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Advice to users

I have made every effort to ensure that the information provided in this guide is accurate, however changes can occur which may affect the contents. It is advisable to check with the local authorities if you are uncertain about anything. You use this guide entirely at your own risk. You must always use your own judgement and if you are uncertain do not continue. I do not accept any responsibility for personal injury, injury to third parties, or any claim whatsoever, resulting from the use of this guide.

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Walks in the Troodos Mountains of Cyprus

Introduction

by Chris Thompson 2003

I have just experienced a wonderful walking holiday based in the resort of **Platres** (1200 metres / 3937 feet) which is situated in the **Troodos** (1920 metres / 6299 feet) mountain range on the fringe of the forests' southern slopes. The forests offer superb walking mostly along loose surface road tracks (disused mule trails or the old pre-tarmac road routes) with a comfortable mixture of open viewpoints and shade provided by the pine forests through which they have been cut.

The local tourist authorities have provided a leaflet, which lists 11 walks in the area. It is not possible to obtain walking maps in Cyprus (or UK) and the tourist office maps have no detail. As there are no meaningful instructions provided in the leaflet, you could experience difficulty following some of the walks. I completed all the walks and found some path forks and junctions that were not sign-posted. If you make the wrong choice you could walk a considerable distance before you realise this, which tends to spoil the enjoyment! I decided to write this guide to assist fellow walkers - I hope you enjoy using it.

I have included sufficient details for each walk, enabling you to approach them with complete confidence. An introduction to each walk offers simple advice and ideas for your consideration. I have listed the overall times and distances plus "time on route" between instructions, with totals in brackets. It is extremely difficult to offer an accurate time because personal walking speed, fitness and terrain will have considerable impact on timing. Most of the distances have been measured with GPS actually on route and are more accurate than some of the signposts or information provided in the leaflets. You should be able to work out your own times and no doubt the actual distances between instructions will be far more useful. However, I am certain that the written instructions alone will be adequate.

The Walks - based loosely on the tourist office leaflet with some alternatives...

1. Platres to Kaledonia Waterfall (*including option to walk on to Troodos*). **Page 2**
2. Platres to Millomeri Waterfall. **Pages 3 / 4**
3. Platres to the Mesopotamos Monastery. **Page 5**
4. Troodos to Pouziaris. **Pages 6 / 7** (*includes Walk 11, Persephone, on route*).
5. Platres to Perapedhi. **Pages 8 / 9 / 10**
6. Platres to Phini (*plus optional walk including Trooditissa Monastery*). **Pages 11 / 12**
7. Prodomos Reservoir. **Pages 13 / 14**
8. Platres to Troodos (*see Walk 4, as these are virtually the same*). **Page 14**
9. Artemis (*ideal easy walk, spectacular views for Troodos day-trippers*). **Page 15**
10. Atalante. **Pages 16 / 17**
11. Persephone (*ideal easy walk, spectacular views for Troodos day-trippers*). **Page 18**
12. Madhari Ridge and Mount Adelphi - *The second highest peak in Cyprus*. **Page 19**

(Please note that some Cypriot place names use different spellings)

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Walk 11 - The Persephone Trail

Troodos - Makrya Kontarka - Troodos (via the Persephone Trail) = 2.4 miles / 4 Km / 1 Hour +

This walk offers an ideal introduction to the Troodos mountain range with spectacular views versus minimum walking effort - ideal if you decide to take a day trip into the mountains from a coastal resort! The walk starts from Troodos and is along a good wide loose surface road track initially, with a short distance (10 mins) on a good dirt track to the view-point / picnic area at the end of the walk. Return the same way.

