



Island of Evia



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Evia

“Of the seven islands nature made... Evia is the fifth, narrow...”

(Stefanos Byzantios, under the entry “Sicily”)

Evia owes its name to the healthy cattle grazing on its fertile land. *Eu* + *bous* = good cattle.

The history of **Evia** or **Avantis** or **Makris** or **Asopis** or **Ellopia** or **Chalkis** or **Chalkodontis**, as it has been known, is tied to the sea and the conflict between the landowners **Ippovotes** and the bourgeoisie **Aeinautes**.

Paleontological research has turned up rich findings. Rare mammal fossils, of the fauna of Pikermi, have been discovered from **Almyropotamos** and **Karystia** to **Kerasia** and **Artemisio**.

The first signs of human habitation date back to the middle Palaeolithic period (100,000 to 40,000 years from today). Firestone tools were discovered in central Evia.

The Neolithic and early Bronze Age are represented in Evia by the civilisations of **Varka** (in the area of Psachna, Neolithic period 6000-3000 BC) and **Manika** (in the area of Chalkida, 3000-2100 BC). During the Neolithic period, it appears that the population grew and settlements were created. The main indications are clay artefacts and the wide use of ceramics.

On the cusp of the bronze age (3rd millennium) there are signs of intense commercial transactions with the Cyclades, Central Greece and the coast of Asia Minor.

During the Mycenaean period (1650-1050 BC), a number of settlements flourish across the island and the residents of Avantes, according to Homer (, 536-539), take part in the Trojan War led by the King of Chalkida, **Elephenor**.

During the 11th century BC, the residents of Evia roam the seas of the Eastern Mediterra-

nean, creating **emporía** (trade centres).

The Ippovotes the aristocracy have by now replaced the Mycenaean kings, and their power, as well as their commercial ties with the Mediterranean civilisations, is reflected in the findings from the tomb of the **Hegemon** in **Leukanti** (now divided between the Archaeological Museums of Athens and Eretria).

In the 8th century BC large city states are founded, the most important of which are Chalkida, Eretria, Istaia and Karystos.

The cities of Evia take part in the colonisation of the Western Mediterranean and the northern coasts of the Aegean, and the colonists, along with their hopes for a better future, bring with them the Evian **Alphabet**, first to **Pithikouses** (now **Ischia**) and then to the whole of Southern Italy (Magna Grecia), which was the basis for the Latin Alphabet.

During this time, *nausikleiti* **Evia** of Homer's Hymn to Apollo dominates the Mediterranean with its ships.

The major civil war the conflict between Chalkida and Eretria for possession of **the plains of Lilandio**, the fertile plain, now known as Vasiliko, in central Evia that devastated Evia and the whole of Greece, took part in the second half of the 7th century BC.

The dawn of the classical period finds Evia, like the rest of Greece, fighting for its independence against the danger of the Persian expansionism. In their 490 BC campaign, the Persians destroy Eretria, punishing its residents for aiding the Milesians during the Ionian revolution, while in 480 BC, in the waters of **Artemisio**, the Greek fleet stall the enemy ships heading towards Salamina.

All the cities of Evia took part in the victorious **Battle of Plataea**, in 479 BC, and their names are now carved, along with those of the other Greeks, on the bronze column erected in Delphi by the victors (currently in Constantinople).

The Evians, who were originally part of the

Athenian League, especially during the Peloponnesian War, apostatise, fighting for their independence, and the island becomes a battlefield.

The **Evian Commons**, a type of confederation of the city-states of Evia, was founded in 404 BC.

After the battle of Chaironeia in 338 BC, Evia comes under the rule of Phillip the 2nd and Macedonian guard are installed in all of its cities.

After the death of Alexander, the island becomes the apple of discord among his Descendants. It takes part in the struggles again the Romans and falls under the rule of Rome in 146 BC.

During the Roman occupation, the economy of the island flourishes, new religions are introduced, and public buildings are erected in the island's most powerful city, Chalkida. Aidipsos in Northern Evia develops into an important balneotherapy centre.

During the Byzantine period, the islands' population gathers in the major urban centres and the rural areas are abandoned. Chalkida is the island's most important port, and the centre of transit trade.

After the fall of Constantinople to the Frankish in 1204, the island comes under the rule of the Venetians; it originally falls under the jurisdiction of the Lombard king of Thessaloniki and is ceded to three barons from Verona, known as **Terzieri (triarchs)**.

Ravano **dalle Carceri** remains the sole ruler of Evia and, in 1209, recognises the rule of Venice, which appoints a **Bailus (Governor)** in Chalkida.

A short break from the Venetian rule was the revolution of the Karystian knight **Likarios**. With the **Castle of Anemopyloi** as his base of operations, he began taking over the Venetian fortresses, one by one, with the exception of Chalkida, supported by the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos. He defeated his enemies at the battle of **Vatondas** in 1278 (near Nea Artaki) and settled in **Fylla Castle**. No one knows the details of the end of the ambitious knight's rule in Evia, which gave the island's Greek population a short period of freedom.

During the rule of Venice, Evia was known as **Negroponte**.

In early June 1407, **Mehmed II The Conqueror** takes over Evia, which is renamed **Egipoz or Egripos**, and becomes the pashalik of Egripos.

On the 8th of May 1821, the revolution breaks out first in Ksirochori, led by chieftain Angelis Govgios, and then in Limni and Kymi. It is not long, however, before it is stamped out. Chieftain Nikos Kriezotis is prominent during that time.

Evia was freed in April 1833. The first prefect, G. Ainian, founded a mutual teaching school and printing press. A short while later, the first newspaper of Evia, **ELLIN**, was printed.

During the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, major Ioannis Velissariou from Kymi stood out in the battle of Bizanio.

After the destruction of Asia Minor ion 1922, refugees from the Greek East sailed to Chalkida, most of them settling permanently in refugee districts in Chalkida, Nea Artaki, Nea Lampsakos and all over Evia.

From April 1941 to October 1944 the island was under German and Italian occupation. The forces of the resistance were active all over Evia, and especially in Lambousa, Steni and Vatondas.

After its liberation, a major development began in Evia, both in economic and cultural terms.

These days, the prefecture of Evia belongs in the Region of Central Greece and comprises the islands of Evia and Skyros, as well as a part of the mainland (Avlida and Athidona). It has an area of approximately 3,900 sq. Metres, and a population of approximately 210,000, with 80,000 residing in the capital, Chalkida. Its geographical constitution, along with the two bridges that connect Chalkida to Central Greece, give the prefecture its dual nature, as both island and mainland.

Introduction



Chalkida - Bridge
(Photo: Vathy Galazio)

Evia, the second largest island in Greece, is an ideal and excellent holiday destination for holidaymakers from both Greece and abroad.

With its rich natural and cultural heritage landscapes of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Natural Monuments, Special Protected Natural Sites and Sites included in the Natura 2000 network, Wetlands, nine hundred kilometres of coastline and 1,190,000 sq. metres of forest it remains, to this day, a crossroads of cultures, a meeting point for nations and traditions.

In the last few years, the island has become known as a four-season tourist destination, thanks to its natural beauty, its varied terrain, its cultural heritage, its lively local traditions, folklore, folk art, the smiles and hospitality of its residents, its gastronomy and traditional recipes.

Despite being developed, it hasn't become a mass tourism destination, nor has its natural environment been corrupted, and this is its major comparative advantage. Evia is a place that remains genuine, authentic and traditional.

Evia is located 75 kilometres from Athens and Eleftherios Venizelos International Airport, and is accessible both by

land and by sea. Easy access by road via two bridges in Central Evia and the railway connection between Athens and Chalkida, as well as the six (6) ferry lines serving the island, make it an ideal destination for short breaks and leave no visitor unsatisfied.

Evia is blessed with **natural beauty, archaeological monuments, museums, the unique tidal phenomenon of Euripos, natural healing springs, the infamous Drakospita (Dragon Houses) of Karystia, the petrified forest and the museum of fossilised mammals of Kerasia, castles, a plethora of monasteries and churches, most importantly the church of Saint John the Russian, the forest village, wetlands, gorges, mountaineering refuges, caves, hiking, climbing and cycling trails, a mountain biking course, underwater activities, religious excursions, horse riding, unique flora and fauna, picturesque villages, wonderful beaches, traditional settlements, agro-tourism, delicious food, traditional dishes, wine tasting and, above all, the warmth and hospitality of its people.**



Chalkida

"...these are the men who drink the water of the sacred spring of Arethusa"
(Strabo, Geographica, C449)



The Fortress of the Straits, shortly before being torn down at the end of the 19th century

The city of **the sacred spring Arethusa**, Chalkida, built along the straits of Euripos traces the etymology of its names to the root of the word Chalkos, which means bronze, and the workshops processing the metal that existed there.

