

8. Ano Gatzea circular walk



A beautiful and easy circular walk starting from Ano Gatzea, in which we have included a few old stone bridges. The first part of the walk follows a part of the original cobbled path (kalderimi) to Aghios Georgios. Then you walk through olive groves along an earth road. The last part of the walk follows the railway track. In the tourist season there is a service on the historic train. The route crosses a few streams at idyllic spots in the shade of tall trees. At the beginning of June when we were there, there were many flowers along the route and we saw numerous butterflies and heard many birds.

This walk is a little longer than 7.5 kilometres and spans a height of 200 metres. It took us 2.5 hours. Start: Ano Gatzea is a small village just above Kato Gatzea, which lies along the main road from Volos to Argalasti.

Map: Anavasi 6.21 Thessaly, Mt Pilion, 1:25.000. The path between numbers 9 and 16 is in parts not on the map.

Map for waypoints and tracks: Anavasi Topomap 3D op CD-Rom, Pilio – Mavrovouni, Central Pilio. Food and drink: There is a spring water drinking fountain in Ano Gatzea just below the church, at a bend in the road. There are also tavernas there. At the station there are two tavernas, but it is not clear when they are open.

1. The walk begins below the church of Ano Gatzea, where at a small parking area a concrete road ascends just before the bend in the road (if you drive up from Kato Gatzea). It ascends below the church and the school and then changes into a kalderimi. Follow the kalderimi up between the houses.
2. At a T-junction by a wall, you turn left. Ignore a path to your right. Past a house on your left hand side you walk out of the village along a stream beneath you. The path changes into a kalderimi and you reach a railway bridge. These bridges were built at the end of the 19th century, when the railway was constructed. Keep walking straight ahead. There are red dots on the stones. A little further on, in the shade of tall trees, the kalderimi turns sharply to the left and then ascends on the other side of the stream.



A little later you can look beyond the Pagasitic coast-line to the south. Follow this kalderimi, which is marked with red dots further up.

3. The kalderimi leads to a concrete road. Turn right here and continue upwards. Further up ignore a concrete road to the left.
4. After a little more than 300 metres, take a kalderimi that leads upwards to the left. The red marks also point in that direction.
5. You reach a bend in an earth road, where you can see the kalderimi to your right continuing upwards. Walk up to the left along the earth road.
6. Past the bend, you see on your left hand side a concrete road over an open concrete irrigation channel. Directly to the right of the road a narrow path begins, parallel to the earth road. Take this path and follow it along the irrigation channel. It changes into a kalderimi that continues ascending.
7. A little later you reach an earth road. Straight ahead, the kalderimi continues upwards to Aghios Georgios. Turn left here, onto the earth road. You now follow this earth road, which roughly stays at the same height and is bordered by olive groves, for 1100 metres.
8. After 1100 metres an earth road turns off to the left. At the beginning there is an olive tree in the middle of the road. Take this earth road. To the left there are olive trees, to the right a row of cypress trees with a fenced orchard behind them. The earth road ascends slightly to a spot with a stone



wall on your left and a beautiful view over the Pagasitic coast-line in the direction of Kato Gatzea, Kala Nera and Afissos.

9. Just after this spot, while descending, the earth road bends to the right. Ignore an earth road going straight ahead. You descend through the olive groves. You pass a small concrete shed on your right hand side. Further down there are black nets hanging in the olive trees.
10. You reach an open space. Take the path straight ahead. After 10 metres you pass a square concrete water irrigation pond. Follow this narrow path and descend through the olive grove to the railway track.
11. At the track turn left. You now follow the railway track back to Ano Gatzea. Soon you walk over a stone bridge crossing a shady gully. After a while you will see Ano Gatzea and the coast-line. You reach a second bridge. This railway bridge is the one you passed at the beginning of the walk. Continue along the track. You will pass the Ano Gatzea station. A little further up you see a stone bridge above the rails.



This is one of the older stone bridges that were built at the beginning of the 19th century. Walk further along the track and through the tunnel. A little further on you will see the second bridge, with its beautiful arch 14 metres above the track.

12. Here, at the second bridge, you turn around. Follow the track back to the tunnel, but just before the tunnel turn off onto a narrow path to the left. At a fork, follow the path up to the right along a stone wall.
13. The path ends at a taverna. Just before the taverna, a kalderimi goes down to the left. Take this kalderimi. You will pass the olive museum. Further down, the kalderimi changes into a small concrete road. Follow this road until you reach a narrow path with two red dots.
14. Take this narrow path to the left. You pass the back of the school and reach the church and the road.

If you wish, you can cross the road and find another stone bridge. Descend along the kalderimi that goes down behind the water fountain. At a wide concrete path, you walk down to the left. At a T-junction turn right along a stone wall. A little further to the left there is a neglected stone bridge.



*Enjoyed your walk? Any comments? Let us know!
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