1. Start at the lower end of the Troodos main street with the triangular shaped garden / reservation behind you (the toilets are ahead right). Follow the tarmac road uphill to your left and very soon the Police Station is on your right and a nature trail notice board almost opposite on your left (also the Civic Restaurant). This marks the start of the walk and the Persephone Trail.
2. Follow the good wide track, you will see the stables over to your left almost immediately (*home of the Troodos horses, offering rides throughout the day*) and perhaps hear some barking dogs? In 10 mins / 0.5 mile (0.8 Km) you will begin to see the grey slopes of the Pano Amiandos asbestos mines to your left and looking back, Mount Olympus. Continue to reach a fork in another 10 minutes. This area is named "Makria Kontarka" by a notice board! (Total 20 mins / 0.9 mile / 1.5 Km).
3. Ignore the left fork (Vryses 7 Km) and go right (upward) sign-posted "Kryos Potamos 4 Km" and almost immediately reach another junction with a track left sign-posted "End of Persephone Trail".
4. Turn left here and follow the clear dirt track and in about 10 mins / 0.2 mile (300m) you will reach the end of the trail (Total 30 mins / 1.2 miles / 1.9 Km). Here you will find a rocky outcrop with benches and superb views towards Pano Amiandos, Trimiklini and Saittas villages, the peaks of Kionia, Kakomallis and Limassol Harbour and Salt Lake.
5. Return to the junction, turn right and keep left at the next junction, following the same route back to Troodos. *An alternative route back to Troodos (I have not tested this beyond the "Troodos 1 Km" junction so you will have to find your own way back into Troodos if the signposts are incorrect)...*

Return to the junction and take the route left sign-posted "Poyziaris 3 Km" and "Pylon Dendron 7 Km". Continue on the good wide track for about another 20 minutes to reach a T-junction ignoring the sign-posted "Kryos Potamos 3 Km" down left and turn right following the "Troodos 1 Km" track.

Walk 2 - Platres to Millomeri Waterfall

Platres - Millomeri Waterfalls = 0.7 miles / 1 Km / 45 mins (each way). **Road version** = 2.0 miles / 3.2 Km / 50 mins (each way).

The route to the waterfalls from the Platres road, near the Church is steep and of loose gravel. I do not recommend walking in this direction, unless you are travelling light and are extremely sure footed. The road version is longer but still very enjoyable. If you prefer a circular walk It would easier to start via the road version and return by the short route (see instructions 4 and 5) as the gradients are easier to negotiate this way. On the road version you pass a junction, which leads to the dam and Perapedhi (please see Walk 5 options, pages 8 to 10). I thought the waterfall was more spectacular than the Kaledonia, although this depends on the time of year and the amount of water flowing!

Short / Steep Route...

1. With the Police Station on your right walk downhill and pass the Lemesos (Limassol) road turning on your left. Just before the church in about 5 mins you will see a signpost to "Millomeri Waterfalls Walk" on your left immediately after a white house. Turn left here to follow the path.
2. The steep gravel path takes you downhill to cross a riverbed (consider time of year / rainfall) then follow it right for a short distance before climbing up again left, passing a bench and wooden safety rails on your right at the top in 20 minutes.
3. Follow the path as it drops down a short steep section (crossing a track) to good stone steps, which immediately turn right and lead down to cross a loose surface road at the entrance to a property. Ahead is a good narrow concrete road, which quickly reaches a T- junction (missing a signpost). Turn right here passing to the right of the café, which is situated at the top of the waterfall path. Continue down the easy steps crossing the small wooden bridge at the bottom, leading to the waterfall (Total 45 mins / 0.7 miles / 1 Km).

Road Version...

1. With the Police Station on your right walk downhill and turn first left on the Lemesos (Limassol) road in about 2 mins, following the tarmac road to drop down first then climb up to a T- junction in 8 mins / 0.4 mile (0.6 Km).
2. Turn right sign-posted Lemesos and in 8 mins / 0.4 mile (0.6 Km) reach a signpost pointing right to "Millomeri Waterfalls 1 Km" (Total 16 mins / 0.8 miles / 1.3 Km).
3. Turn right here and follow the good tarmac road as it winds downhill passing another "Millomeri Waterfalls 1 Km" sign (still 1 Km!) at an unmarked road track in 15 mins / 0.6 mile (1 Km) (Total 33 mins / 1.4 miles / 2.2 Km). **Note... This junction can be used to include Perapedhi - see over. You could visit the dam and Perapedhi from this point and return to the waterfalls.**
4. Continue downhill and rise immediately up a short steep section (the road has become loose surfaced now) before levelling off (ignore fork right). You reach the café just after passing a steep narrow concrete road up to the right in 15 mins / 0.6 mile (1 Km) (**this is the more difficult route back up towards the church on the Platres road**). Continue down the easy steps (right of the café) crossing the wooden bridge at the bottom to the waterfall (Total 50 mins / 2.0 miles / 3.2 Km).