The oldest documentation proving the existence of Chalkida appears in the Homeric Epics and specifically the city is listed in the catalogue of ships in the Iliad (Book 2, 536-541). **Elephenor** was one of Helen's the suitors (the woman who became known as the beautiful Helen of Troy). He was King of the Chalcideans, leader of the **Avantes** from Evia, and according to the epic he was at the head of forty ships, which the lords of the island contributed to the Achaeans' fleet, as it set out for Troy. The Early Helladic settlement of **Manikas** (3000-19000 BC) has been identified as prehistoric Chalkida. The fort settlement of **Glyfas** on the coast of Boeotia, the *tholos* tomb at **Pei**, and the chamber burials at **Aghia Eleoussa**, **Panagitsa** and **Kamares** with their rich grave goods are proof of the region's development during the Mycenaean period.

The settlement at **Vathrovouni** (identi-

fied as **Kanithos**, the acropolis during historic times) is thought to have been established during the Geometric period (circa 900 BC), to the southeast of the modern town, and this would form the nucleus of the urban web of classical-era Chalkida.

The city or *polis* had a ruling aristocracy of feudal **Ippovotes**. The city took part in the movement to colonise the West, establishing **Rhegion** and **Naxos**, in **Lower Italy** (Magna Grecia).

Its important strategic position made it a target for the Athenians, starting from the mid sixth century BC. Chalkida participated in the Second Athenian Confederation, seceded in 446 BC, whereupon Pericles himself, at the head of the Athe-



Cycladic idols or statuettes from Manika in the Archaeological Museum of Chalkis

Chalkida

nian Fleet brought the city to order, granting land to 2,000 Athenians cleruchs from its territories.

In 410 BC the city revolted once more, fortifying the straits of Euripos and gaining its independence. In 334 BC Chalkida came under Macedonian political influence, whilst in the mid 3rd Century BC, **Heracleides the Cretan** described the city as an economically powerful city with a Gymnasium, Theatres, two ports and an Agora full of works of art.

During the Roman era, it was the island's major commercial centre, even though it gradually began to lose its old glory.

During the Byzantine Era Chalkida was fortified with walls and a moat, while in 1082 Alexios I Komnenos allowed the Venetians to use it as a **commercial scalo** (port). This was also the time when the Jewish community, the **Giudecca**, began to flourish. In 1204 the town fell to the Crusading Franks and in 1216 it passed into the control of the Venetians.

In 1461, facing the threat of the Turks, Chalkida, the Venetian town of Negroponte, was fortified even further, in order to deal with the invaders. On July 12th, 1470 it was taken by Mehmed II and the last Bailus was martyred, put to death

by being sawn apart in front of the seat of the Latin Patriarch.

The Ottoman town of **Agriboz** retained its commercial lustre through the Middle Ages.

In 1699 **Morosini** and **William Koenigsmark** failed to capture the town from the Turks.

On April 7, 1833, **Hadji Ismael Bey**, the representative of the Supreme Porte, handed over Chalkida to **Iakovos Neroulos Rizos**, representative of Otto, King of Greece.

The demolition of the medieval walls of Chalkida, and the subsequent filling in of the moat began in 1855, while Ch. Trikoupis was Prime Minister and Heracles Gazepis the Mayor of Chalkida.

After the destruction of Asia Minor in 1922, refugees from the Greek East sailed to Chalkida, most of them settling permanently in refugee districts in Chalkida, Nea Artaki, Nea Lampsakos and all over Evia.

During World War II, Chalkida was bombarded by German planes. In April 1941, the German Army entered the capital of Evia and the German administration settled in the "Red House". The residents of Chalkida fought hard against the invad-



Town Hall

(Photo: Vathy Galazio)

Chalkida

ers, and the city was liberated in October 1944.

Today Chalkida, the capital of the prefecture, is a cosmopolitan town with over 80,000 residents, built on the banks of Euripos. It is the administrative and commercial centre for the Prefecture of Evia, and practically a suburb of Athens, a place where the residents of the Attica basin escape to for recreation and short breaks.

The city of Chalkida is a centre of intense commercial activity, tourism and culture, and a rich and varied nightlife. It is a majestic, stylish city with natural beauty. Its proximity to Athens (only 80 kilometres) makes it an ideal destination for weekend breaks, and much more. Its traditional two-storey buildings, the old bridge and its numerous seaside establishments give it a traditional feel. Chalkida is a contemporary cultural centre, with an Archaeological and Folklore museum, a Library, an Art Workshop, a Theatre, Sports Facilities, a Sailing Club and many other conveniences.

Places of interest:

- **The bridge of Euripos and the tidal phenomenon**
- **The Kara-Baba castle**, built by the Turks on the Boeotian shore of Chalkida, in order to increase the town's defensive capabilities during their 1684 war against the Venetians.
- **Skarimbass' Tomb** at **Kara-Baba castle**
- **Along the promenade: The Town Hall, the Red House, the House of Statues, the National Resistance Memorial**
- **Athanaton Square** with busts of famous personalities and heroes
- The Church of **Aghios Nikolaos**
- **Public Central Library**
- **Municipal Gallery**
- **Papadimitriou Theatre**
- **Art Workshop** and the Church of **Aghios Dimitrios**
- **The Kriezotis Mansion**, where the **General Archives of the State of Evia** are located

The city has modern hotel infrastructures, a plethora of beaches, ouzeri, tavernas, cafes and everything else a demanding visitor may require. In the city's famous ouzeri, along the beach, and in its many alleyways, one may enjoy fresh seafood dishes. Avanton Street is the city's main market street.

It is an ideal destination for short breaks away from the big cities.

The tidal phenomenon of the waters in the Straits of Euripos is unique worldwide and is a marked feature of the town.

Chalkida has had numerous famous residents, including the writer Giannis Skarimbass, the sculptor Antonis Karachalios, and the actors Orestis Makris and Aspasia Papathanasiou. The famous musician Nikos Skalkotas (1905-1949) was born in Chalkida, which is also the hometown of Dimitris Mytaras, one of Greece's most prominent painters.



Kara-Baba Castle
(Photo: Vathy Galazio)



The Tomb of Yiannis Skarimbass

Chalkida

- **The tower of the siren** (remnant of the town's medieval fortifications)
- **Court House**
- **The Archaeological Museum of Chalkida**, a neoclassical building erected in the early 20th century, which holds exhibits from excavations that took place at Varka, Manika, Tharrounia, from the large and important Classical and Hellenistic period cemeteries of Chalkida, coins from various periods from all parts of the island, burial and votive statues in the round from the Archaic up to the Roman eras, as well as inscriptions from archaeological investigations throughout the island.
- **The House on Paidon Street**
- **The Early Christian Basilica of Aghia Paraskevi**
- **The Residence of the Bailus of Chalkida**
- **The Folklore Museum**, which is housed in the sole remnant of the renowned medieval city walls
- **The Railway Station**
- The two **Tetartokyklia** (Quarter-circles), what remains currently of the fortress islet in the middle of the Euripus, one of which has been turned into a cafeteria.
- **The Port of Chalkida**
- The School of Infantry
- The **bay of Vourkos**, the location of the few remaining boat-yards
- **The Municipal Market**, a conservation-grade architectural complex dating from the latter part of the 19th century
- **The spring of Arethusa**
- **Industrial Architecture: The Georgiadis building and the Arethusa Winery**
- **Vathrovouni**: Shaft graves and Acropolis
- **Kamares** Venetian aqueduct
- **Manika**, five kilometres northwest of Chalkida, and thought to be the location of the city in prehistorical times
- **Glyfa**
- **The beaches of Chalkida: Asteria, Rodies, Souvala, Kourenti, Papathanassiou, Liani Ammos.**
- **Riding Club at Pei**, with great facilities and a café.



The Red House (Photo: Vathy Galazio)



Kamares



Aghia Paraskevi



Emir Zade Mosque

Chalkida

The Euripos phenomenon

This is a phenomenon whereby the tidal currents change direction every six hours, possibly due to the narrowness of the Strait, the volume of water and the gravitational pull exerted by the Moon and the Sun on the Earth.

The phenomenon has been studied by **Aristotle** (who died in Chalkida) and many modern scientists from Greece and overseas.

A definitive explanation was provided by Professor **Dimitris Aiginitis**, according to whom this phenomenon is caused by the difference in the levels of the water in the Northern and Southern Gulf of Evia, in combination with the effect of the moon's gravitational pull.

