the economy and creating prospects for further development.

The Municipality of Pylaros has played a constructive and coordinating role in this effort.





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## **SECONDARY TRAIL**

### **ROUTE A: CHAPEL THEMATA MONASTERY**

The secondary trail leads from the small chapel to The Monastery of the Virgin Mary at Themata which is one of the oldest on the island, dating to the 11th century. (photo 5) Many different animals are bred in the areas surrounding the monastery grounds. The view from this point is simply stunning. (photo 6)

You may now catch your breath and relax under the shade of the oak trees at the Municipal Refreshment Kiosk "...at Themata" which is within the grounds of the oak grove. (photo 7)

Should you may choose not to follow the secondary trail, you will continue along the path.

You'll come across barns and sheepfolds, fertile fields wedged in the rugged mountain terrain which are still being cultivated, and a traditional stone hut. (photo 8)

After literally climbing the mountain side, you'll reach Ypoporos, a spot which will certainly reward you for your effort as the view from here is simply magnificent.

The Bay of Sami and Ithaca spread out in front of you, with every possible shade of blue coming together and becoming one with the wooded mountains leading up to Mt. Aenos. (photo 9)

### **ROUTE B: YPOPOROS MAKRIOTIKA**

Continue on the trail which now takes a downward direction. For about 1.5 km. you'll be moving through rugged mountain terrain until you reach the Batista location.

There is a barn here as well as the ruins of a stone hut. Continue your descent on the mountain slope to the stockbreeding district where you'll come upon herds of sheep, goats, and cows grazing in open pasture fields, as well as stockbreeding facilities. (photo 10)

The route terminates at the gorge of Makriotika village. From this point it's possible to either embark on the other walking trail (the path signposted in red), or to enjoy the view and a cup of traditionally made coffee at the Municipal Coffee House "NYKTERIDA". (photo 11)

### **ROUTE C: YPOPOROS AGHIA DYNATI SUMMIT (ANALYPSI)**

From Ypoporos you may choose to keep climbing the mountain ridge which leads to Mt. Aghia Dynati's highest summit at an altitude of 1131 m. This position offers uninterrupted, breathtaking views to the rest of Kefalonia in every direction, to Ithaca, to Zakynthos, and as far away as Lefkada and the mainland.

The ruins of the old chapel of Analypsis (The Ascension) are visible as well as the wind power parks which spread out over this mountaintop. (photo 12)



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## **WALKING TRAIL**

### **DRAKOPOULATA THEMATA MONASTERY - MT. AGHIA DYNATI MAKRIOTIKA**

**Duration: approximately 7 hours**

*Follow the trail signposts marked in green and blue. The signposting and this brochure provide full description of the trail that starts at the traditional Pylarean village of Drakopoulata, leads to Themata Monastery and Mt. Aghia Dynati, and terminates at the village of Makriotika.*

*Having completed the trail, you may return using the road network.*

## **PRIMARY TRAIL**

### **ROUTE A: DRAKOPOULATA YPOPOROS**

Following the main road "Drakopoulata Makriotika" you'll come upon the village square of Drakopoulata and the information sign which marks the beginning of the trail.

The trail crosses the pre-earthquake settlement of Drakopoulata, enabling you to observe the houses which were partially ruined by the earthquakes in 1953. (photo 1)

A little further up there's a traditional cobbled threshing field, (photo 2) while to the side there is an old stone (photo 3) well both fine samples of traditional architecture.

Making your way up through oak woods and dense vegetation, you'll come upon the paved country road.

Cross this road and follow the signposts. You are now walking along in a parallel to the gully where tall oaks provide natural shade. Eventually you'll come upon the chapel of Elias the Prophet at an altitude of 790 m. (photo 4)