Walk 10 - Atalante (Mount Olympus low level circular)

Atalante Nature Trail = 6.2 miles / 10 Km / 3 Hours +

This is a much longer version of the previous Walk 9 Artemis Nature Trail. The main nature trail is quite easy to follow (but there are a few useful notes to consider) however when you reach the opposite end of the trail the instructions provided for your return (on the notice board at the start) are inaccurate. If you feel tired when you reach the road I recommend that you return to Troodos via the road as the alternative (the extension of the nature trail) route includes quite a lot of ups and downs!

1. Start on the left at the Atalante Nature Trails notice board, which is actually on the left just at the main road junction, at the top of the Troodos B8 main road (opposite a stone clad building). Facing the notice board (note the information provided for the return route is inaccurate) start to the left on a very clear dirt path and in 15 mins / 0.6 mile (1 Km) you see the green rooftops and tennis courts at the Troodos Visitor Centre, below on your left.
2. In about another 15 mins / 0.8 mile (1.3 Km) you reach an open area to your left and a track goes uphill to your right (*This is the same track, which crosses the start of the Artemis trail above you in Walk 9 number 2*). Here you take the second and lower track, which starts parallel to the steeper upward track passing almost immediately between two pine trees (there was a bench and arrow signpost here Sep 2002). In minutes pass a 3-Km marker and a waterspout (stone wall right).
3. You reach the entrance to the disused (1982) Hadjipavlou Chromium mine in another 15 mins (Total 45 mins / 2.5 miles / 4.2 Km). Soon after the mine, in only 2-mins, pass a 5-Km marker and almost immediately turn left crossing over a narrow streambed (dry September) to re-join the clear track sharp left, also quite narrow and passing between foliage initially.
4. In another 1 Hour 5 mins / 3.4 miles (5.5 Km) you reach a 7-Km marker and an old bench just before Prodrornos comes into view at a corner.
5. In 15 mins pass another bench (right) and ahead you can see the higher Artemis trail path and radio mast high above you. You pass an exposed area of scree as the path swings left - the path crosses it almost on the level so don't worry! Take care not to wander off onto the scree!
6. In another 25-30 mins / 1.4 miles (2.2 Km) you reach the main road and the notice board which marks the end of the Atalante Nature Trail. This is referred to as the Chromium end of the trail (Total 2 Hours 30 mins / 4.8 miles / 7.7 Km). For trail extension / return route go to 7...

*At this point you have an option to return to Troodos by the road (about 1 mile / 1.5 Km / 40 mins) which is a similar distance to the trail extension but avoids the extra ups and downs! Turn right onto the main road, after a bend, 30-MPH speed limit signs come into view in the distance. You pass roadside crash barriers left, just before the Ski lift station (if you walk down left behind them, at the start of the barriers you can pick up the extended trail path *just below the road. Turn right at the bench - see instructions 7 and 8. This shortens and makes easier the extended route). Otherwise continue on the tarmac road to pass the F953 Olympus road (right) and ahead to return to the Troodos junction and starting point.*

7. Cross the main road and turn right (ignore the road to radio station uphill opposite) and in 100m turn left at a track sign-posted "Agios Nikolaos 15 Km". In 10 mins / 300m you reach a sharp left bend at the brow of a hill, where you take an indistinct path down right (small white arrow pointer 2002). Drop down the steep dirt track passing a bench, into a dip, then climb back up left to another bench (which is *just below the main road) in 10 minutes.

Walk 3 - Platres to the Mesapotamos Monastery

Platres (or the Pylon Dendron Nature Trails car park) - Mesapotamos Monastery = 9.8 miles / 15.7 Km / 3 Hours 30 mins.

This is a pleasant and easy walk on a wide loose surface road track with little change in gradient. The views open up as you progress and although quite a lengthy walk, you should find it most rewarding. We were a little disappointed to find that the Monastery was off limits due to restoration work (Aug / Sep 2002) however, at least the Monastery will survive, perhaps for you to enjoy! There is a picnic area just before the Monastery, although we preferred a quieter spot just before the picnic area (see instruction 4 below). The walk begins near the Pylon Dendron trout farm restaurant. Take a taxi or hire car to the car park if you prefer, use instruction "1" below as it follows the road anyway. If you are driving from Platres village remember to deduct 40 minutes / 1.2 miles (2 Km) from your route total.