This brings about the creation of a **regular current**, which runs for 22-23 days for approximately six hours towards the North and then back and which alternates four times a day (24 hours 22 min and 2 sec) where the water current velocity reaches 10 miles per hour. The **irregular current** appears when the Moon and the Sun are in quadrature (at 90 degree angles viewed from the earth) and lasts two to three days. The frequency with which the flow of the current alternates can reach twelve times a day, while its velocity can be one to two miles per hour.



Eretria

*“Eretria was previously known as Melania and Arotria”
(Strabo, Geographica, C 447)*



Eretria

In antiquity Eretria was the second most important city on the island, after Chalkida. Along with other Evian cities, Eretria took part in the Trojan War (*Iliad*, II, 537) and in the 8th century BC established colonies along the coasts of Macedonia, Corfu and mainly in the West (Italy and Sicily). Its powerful and active com-

mercial interests made the city wealthy and the sanctuary to Apollo, the first observed vaulted temple was built during that era. Eretria played an important role in processing the **Euboean Alphabet** and in spreading its use to the West, through colonisation.

In the Archaic era the authority of the **Aeinautes** was established here, and the city developed into a considerable marine power. At the close of the 6th century and on the site of an older temple to Apollo a monumental peripteral temple of the Doric order was built, which was later destroyed by the Persians, when they invaded in 490 BC. The Western pediment (510 BC) of the temple, showing the **Battle of the Amazons**, contained a **sculpture complex showing Theseus seizing Antiope** (now in the town's Archaeological Museum).

The first building phases on the **ancient theatre** and the **Tholos**, a circular building in the city's ancient agora, date back to the 5th century BC. Eretria seceded from the Athenian Confederacy to which it belonged in 411 BC, forming an alliance with other cities in Evia, the **Koinon ton Euboeon**. The city's prosperity in the 4th and 3rd centuries BC is reflected in its monuments. The **house of mosaics** is the



Sculpture complex showing Theseus and Antiope from the Temple of Apollo Eretria Museum



*Amphitheatre
from the
Hellenistic
Era and stage
from the
Roman Era*

major remnant from this period. After 338 BC the city came under the influence of **Phillip II of Macedon**. From 295 to 268 BC, **Menedemos**, the Cynic philosopher, founder of the Eretrian school of philosophy, and teacher to **Antigonos Gonatas**, ruled the city, which was destroyed by the Romans in 198 BC.

In 1834 the newly established kingdom of Greece decided to build a new city on the ruins of Old Eretria, charging the Bavarian architect **Schaubert**, a collaborator of **Kleanthis**, with preparing a town plan. The land was distributed to freedom fighters from Psarra, including the family of **Konstantis Kanaris**.

Today Eretria is one of the most important tourist resorts on the island, thanks to its important archaeological sites, large-scale hotels, wonderful beaches, easy access from Attica via ferry boats to and from Oropos, its tavernas, *ouzeri*, pubs and cafes.

In the past, Eretria was inhabited by refugees from Asia Minor.

Important monuments in Eretria:

- **Baths in the region of the Harbour**, 3rd century BC first phase.
- **Temple of Isis** southeast of the city, first phase: 4th century BC, second construction phase after 198 BC
- **Lower Gymnasium** on the southeastern side of the city, first phase 4th century BC.

Archaeological site North of the Museum:

- **Western Gate**, Early Archaic Period;
- **Temple of Ares**, final phase 2nd century BC;
- **Palace**, final phase 5th century BC;
- **Temple of Dionysus**, 4th century BC;
- **Upper Gymnasium**, 4th century BC;
- **Thesmophorion** (Sanctuary to Demeter), 3rd century BC.
- **Tomb of the Erotas**, a tomb in the Macedonian style, 4th century BC.
- **Macedonian Tomb at Kotroni**
- Excavations of an Early Christian Basilica at **Aghia Kyriaki**, 3 km SE of the town.

The **Archaeological Museum of Eretria**, near the archaeological site of the ancient city contains finds from the excavations in the town, as well as from digs at **Lefkanti** and **Amarynthos**.



*Temple
of Apollo
Daphnephoros*



Central Evia

The region around Chalkida offers many opportunities for interesting excursions.

Arriving from Athens you encounter the historical **Municipality of Aulis** whose capital is **Vathy**, and which includes the municipal departments of **Kalohori-Panteihio**, **Paralia Avlidos** and **Pharos**.

Known from **Homer** as the site of the **Sacrifice of Iphigeneia**, Aulis is on Boeotian coastline on the Southern Gulf of Evia.

The surrounding area has beautiful shallow beaches, a fishing refuge, *pension* and rooms for rent, taverns and *ouzeri*, and is renowned for its nightlife. There is also a rapidly developing market for weekend and holiday homes in the area.

The Municipality of Aulis is connected by a beautiful coastal route to **Dilesi**, **Halkoutsi**, **Skala Oropou**, as well as Athens, and there is a regular long-distance bus service and trains.

Viticulture is very developed in Aulis and several large wineries are established there. We have no reservations in recommending to visitors that they should seek out wines from the region.

Places of interest:

- **Temple of Artemis Aulideios** The ruins from the Roman phase of construction in the sanctuary and the temple, which researchers identify as the temple where **Iphigeneia**, according to Pausanias, served as head priestess after being saved from the ritual knife of her father **Agamemnon**, by the goddess herself.
- **Kolpos Nafpigiou** (Shipyard Bay **Megalo Vathy**). Believed to be the harbour where the Greek forces departed to make war on Troy.

Continuing on towards Chalkida, a short distance from Aulis, you encounter the deviation going to **Drosia** and **Lukisia** in the **Municipality of Anthedon**.

Easy road access to Athens, Chalkida and Thebes make the area ideal for recreation and entertainment, particularly during the summer, due to its natural beauty, extended and amazing beaches and deep crystal clear seas. The area's image benefits from picturesque taverns, local *ouzeri* and mainly from the well-developed nightlife, particularly along the renowned **Alykes** beach.



Temple of
Artemis
Aulideios

Central Evia

Ktyponisi
Anthedon



Anthedon is the place which, according to its name, *produces flowers*. According to Pausanias the city of **Anthedon** took its name from King **Anthus** or from the nymph **Anthedon**.

An important port, the city played a major role in the development of the general region.

In the area is the **Tomb of Salganeas**, the Boeotian navigator whom the Persians executed on this spot in 480 BC, believing that he deceived them by leading them into the Straits of Euripos, which they considered could be navigated.

Along the shoreline of Loukissia are important harbour installations dating back to the Hellenistic Era and up to the Early Byzantine era.

The chapel of **Aghios Georgios**, part way between Drosia and Loukissia has interesting wall paintings dating from the 14th to the 17th century.

A noted landmark in the area is **Ktyponisi**, also known as **Egglezonisi** (the Englishman's island) from its only inhabitant in the nineteen thirties.

The bay of **Aghios Minas**, with its wonderful sandy beach and picturesque taverns situated next to the waves, along with **Valopoula**, **Bournondas**, **Panagitsa**

and **Gaidaros** are some of the many beautiful beaches along this coastline. Pressing on we come to the endless beach of Loukissia and the road brings us to the picturesque fjord-like bay of **Skorponeri**.

Leaving Chalkida and heading north we come to **Nea Artaki**, a refugee village that has developed into a modern town, almost an extension of Chalkida. It took its name from **Artaki**, a town in the province of **Kyzikos** on the **Propontis** (the Sea of Marmara). It is known for its beautiful beaches, its ouzeri serving fresh seafood, and traditional dishes from Asia Minor.

The region has provided a wealth of material concerning the **habitation of Palaeolithic** men in the Helladic region and their activities.

The shop run by the "**Kyzikos**" **Women's Cooperative** and the "**Nea Krini**" **Women's Cooperative** in the centre of town are worth a visit.

This is also the location of some of the largest white meat production facilities in Greece.

At Nea Artaki there is a fork in the road. If you keep on going straight you go to Messapia and on to Northern Evia; turning right will take you to beautiful Dirfy and to some of the wonderful beaches of eastern Evia; while you can also take the scenic mountain route as far as Kymi.

In the region of the **Municipality of Messapia** you can visit **Psachna** (seat of the Municipality), **Politika**, and **Daphni**, with their extensive beaches, verdant mountain villages on the foothills of Dirfy and learn the wild beauty of **Limnionas**

Nea Artaki



Central Evia

and the other, smaller beaches on the Aegean Sea side.

Messapia is one of the most productive plains in Evia, with renowned agricultural products.

Places of interest:

- **Folklore Museum of Psachna**
- **Anastasios Liaskos Historical-War Museum at Kontodespoti**
- **Kastri Psachnon**, where there is a Venetian castle and traces of an ancient settlement.
- **The Venetian Tower at Triada**
- **The Venetian Tower at Politika**
- **The House of General Kriezotis in Triada**. Inside the house excavations have revealed an Early Christian basilica
- **The Statue of Angelis Govios**, at the Psachna Kastella crossroads
- **The Monastery of Panagia Perivleptou Politikon**
- **The Monastery of Aghios Ioannis Kalyvitis**
- **The Monastery of Panagia Makrymallis**
- **Kolovrechtis**, a wetlands habitat protected by Presidential decree.
- **Varka**, a hillock within the wetlands, on which were located the remnants of a sea-front settlement of the Early Neolithic era and traces of habitation from the Mycenaean Age.

Returning to Nea Artaki and taking the route East, we begin to drive up the lower slopes of Mount Dirfy, entering the boundaries of the **Municipality of Dirfy**.

We are now in nature wild. Starting with pine and olive trees lower down, osiers and willows in the ravines, chestnut trees and fir trees as you climb higher.

Now officially an **Aesthetic Forest**, it is protected by Presidential Decree since 1977, while due to the rarity of its ecosystem the entire range of Mount Dirfy is part of the **NATURA 2000** Network (GR2420002).

It is also not a matter of chance that for the Ancient Greeks Mount Dirfy was sacred ground, a place where they



Limnionas



Folklore
Museum
of Psachna



Anastasios
Liaskos
Historical-War
Museum

honoured the goddess Hera.

This is the region where **Diakria** and **Oechalia**, the city of **Eurytus**, are believed to have been located, which, according to mythological tradition, was destroyed by **Heracles**.

The landscape is imposing at **Steni** (seat of the Municipality), where steep rocks lead the eye up into the sky, while tall plane trees tame the waters throughout the year. Make a stop in the square for a coffee and a spoon sweet and fill your water canteens at the **Vryssi tou Giatrou** - the doctor's fountain, before continuing on to **Katafygio** and **Hiliadou**.

Mountaineers and nature lovers can enjoy, year-round, the beautiful and well marked **hiking routes**, as well as the recently laid out **climbing field**. They can also stay overnight at the Hellenic Alpine Club of Chalkida **"Michalis Nikolaou" Mountain Refuge**, located at an altitude

Central Evia

Mount Dirfy,
Mountain
Refuge



of 1,100 m. It takes almost two hours to climb from the Mountain Refuge to the peak (altitude 1,745m), while it takes three hours to hike from the Refuge to Xirovouni. For information about hiking, visitors can refer to the recent publication by the Prefectural Local Government "**Monopatía tis Evias**" (**The Footpaths of Evia**), or contact the Municipality of Dirfy and the Hellenic Alpine Club of Chalkida.

Those who prefer the sea have an opportunity to enjoy the endless beaches at **Hiliadou** and **Metohi**, as well as countless others that are smaller, with their deep blue, clear waters. Hiliadou in particular has seen major development

over the last few years, attracting large numbers of visitors over the summer months. On the northern section of the coastline there is a specially demarcated **nudist beach**.

Kathenoi, Loutsa, Aghios Athanassios, Glyfada, Stropones, Lamari, Theologos, and many more places around here are well known for their meat and poultry.

Other places of interest:

- **The Monastery of Erion** at **Kathenoi**, located in a magical ravine. That very place was once the source of water for the town of Chalkida.
- **Skouderi**, a Venetian tower and an old settlement.
- **Aghia Kyriaki**, a cave-chapel at **Kampia**
- **Trout farms** at **Kampia**
- The **Agali Ravine**, which is exciting to cross. Recently the Prefecture of Evia has undertaken work to support and promote this.
- The **Voidoklefta Cave** at **Aghali**, which shows traces of Prehistoric habitation.
- The **Venetian Tower** at **Pissonas**
- The **Old Monastery** of **Panaghia Hiliadou**.

The beaches
at Hiliadou
and Metohi



Agali Ravine

Central Evia

Leaving Chalkida behind you and taking the route south, after about four kilometres you can visit **Nea Lampsakos**, also a refugee village, famous for its ouzeri eating places. **Bourtzi (Aghios Nikolaos)** with its lovely beach, great fish taverns and traces of earlier fortifications lies across the Strait from Aulis.

Vassiliko is the seat of the **Lelantine Municipality**, and is a major industrial centre. Its port is the highly organised town of **Lefkandi**, with its massive sandy beach and crystal clear waters. There is a wide variety of small and large hotels, apartments, tavernas, ouzeri, cafés and clubs.

Places of interest:

- The **Lelantine Plain**. The fertile plain, run through by the river Lelantas, is verdant with grave vines, olive and fruit trees. It is also famous for very good wines produced by a number of small producers.
- The **Venetian Castle** at Fylla, connected to myths and history Fylla was the name of the Frankish baronial castello built in the 13th century, seat of the legendary Licarius.
- The **Venetian Towers at Lelantine** and the **Venetian Tower** at Vassiliko.
- The **Monastery of Aghios Georgios ARMA**
- The Ancient City of **Xeropolis** at Lefkandi, which provided vital information concerning the so-called *Dark Ages*.
- The **archaeological site of Kalo-gerovryssi** near Afrati. Excavated Neolithic settlement.



Lefkanti, Xeropolis



Venetian
Towers
at Lelantine



Nea Lampsakos
(Photo:
Giorgos Giannakis)

CASTLES AND TOWERS

There are a number of important fortifications dating from medieval times that tower magisterially over Evia.

The towers, besides their purely defensive character, also formed links in a communications network, where using light signals, their defenders could send warnings of imminent danger from one end of the island to the other.

This was similarly the case with **phryctories** (signalling beacons) in classical times, which have been located on Kantili, Eretrian Olympus, Dirfy (on the Mallas plain) and on other mountain locations on the island.



Central Evia



Amarynthos

The region of **Amarynthos** (seat of the Municipality of the same name) is an ideal spot for a rest, as it has beautiful beaches and nearby mountain villages.

The history of the region goes back to the depths of time. It is said that it bears the name of **Amarynthos**, hunter and companion of the Goddess Artemis. Archaeologists have excavated evidence of Neolithic human activity at **Palaiohora** and **Gymno**. In historical times Amaranthos was known throughout Greece due to its sanctuary to **Artemis Amarynthia** or **Amaryssia**.

The mountainous region of the Municipality is also of great interest. There are picturesque villages in a verdant environment that call to a visitor's soul. **Ano Vatheia**, **Gymno**, **Kallithea**, **Setta** all constitute a very interesting day excursion.

Places of interest:

- The **edifice** of a Macedonian **tomb** on the road to Ano Vatheia.
- The **Monastery of Aghios Nikolaos** at Ano Vatheia.
- The **Venetian Tower** at Gymno
- The **Folklore Museum of Ano Vatheia**
- The **Cross-roofed post-Byzantine Church of Panaghia** at Ano Vatheia
- The **Nikos Papakonstantinou Theatre** at Setta, built in accordance with ancient principles, cut out of the rock amongst the fir trees.

- **Post-Byzantine chapel to Panaghia Ampoudiotissa**, sheltered by enormous pine trees, with running waters along the fringes of a fir-tree forest with alpine meadows.
- The **Ampoudiotissa Plateau** for hikers and nature lovers.



The Venetian Tower at Gymno



The Theatre at Setta
(Photo: Vathy Galazio)

Central Evia

*The Venetian
Tower at Milaki*



Continuing on past Amarynthos, you reach **Aliveri** (seat of the **Municipality of Tamyneoe**). This is a modern town with strong economic development. The port for Aliveri is the picturesque **Karavos**, which draws people from the general area and beyond.

The varied night life and fresh fish draw an enthusiastic response from visitors. It is worth visiting the neighbouring villages to meet the friendly and welcoming inhabitants, and also to swim in the blue waters of **Akti Nireos**.

Places of interest:

- The **Roman Baths** and the **Venetian Tower** in the area near the Public Power Corporation thermo-electrical power plant
- The **Mycenaean tomb** at Katakalous
- The **Venetian Tower** at Trachili
- The **Skoteini Cave** at Tharrounia

- **Rizokastro** or **Rizopyrgos**, a Venetian Castle at Aliveri
- The **Venetian Tower** at Milaki



The Venetian Tower at Trachili

*Avlonari
(Photo:
Vathy Galazio)*



Central Evia



Kalamos
(Photo:
Elliniko Panorama)

Your next stop will be at **Avlonari** (seat of the **Municipality of Avlonas**). The ground morphology and scenery is such that there is year-round tourism here. The area has been gifted by nature with beauty unparalleled. The combination of the wonderful sea, endless clean sandy beaches (**Korasida, Kalamos, Mourteri, Agios Merkourios, Bournias** etc.), with the inland areas which are covered in vegetation, run through by the Nileas River, create an ideal environment for nature lovers.

You shouldn't neglect to visit the shop of the "**Avalona**" **Women's Cooperative**, which offers amazing traditional home-made products.