1. Start in Platres with the Police station on your left and walk uphill to a T junction (with a restaurant on your left) then turn right uphill to reach the main B8 road at a T junction with a nature trails car park opposite (Total 20 mins / 0.6 mile / 1 Km). Cross over the road and walk right (towards Lemesos) and at the end of the car parking area on your left, set off on a wide loose surface road track sign-posted "Mesapotamos 8 Km" by a nature trail notice board. (*The route is marked as 8 Km but we found it to be 7 Km from the trout farm and 8 Km from Platres village*).
2. In approximately 40 mins / 2 miles (3 Km) ignore a left fork sign-posted Troodos and continue ahead (Total 1 Hour / 2.6 miles / 4.2 Km).
3. In another 25 mins / 1.2 miles (2 Km) continue ahead as sign-posted "Mesapotamos 2 Km".
4. In another 10 minutes look out for small electricity pylons (concrete posts) - soon after passing the post numbered 100 (right) you come to number 97 (right) at a left bend. Here you will find a pleasant area for a picnic stop just off the road behind the soil embankment.
5. In another 10 mins you reach the Monastery...continue downhill and pass the recreation / picnic area on your right following the main road track as it begins to climb up and away to a left bend. After another bend the Monastery comes into view below you on your right. Take extra care not to miss it as the trees could easily hide it (Total 1 Hour 45 mins / 4.9 miles / 7.9 Km).
6. Return the same way to collect your car or walk back into Platres. At the main B8 road cross over ahead sign-posted Platres and walk downhill to the next junction (with a restaurant on the corner) turn left continuing downhill into Platres village (Total 3 Hours 30 mins / 9.8 miles / 15.7 Km).

4. In another 10 mins / 0.6 mile (1 Km) you pass a track, which turns off right at a corner but continue down left on the good road, which crosses a stream in about 15 mins / 0.8 miles (1.3 Km).
5. You reach the Troodos road in a further 30 mins / 1.3 miles (2.1 Km) where you can be collected by taxi (Total 2 Hours + / 5.1 miles / 8.2 Km).

Walk 8 - Platres to Troodos

See walks one and four... the tourist office walk is basically a mixture of the Kaledonia Waterfalls Walk 1 and the Pouziaris Walk 4 and as they involve climbing uphill I suspect you will enjoy them far more when approached from Troodos.

- square mast on a distant hill - a signpost would have been useful here! This faint path quickly begins to drop down steeply to an increasingly more distinctive track below you. You will reach signposts in about ten minutes for "Kaminoudia 2 Km" and "Pylon Dendron 6 Km" left and "Pylon Dendron 3 Km" right (Total 1 Hour 10 mins / 3.2 miles / 5 Km).
8. Take the right fork sign-posted "Pylon Dendron 3 Km", which rises immediately to pass the square shape mast and a bench. Again, the path down is indistinct but as soon as you pass the bench and begin, the way quickly becomes an obvious zigzag path. Continue until eventually you reach a wide loose surface road track in about 15 - 20 mins (Total 1 Hour 30 mins / 3.8 miles / 6 Km). Here you cross over the road track (in a slightly uphill direction) to re-join the sign-posted dirt track to Pylon Dendron which meets a junction in another 5 minutes / 0.2 mile (300m).
 9. At the junction turn right and in another 3 minutes just before a tight left bend, turn right (there **was** a small yellow arrow here) down a stony track passing closely between two pine trees. In only a minute you see a bench ahead on top of a small hill (no need to climb this hill). The path turns sharp right here, dropping down quite steeply from above the trout farm to arrive at Pylon Dendron in about 10 - 15 minutes (Total 2 Hours + / 4.3 miles / 7 Km).
 10. Pass the end of trail notice board on your left. To walk back into Platres (another 20 mins / 0.6 mile / 1 Km), at the main B8 road cross over, walk right and then follow the road left sign-posted Platres. Walk downhill to the next junction (with a restaurant on the corner) turn left continuing downhill into Platres village (Total 2 Hours 30 mins / 4.9 miles / 7.9 Km).