Places of interest:

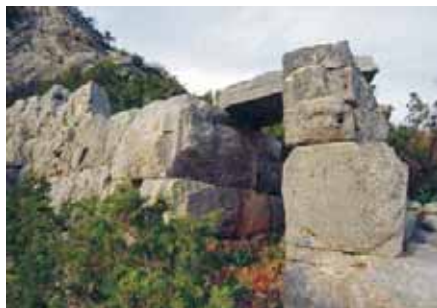
- **National Resistance Monument in Lamboussa** on the Lepouroi Neochori road
- **Neoclassical houses** in Avlonari and Chania
- **Venetian Tower** at Avlonari
- **Church of Aghios Dimitrios** at Chania, Avlonari.
- **Church of Aghia Thekla**
- **Monastery of Leukes**
- **Monastery of Karyes**
- **Potiri Castle**

- **Octonia Castle** (ruins)
- **The Spring of Nikolettta** at Neochori

Nature and its geographical relief (hills and mountains) set the scenery for the **Municipality of Konistra**, with its seat of the same name, and this is where alternative forms of tourism are being developed. The region extends to the foothills of the **Kotylaion Mountains** (also known as **Mavrovouni - Black Mountain**) and the valley formed by the river **Manikiatis**.

Places of interest:

- The **Venetian Tower** at Kadi
- **The Castle / Citadel city La Cuppa** at Dragonera above Vryssi. This dominates the entrance to the Manikiatis gorge and is built on the ruins of Hellenistic fortifications.



**Castle city
La Cuppa**

Central Evia



Paralia Kymis

The journey that began in Chalkida ends on the eastern coast of Evia and majestic **Kymi**, the seat of the Municipality of the same name. The town's name originates from the Greek word for “waves”, “*kymmata*”, in testament to its nautical history. The town is lively and the local economy well developed, but its style is Neoclassical, as if untouched by time. The town rises amphitheatrically over the Aegean Sea a balcony over the Aegean with a lush green backdrop and wonderful views of the sea. A town of captains, Kymi is the birthplace of Professor **Georgios**

Papanikolaou (inventor of the Pap smear), major **Ioannis Velissarios** and the Greek heroes, brothers **Nikolos** and **Panagis Chartsas**, who were executed by the Italians in 1944. There are regularly scheduled boats leaving the port of Kymi for the island of **Skyros**. **Platana**, **Stomio** and **Soutsini** are just some of the wonderful beaches in the region, on the Aegean Sea.

Kymi has an active **Women's Cooperative** that makes handicrafts from the cocoons of silkworms, called *koukoularika*, as well as a **local Fig Cooperative** (Tel. **2222031722**). Visitors should also not miss out on the local traditional sweets (*baklava*, *amygdalota*, figs).

From Kymi you can return to Chalkida by the amazing mountain route, through Metohi and Steni.

Ships for beautiful Skyros depart from the beach of Kymi.

Places of interest:

- **Folklore Museum of Kymi**
- **Potamia Archaeological Collection** (in the village of Potamia, Kymi) includes finds from the excavations carried out in the area
- **Town Hall** and many more neoclassical buildings



Kymi

Central Evia

- **The Ioannis Velissarios Memorial**
- **Memorial for the local heroes, brothers Nikolos and Panagis Chartsas**
- **The Kymi Centre for Environmental Education** (under construction on the site of the **Mylonopoulerios Foundation**)
- **The Merchant Marine Captain's School**
- **Medicinal Springs at Choneftiko**
- **The Church of Panaghia Laoutsanissa**
- **The Monastery of the Transfiguration**
- **Apokleidi Castle**, the ruins of the medieval fortifications of Kymi (in the area of the Monastery of the Transfiguration)
- **The Mantzari Monastery**
- **Oxylithos Volcano** (inactive)
- The villages of the area (**Enoria, Kalimerianoï, Vitalo, Andronianoï**, etc.) are of incomparable beauty, as is the natural environment in the wider region of Kymi. The mountain settlements around Kymi have been designated **Landscapes of Outstanding Natural Beauty** (AT2011005).

The **Mourteri and Manikiotiko Gorges**, located in the general region of the Municipalities of **Avlonas, Konistra and Kymi**, are also **Landscapes of Outstanding Natural Beauty** (AT2011004)



Folklore Museum of Kymi (Photo: Vathy Galazio)



Georgios Papanikolaou

Georgios Papanikolaou was born in Kymi, Evia, in 1883 and died in Miami, Florida, in 1962. He was a famous doctor, biologist and researcher.

He studied Medicine at the University of Athens and moved to Germany in 1907, where he took a course in biology and then began his research into the field.

He left for the U.S. in 1913, where he worked as an assistant in the field of anatomy at Cornell University. He subsequently became lecturer, associate professor and full professor of anatomy and histology at Cornell.

He first applied his method for detecting cervical cancer (Pap test, or Pap smear) in 1923.

He gave life to all women in the world, and gained many distinctions.

He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Athens Medical School in 1949, and became an honorary member of the Academy of Athens in 1957. He received the U.N. prize posthumously.



Northern Evia

*“...and it was named Ellopia from Ellops, son of Ion”
(Strabo, Geographica, C 445)*



Pili
(Photo:
Elliniko Panorama)

Leaving behind you Chalkida and Messapia, you meander up the bends of Aghios. Along the entire trip, up to the highest point, picturesque taverns offer choice local meats and cheeses, and specialise in peasant spaghettis and their famed frying pan bread.

There is a wonderful pine forest, with arbutus, plane, elm and oaks trees that accompany your progress until you reach the height at which you find the first firs.

After the first few turns on the descent, you enter the infamous **Derveni**, in the past the most inaccessible and well defended position.

At 52 km into your journey you encounter Prokopi, a refugee village, which took its name from **Prokopion in Cappadocia**. In the past it was known as Ahmetagha. Today it is known throughout Greece as the site where the relics of **Saint John the Russian**, which the pious refugees brought with them during the exchange of populations.

From Prokopi you take the road that leads to Pili, and its wonderful beach, and continue along the Aegean coastline towards **Vlachia** and **Sarakiniko**.

Continuing along this road leads you to **Mantoudi** (seat of the **Municipality of Kireos**), through the dreamy landscape of

the centuries old plane tree forest, along the bed of the **Kireas river**.

Greenery is rampant and the landscape is perfect for nature lovers and hikers. The beaches, too, are unique. **Pili, Atalantos, Kymassi**, and **Krya Vryssi** all reward even the most demanding visitors.



**Plane Tree
Forest Kirea**
(Photo:
Giannis Fafoutis)

Northern Evia



Museum of the Forest, at Prokopi
(Photo: Giannis Fafoutis)

The area of Mount **Kandili** / **the valley of Prokopi** / **the Delta of the Kireas River**, a swathe which extends from the Northern Gulf of Evia to the Aegean, is of particular environmental interest and is listed in the **NATURA 2000** Network (GR2420003). The region has a great variety of forested expanse, with deciduous as well as evergreen trees, with large numbers of local native plants most of which are quite rare as well as a variety of birds, particularly birds of prey.

At Kantili, as well as at Pyxarias, there are many interesting footpaths, for those who enjoy mountain hiking, and the inland settlements are also worth investigating. A major local point of interest is

the only still operational **water mill and water press**, located at **Spathari**.

Places of interest:

- **The Church of Saint John the Russian**
- **Museum of the Forest**, at Prokopi
- **Megas Platanos**, a natural monument at Paraskevorema (on the road from Prokopi to Mantoudi)
- **Sarakatsanic Cottage Museum** at Mantoudi
- **Fortification of Ancient Kirinthos**

The journey continues through the **Municipality of Elymnioi**, and its seat in the beautiful nautical town of **Limni** (the ancient city of **Elymnion**). Built to rise amphitheatrically up from the Northern Gulf of Evia, this town has a centuries-long history and a great naval tradition. Most people are unaware of the Prehistoric finds, the ancient cities, the monasteries which are some of the oldest in the land located on the site of temples that date back to the time of Homer, the remnants of Byzantine buildings, that exist alongside its island architecture, which is still preserved. All these elements reward further investigation.

Ancient Elymnion according to Thucydides, was most likely destroyed by



Limni

Northern Evia

earthquakes, as were the cities alongside it, **Orobiae** and **Aegae**.

The picturesque **Historical and Folklore Museum of Limni** is crammed full of the area's rich cultural tradition and even includes a small archaeological collection.

There are many interesting **agro-tourism facilities** in the general area of the Municipality of Elymnioi. You should seek them out.

Places of interest:

- **Excavations of the Early Christian basilica** at the centre of Limni
- **The beaches at Limni and Rovies**
- **The church of Aghios Ioannis-Katounia**
- **The Monastery of Agios Nikolaos Galatakis** at the foothills of Mount Kandili
- **The Monastery of the Blessed David**
- **The Venetian Towerhouse at Rovies**
- **Stefani Castle**, the ruins of a castle dating from classical times at **Mourtias**
- **The Tombazi Mansion at Kechries**
- **The waterfalls** of the Drymon river
- **The Rovies Agricultural Cooperative**, which is a model of good cooperative practice and collective effort
- **The Women's Cooperative**, which has traditional weavings.



The Monastery of Agios Nikolaos Galatakis



Saint John the Russian

One of the most important religious sites, not just in Evia but in the whole of Greece, is the church of **St. John the Russian**, located in **Prokopi, Northern Evia**. The Saint's holy relics, which refugees from Prokopi in Cappadocia brought over to their new home in 1925, are kept at the church. Thousands of visitors pilgrims visit the Saint, especially on the 27th of May, the day his memory is celebrated. Christians from all across the land come to pray to him and ask for his help during difficult times.

St. John was born in Russia in 1690, served in the Russian Army and taken prisoner in 1711, during the war between Russia and Turkey. He was enslaved by a Turkish officer in Prokopi, Cappadocia. John, who was a Christian, took over the care of his master's animals, while being humiliated by the Ottomans. The stable where he lived was turned into a place of prayer, and many miracles are attributed to him during the course of his life. John passed away on the 27th of May 1730, and his body was buried by the Christians of Prokopi, who brought it over to their new home in 1925.

Northern Evia



Loutra
Aidipsou

The road continues along the coast to the famous spa **Loutra Aidipsou** (seat of the **Municipality of Aidipsos**), which Ancient Greek sources say were dedicated to **Heracles (Thermae Herculeae)**.

This magical area is known around the world from ancient times for the benefits of its rich subsoil and the gifts brought forth from the depths of the earth.

Aidipsos can attract even the most discriminating visitors and lead them to discover its wonderful hidden secrets. It is a welcoming town, full of life, with intense colours and strong aromas, gifting all visitors with serenity and intellectual clarity.

Plutarch describes the social life that had developed in the city, his pleasant and entertaining stay there, and makes reference to the excellent local diet, with plenty of fish and poultry. **Strabo** mentions the appearance of new springs and their healing properties.



The Monastery
of Aghios
Georgios
Elion

From olden days Aidipsos was known for its copper foundries and this might be the reason why it is one of the few cities that had its own coinage. This coin, depicted by **Rigas Feraios** on his **Charta**, had a crab on one face and a fish on the other, symbolising the marine wealth of the area.

Besides the road network, the city is well served by ferryboat services from **Arkitsa** on the mainland coast of **Fthiotida**, as well as the ferries of **Glyfas / Agiokambos**.

Today there are more than 80 medicinal springs, whose temperature ranges from 28° C to 86° C. Their medicinal attributes have the reputation of being effective in curing various ailments.

The new Hydrotherapy Centre run by the Greek National Tourism Organisation, as well as many modern hotels offer full spa capabilities.

Places of interest:

- The **Aidipsos Archaeological Collection**, at the **GNTTO Hydrotherapy Centre** has a display of ceramics; coins; statue plinths bearing inscriptions; statues and relief sculptures found on recovery digs throughout the town, most of which are related to the **thermae** or spas and how they were in the Hellenistic and Roman Eras

Northern Evia

- The Neoclassical building of the **Aghioi Anargyroi spa**, next to the contemporary GNT0 Spa
- **Roman Balnea / Thermae Sylla**
- The **Monastery of Aghios Georgios Elion**, located at a magical spot, with an endless horizon and rich flora, on the hilltop of **Valanti** hill. This was previously the location of the temple of **Apollo Phoebus Selountios**, sun god (in Greek sun is Helios), giving its name to the nearby settlement.
- The **beach of Aghios Nikolaos**, a long beach with olive groves extending to the edge of the water, with a deep colour, two kilometres from the Baths.
- **Yialtra**, a picturesque fishing village on an inlet of the same name, with a cove that serves as a natural fish farm.
- **Roman balnea** on the beach of Yialtra.

The Community of Lichada

Endless beaches, crystal-clear waters, pine tree forests touching the waves and spread out holiday homes, this is the idyllic image of the Lihada peninsula on the north-western point of Evia.

On the waters of the Evian and the Maliac Gulfs it faces Kallidromos, Oeti, and Othrys.

According to local mythology, the peninsula is part of the body of **Lichas**, who was slain by Heracles, while his head formed the **Lichadonisia** islands.



The beach at Monolia

Using **Aghios Georgios** as its port and with regular ferryboat services to **Aghios Konstantinos** on the opposite coast, this town is a gift of nature to every visitor.

The region has a rich and fascinating history.

There is a host of small hotels and taverns that make a stay comfortable and pleasant.

Due to its natural wealth, the mild landscape and the complex ecosystem sustained in the region of **Mount Telethrion / Lihada / Yialtra**, it is included in the **Natura 2000** Network (GR2420005), while the islets of **Stroggyli** (AT2011042), **Monolia** and **Lichades** (AT2011050) are designated **Landscapes of Outstanding Natural Beauty**.

Places of interest:

- **Cape Kynaio**
- **The Lighthouse of Vassilina**, a remarkable stone-built construction
- **Lichadonissia**: at Stroggyli the stone-built Lighthouse and the ruins of the Monastery of Aghios Grigorios. The organised beaches on the islet of **Monolia**
- **Footpaths** for hiking through the green countryside
- **A Diving Centre** that operates all year round, as well as boats for excursions to the Lichadonisia islands.



Aghios Georgios, Lichada

Northern Evia



Oreoi

The journey through Northern Evia continues with **Oreoi** (seat of the Municipality of the same name). The name is taken from the **ancient city of Oreos**. The city was established by the Athenian generals Tolmides and Pericles in 447 BC, when they settled land grants on 2,000 Athenian cleruchy. After the Peloponnesian War the city fell to the Spartans, who threw out the Athenians. Later, it was taken by the Macedonians and the Romans (200 BC).

It is a quickly developing tourist destination, with a handsome port, where one can enjoy a meal of very fresh fish. The village is renowned for the exceptional quality of the ouzeri on its beachfront.

Oreoi are a popular tourist destination. In the summer months, and during the winter weather permitting they are connected by boat to **Trikeri** and **Volos**.



Marble Bull,
Oreoi

Places of interest:

- The 4th century BC **Marble Bull** on the beachfront.
- The ruins of the **ancient acropolis** (parts of the wall are visible).
- Byzantine and Medieval **Castle**.
- The Byzantine church of **Aghios Vassilios**, which appears to have been built on the site of a pre-existing ancient temple.
- The **Oreoi Archaeological Collection**, which is on display at the town hall on the beachfront, near the marble statue of a bull, and includes finds from the region, most of which date back to the Hellenistic and Byzantine eras.
- The **Church of Panaghia Nisiotissa at Neos Pyrgos**.

The surrounding area is ideal for fishing, either from the beach or by boat, along the **Oreoi channel** and off the lovely island of **Argyronissos**, which is just 2 nautical miles away.

Lovers of alternative forms of tourism, find opportunities for **mountain biking** (around the villages of **Kamatriades** and **Taxiarchis**), as well as for **horse riding**. There are also many footpaths for hiking.

Northern Evia



Histiaia,
Kanatadika

Next stop is **Histiaia**, seat of the Municipality of the same name. Its history also harks back to the Neolithic age, as a settlement from those times was located in the area. Homer makes reference to **Histiaia polystaphyllos** (rich in vines) as one of the cities of Evia in the **catalogue of ships**.

The area contains one of the few wetlands habitats in Eastern mainland Greece and as such has increased environmental interest. **Mikro and Megalo Livari** lagoons are important resting places for migratory and over-wintering birds. The largest population of otters lives here, and there are small expanses of alluvial and riverine forest, which have been designated **Natural Monuments for Conservation**. The complex of **Mikro and Megalo Livari the Xiria Delta and the Deciduous Forest of Aghios**



Swans at Megalo Livari

Nikolaos are part of the **NATURA 2000** Network (GR2420004).

Kanatadika is a tourist resort, particularly during the summer months attracting tourists with the endless beach and picturesque taverns.

Equally interesting is the mountain region with picturesque villages nestled in vegetation and the thick forests.

You can also visit the **Museum of Natural History**, which is maintained, with great care and effort, by the Histiaia Hunting Club.

Artemisio is the seat of the Municipality of the same name. Its name used to be Kourbatsi.

In 1926 the name was changed in honour of the goddess Artemis, as it is believed that a temple in her honour existed at Aghios Georgios.