7. Follow it to the right and then up past the blue co-op sign and shop (right) to a "Novelty Shop" on the outskirts of the village at the top of the road. Here the road climbs up steeply (left) via hairpin bends to quickly meet the main F804 Pano Platres road where you turn right.
8. In about 10 minutes / 0.4 mile (0.6 Km) (first pass a roadside blue co-op sign at a track on your right) you reach a signpost "Platres 4 Km" which is just past the brow of the hill on your left. Turn left here and follow this good tarmac road for 30 mins / 1.0 mile (1.2 Km) to reach a road junction at the Red Lantern Café where you turn right.
9. Continue to a road fork and turn left uphill passing the road junctions "Stop" signs, climbing up to the Forrest Park Hotel driveway entrance opposite a telephone box. Here you follow the one way road system (i.e. turn right after the telephone box) downhill into Platres (Total from Monastery 2 Hours 15 mins / 4.6 miles / 7.5 Km).

3. Turn right here and follow the good tarmac road as it winds downhill to another "Millomeri Waterfalls 1 Km" sign (still reads 1 Km!) at an unmarked road track in 15 mins / 0.6 mile (1 Km) (Total 33 mins / 1.4 miles / 2.2 Km).
4. Turn left here at the unmarked loose surface road and follow it downhill for 15 mins / 0.6 miles (1 Km) to reach the dam and a welcome bench on your right (Total 50 mins / 2.0 miles / 3.2 Km).
5. Continuing downhill the road surface quickly becomes tarmac. Soon you meet a fork where you keep left on the "Timiou Stavrou Street" (you could take the right fork "Markantoni Street" - it emerges at the same point). Keep on downhill all the way into Perapedhi village in 15 mins / 0.6 miles (1 Km) (Total 1 Hour / 2.6 miles / 4.2 Km).

Return to Platres via taxi (the café at main road will telephone for you) go back the same way or via waterfalls - follow instructions C.

C. Perapedhi - Platres (via Millomeri Waterfalls) = 2.5 miles / 4.0 Km / 1 Hour 30 mins (each way).

1. Take a taxi to Perapedhi village and start at the café on the corner of "Timiou Stavrou Street". There is a yellow post-box attached to a tree, which stands in the middle of this street! Follow the good wide tarmac road uphill. You soon pass a house on your left (and Markantoni Street) and continue uphill ignoring a road on your right which leads to a new housing estate / development.
2. In about 15 - 20 mins the road becomes loose surfaced just before reaching the dam. There is a bench here where you can relax and watch the water! (Total 15 mins / 0.6 miles / 1 Km).
3. Continue uphill and in 15 - 20 mins / 0.6 mile (1 Km) reach a T-junction at a signpost "Millomeri Waterfalls 1 Km" (Total 30 mins / 1.2 miles / 2.0 Km).
4. Turn left, follow the sign-posted road downhill briefly, before climbing up left and levelling off (ignore a track right soon after) as you approach the café in another 15 minutes / 0.6 mile (1 Km). Note a steep concrete road uphill (right) just before the café, as you must return to this later (Total 45 mins / 1.8 miles / 2.9 Km).
5. To visit the waterfalls pass to the right of the café, which is situated at the top of the waterfall path. Continue down the easy steps to cross the small wooden bridge to the waterfall at the bottom. Return to the junction and the steep narrow concrete road, now on your left, just after the café.
6. Climb up the narrow concrete road and cross a loose surface road track at the entrance to a property, onto good stone steps, which climb to turn suddenly left at the top. Cross a track and climb up a short steep dirt path passing wooden safety handrails and a bench on your left. Follow the path down to a riverbed and right along it for a short distance. The path crosses the river and climbs up steeply to the left to emerge near the church on the main Platres road in 45 mins (Total 1 Hour 30 mins + / 2.5 miles / 4 Km). Walk right (uphill) for 5 mins to reach Platres.

D. Perapedhi - Platres (via road route) = 2.6 miles / 4.2 Km / 1 Hour (each way).

1. Take a taxi to Perapedhi village and start at the café on the corner of "Timiou Stavrou Street". There is a yellow post-box attached to a tree, which stands in the middle of this street! Follow the good wide tarmac road uphill. You soon pass a house on your left (and Markantoni Street) and continue uphill ignoring a road on the right which leads to a new housing estate / development.
2. In about 15 - 20 mins the road becomes loose surfaced just before reaching the dam. There is a bench here where you can relax and watch the water! (Total 15 mins / 0.6 miles / 1 Km).