There still exist buildings from the years of Ottoman occupation and these give a particular flavour to Artemisio. Nature



Drosinis
Tower

Northern Evia



The beach
at Ellinika

lovers can follow the gorge that starts up a short way out of the village, and is covered in plane trees, pines and walnut trees and leads to **Agrilitsa**. The view from here is magnificent, overlooking **Pilio** and the **Sporades Islands**.

Pefki is famous for its immense pine-tree covered sandy beaches and its crystal clear waters.

Passenger ships organise day cruises to the **Sporades** that leave from this port.

The statue of **Poseidon of Artemision** was fished out of the waters around Artemisio, as was the **statue of a youth on**

a horse, which now on display at the **National Archaeological Museum** in Athens.

The **cape of Artemisio** was the site of a major naval battle in 480 BC, in the wars between the Greeks and the Persians.

The village of **Gouves** has a medieval tower, where the poet **Georgios Drosinis** used to live.

It is also worth visiting the lovely beaches at **Asmenio**, **Ellinika**, **Agriovotano**, as well as the renowned **Psaropouli**, the beach at **Vassilika**.

The journey through Northern Evia ends up in the region of the **Municipality of Neleus**. **Aghia Anna** (seat of the Municipality) is smothered in vegetation, and built as an amphitheatre, looking on the sea and the view of the Sporades across the sea.

Its name comes from the icon of Saint Anne in the church of the same name, which is believed to cause miracles. Archaeological investigations at **Agali** brought to light Palaeolithic flint tools made using the **Levallois** technique.

Visitors to the **Museum of Folk Art** at Aghia Anna can admire the unique **traditional dress** of the region and become



Pefki

Northern Evia



Aghia Anna
(Photo:
Elliniko Panorama)

familiar with old customs and the way local inhabitants lived until recently.

Ayianna, as it is colloquially known, also gathers people from all over Greece for **Carnival** and the events of the connected festival of Apokrea, which are particularly colourful.

The atmosphere is truly Dionysian and visitors can enjoy wine and *meze* with the locals, and have the opportunity to enjoy themselves listening to some of the thousands of pejorative songs and verses, which are connected with the local tradition for this festival.

The Gorge of Nileas (Arapis) begins spectacularly in an area of immense natural beauty, about three kilometres west of Ayianna and leads, after a two-hour hike through water, to the **bridge of Amelanta** and five hours later to **Kerasia**.

The Kerasia Museum of Fossilised Mammals was inaugurated in September 2006, and is 6 kilometres west of the Chalkida-Histiaia road, north of Aghia

Anna. It holds finds from investigations by the palaeontologists of the University of Athens; mammals that lived in Evia more than six million years ago. Fossils of Deinotheria, Helladotheria, Samotheria and Agylotheria, are surrounded by remnants of small mammals including ponies, bovines and boars, as well as carnivorous felines, samples of the exceedingly rare prehistoric fauna found in the region. These finds, suitably preserved by the University of Athens are display for the first time to the public in an original manner.

Visitors should also visit the wonderful and endless beaches **Agali** (Aghia Anna) and **Frangaki** (Achladi).



The Gorge of Nileas



The Frangaki beach, Achladi



The Kerasia Museum of Fossilised Mammals
(Photo:
Elliniko Panorama)



South Evia

The road from Aliveri to Kymi leads you to South Evia - Karystia and the gateway to this region would be considered to be **the crossroads at Lepoura**, when you head south. From this point on visitors can follow the road to the furthest settlement on Evia, in the region **Kaphereus (Cavo Doro)**.

The first stop on your way is the **Municipality of Dystia**. Its many points of natural beauty and its untouched nature it is particularly welcoming to those who love alternative forms of tourism. Nature lovers will fall in love and will enjoy countless hours hiking the footpaths through beautiful landscapes and watching rare water birds on the **wetlands of Lake Dystos**. The lake, which has a fragile ecosystem and constitutes a transit point on the migratory path of many birds, is part of the **NATURA 2000** Network (GR2420008).

The seat of the Municipality is **Krieza**, which gave its name to the chieftain **Nikolaos Kriezotis**.

Along the eastern coast of the municipality is the organised **beach of Aghioi Apostoloi**, where you may find hotels, rooms to let, tavernas, ouzeri, pubs, cafes, etc.

There is also a newly opened **Diving Centre**.

The old village of Zarakes has been designated a traditional settlement.

Other beaches: Fryniakos, Porto



Buffalo, Aghios Dimitrios, Stomio and Heiromili.

Stomio and Heiromili

Places of interest:

- **Ancient Dystos** and the **Venetian Tower** on the hilltop within the lake.
- The **Sarai**, a complex of buildings inside the precincts of the lake, a remaining monument of the feudal form of economic relations
- The excavations of an Early Christian basilica at **Aghia Triada**
- **The Venetian Tower at Koutoumoulas**
- **Water mills at Petries**. Still maintained in relatively good condition in the Petries gully
- **Windmills at Zarakes**



Lake Dystos



South Evia



Styra

Your course through South Karystia continues through the **Municipality of Styraies**, and the current seat of this Municipality, the picturesque **Styra**. This land was inhabited by the Dryopes in antiquity. Its geographical position, natural beauties, good climate and many transport links through **ferries** to the coast of Attica that lies across the straits (**Aghia Marina-Nea Styra & Almyropotamos**), have made the region a major tourist resort.

Modern hotels, rented rooms, sea sports, picturesque little taverns on the beach and a vivid nightlife create a cosmopolitan image.

Visitors are recommended to take a relatively easy hike that takes about two and a half hours to complete, which passes by the **Drakospita** (Dragon Houses) and the **ancient quarries** and ends up on the hill-top with the ruins of the **cyclopean wall**, where the ruins of the **Acropolis of Styra** and the **megalithic Gate of Armenon** the emblem of the Municipality of Styra are located.

Fossils of mammals that are over eight million years old have been found at Almyropotamos, another tourist resort with beautiful beaches and a variety of accommodation.

Places of interest:

- The ruins of the **ancient acropolis** at the top of Styra, and the **Gate of Armenon**

- **The mill of Mavromichalis** - kokkinomylos (red mill)
- **Styra town square**, with the spring of Lais
- **Drakospito** (Dragon House) at **Kapsala**
- **Drakospita** (Dragon Houses) at **Palli Laka**
- The **Ancient Quarries** of Styrian Stone
- Nea Styra **Heroon (Heroes') Square**
- **Folklore Museum of Kapsala**
- **Centuries-old olive trees** at the Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos at Almyropotamos



Nimporio

- The **Islets** of Almyropotamos and Styra
- Beaches: **Nea Styra, Porto Lafia, Nimporio, Limnionas, Almyrihi**
- **Charakas Gorge**

South Evia



Marmari

Next stop is the region of the **Municipality of Marmari** with the seat of the same name. They say that the name comes from the wonderful cipollino marble that was quarried in the region. Renowned even in antiquity it was used for columns and floors to decorate temples and luxurious homes.

Marmari, built to rise amphitheatrically, is a modern tourist resort. In the summer it is transformed from a picturesque fishing village to one of the most popular tourist resorts in the prefecture. Frequent **ferryboats** from **Rafina**, which lies across the strait, are one reason for this. The journey takes an hour.

There are several beautiful beaches in



The gorge
of Aghios
Dimitrios

Marmari, including: **Chryssi Ammos, Kokkini, Fygias, Kavoi, Zastani, Lykorema, Aghia Eirini, Baniera, Rossa, Vassiliko, Schoinodavli, Limnionas, Verelaioi, Kallianoi.**

Besides the lovely beaches, visitors can also enjoy **Petalioi**, a magnificent complex of islets made up of thirteen islands both big and small and rich in vegetation. In the summer, frequent boat services will take you there for a swim.

It is also worth visiting the area's many picturesque villages, each of them unique in its own way (**Paradeisi, Melissonas, Aghios Dimitrios, Kallianoi, Katsaroni, Stoupaioi, Varelaio, Actaio, Giannitis**), as well as enjoying a swim at the local beaches.

Hiking enthusiasts can cross the gorge of **Aghios Dimitrios**, through a constantly changing landscape, ending up at the sea. Alternatively, they can head uphill for the **Boublia** peak of **Mount Ochi**, where the footpath commences at Aghios Dimitrios and ends up on the forested peak, where some of the oldest chestnut trees on Mount Ochi grow.

The region is also famous for the quality of its meat and poultry.

Places of interest:

- **Fylagra Castle**
- **The little church of Ossios Loukas at Yiannitsi**
- **The chapel of Aghios Isidoros at Katsaroni**

South Evia



Karystos
(Photo:
Vathy Galazio)

At the southernmost tip of Evia, in one of its most beautiful landscapes, is the site of **Karystos**. The beautiful landscape is reminiscent of a Cycladic island, with verdant gorges and shimmering endless beaches.

This place has an ancient history, connected to legends. The austere mass of Mount **Ochi** dominates the scene; the largest and best-preserved **Drakospito** (Dragon house) creates a note of legend. This is the mountaintop where Zeus was supposed to have mated with Hera and from this the mountain draws its name.

For many years now Karystos has had increasing tourism development. It is the favoured destination of many Greek and overseas visitors, and has its fanatical admirers.

Its great economic development, due to the wealth of the interior and mining of the green cipollino marble, known as **Karystos stone**, along with its strategic position and port, was a temptation to

every invader.

Kokkinokastro, known as **Castello Rosso** (the red castle) was built by the Lombards at the dawn of the 13th century, over the ancient acropolis in an exceptionally well-fortified place with a difficult approach, and was utilised by all subsequent conquering invaders. Around the mediaeval castle lies the amazing castle town. Behind the castle, the **Venetian Aqueduct** is preserved.

Bourtzi, a small fortress in the harbour (a coastal check point for the defence of the city), was also built in the 13th century. It is one of the few of its kind and is preserved in remarkably good condition. It was built using the marble building blocks from the **Temple of Apollo**, located in the commercial district of the town (the Evraiika or Jewish Quarter).

The **Giokaleio cultural centre - a donation by the Kotsika family -**, which also houses the **Library** and the **Archaeological Museum**, dominates the eastern side of the beach. It contains exhibits from all around Karystia from all different periods, as well as the most important finds from the excavations at the **Drakospito** on the peak of Mount Ochi.

A visit to the **Karystian house (The Deligiorgis Collection)** provides a glimpse into life for the local society in the past.

The town plan of Karystos today is due to King Otto and his Bavarian Engineer



Karystos, Columns



South Evia

Birbach, who designed the new town.

Mountain hikers can stay overnight at the **Refuge** on Mount Ochi (the route is very inaccessible), and from there it only takes 45 minutes to reach the peak and the Drakospito or Dragon House. Alternatively they can take the footpath that starts at **Myloi**, passes through the ancient quarry with its imposing **columns** and reaches the Refuge after a three-hour hike.

Places of interest:

- **The Town Hall - Church of Aghios Nikolaos - the busts of the Kotsika family**
- **Giokaleio - Bourtzi - Amalias Square - Heroes Unknown Sailor Memorial**
- **The Karystia Centre for Environmental Information** in Kalyvia. Exhibition / Museum on local natural history and sound show about the Dragon Houses.
- **The Montofoli Estate** at Palaia Chora, which due to its cultivable and particularly fertile soil was always a point of reference in the many centuries of Karystos' history
- **Kokkinokastro or Castello Rosso**
- **The cave of Aghia Triada**
- **Petrokanalo**, a plateau with a stone hut, which is the beginning of the hiking trail through the **Dimosaris Gorge**
- **The villages of Gournia, Lala, Nikasi, Kalyvia, Grabia, Myloi, Aetos, Metohi**, some of which have wonderful tavernas.



Bourtzi, Karystos

- **Platanistos**, the first and largest of the villages on Cavo Doro that you meet after leaving Karystos. The stone bridge, the traditional watermills, the area's wild landscape, and the endless, picturesque beach of Potami are not to be missed.
- A one-hour hike at **Archamboli**, starting from the hamlet of **Thymi** and ending up at the dream-like beach of Archamboli, where there is an excavation of a settlement with metal working workshops.

A Diving Centre for underwater activities operates in Karystos (Tel: 2224025766).

The area of Karystia is known for its famed produce, cheese, goat, lamb, chicken, goglies pasta, *chylopites* (traditional pasta), pastries, wine, tsipouro and ouzo.

Important **agro-tourism** units operate in the region.



Castello Rosso
(Photo: Vasilis Sykas)

South Evia

Drakospita (Dragon Houses)

The infamous Drakospita (Dragon Houses) are the most characteristic feature of Karystia. These are huge structures, made from large slabs of grey limestone, without mortar, built with daring and knowledge.

There are over 20 drakospita in the wider area, built between the 7th and the 2nd century BC.

The locals refer to them as Drago or Dhrago and think of them as the work and homes of supernatural dragons.

The one located at the top of Mount Ochi is the most important and best preserved of all. It measures 4.85 m × 9.80 m and its entrance is on the large facade, in contrast to ancient temples whose entrance is usually on the small facade.

The technique used to construct their roofs known as corbelling is characteristic. The slabs of stone are stacked up on top of one another, creating a structure reminiscent of an upturned trough. Judging by the findings, there is no doubt that they were indeed built as temples, places of worship. Professor N.K. Moutsopoulos was the most prominent researcher of the Drakospita.





Dimosaris

“As I walked through this lushly verdant, shady gorge, full of dew and singing birds, I felt I should call it the Tempi of Karystos, as they can compete in beauty, in water and in the wealth of its greenery with those Tempi in Thessaly”.

Tassos Zappas, Euboeica III, 1984, p. 119

The footpath in the gorge was once one of the main communication corridors for south Evia.

One of the most well known and most interesting, in ecological terms, areas in Southern Evia. The name Dimosaris is Byzantine in origin. The trail through the gorge traverses the wilderness of Ochi, and is one of the main arteries of communication. The more attractive and less tiring route begins at the Petrokanalo pass (altitude 954m). The landscape is unique and of outstanding natural beauty. The journey features lush vegetation, cobbled paths, dozens of springs, small lakes, waterfalls and wildlife, offering hikers an ever-changing visual experience. The trail, which is passable and clearly marked, ends at Kallianos beach. The village of Lenosaioi is located about two thirds of the way there, after which the trail follows a dirt road and then another footpath that leads to the sea under the shade of plane trees. The local flora and fauna are unique.

The general region of Mount Ochi Kafireus, to which the Dimosaris gorge belongs, is part of the **NATURA 2000** Network (GR2420001) due to the unique features of its ecosystem. **Cape Kafireus** (AT2011001), **Dimosari** and **Kastanologgos** on Mount Ochi (AT2011105), as well as the **Valley of Rouklia** (AT2011002) are designated **Landscapes of Outstanding Natural Beauty**.



Skyros



The town
of Skyros
(Chora)

The largest island of the Northern Sporades enchants with its varied landscapes:

Mountain terrain, pine covered land, beautiful sandy beaches, picturesque bays. Its own individual island nature is engrossing and is perfect for all kinds of activities and forms of tourism.

Its name is taken from the famous **Skyrian variegated coloured marble*** that the Romans used to built their manors.

The inhabitants of Skyros are mainly involved in animal breeding. It is well worth tasting and taking home with you some of the island's cheeses, as well as the wonderful lamb and goat meat.

Skyros has seen a lot of tourist development over the past few years. Many new hotel units offer visitors all desired conveniences.

Access is easy, both with the new car

ferry that ties up at **Linaria** and using the airport.

It is 22 nautical miles from **Kymi**, a trip that takes about two hours by ship.

There is a wealth of history, as well as myths and legends to be told about this land.

This is where **Theseus**, exiled from Athens, died, when King Lycomedes, fearing for his throne, tossed him off a cliff.

Here **Thetis** hid her son **Achilles**, disguising him as a girl, in order to protect him, and here **Odysseus** penetrated his disguise and took Achilles with him to Troy.

In later times the fate of the island echoed the fate of the town. It fell successively to the Venetians, to pirates, and the Turks, up to 1829, whereupon, along with the remaining islands in the Sporades chain, it was finally liberated.

Folk art is particularly developed, with emphasis on **woodcarving**, **weaving**, **embroidery** and **pottery making**. The island nowadays is itself a living museum, because this heritage has been preserved. The **traditional cube-shaped Skyrian house** is renowned, due to its particular aesthetics and the absolute functionality of fitting everything into the smallest possible space.

The decorative motifs used in local folk



Traditional Skyrian house

Skyros

Linaria



art are drawn steadily from the natural and social environment.

Many traditions record the genuine folk consciousness of the island's inhabitants. A crescendo is reached at the **Skyrian Carnival**, part of the feast of Apokreo preceding Lent, whose precedents are lost in the mists of time, rooted as they are in centuries-old uncertainties and qualms mankind has about life and death. The starring roles in the Carnival festivities are held by the **Geros** (the old man), **Corella** (a girl) and **the Frank**, who was added later on, probably in order to make fun of the first Frankish mode of dress (pantaloon / jacket). In particular, the form of the Geros is unique compared to all other Greek folk traditions. The Carnival takes place without any particular programme, due to the participation and the enthusiasm of the locals.

The town of Skyros or **Chora** is built amphitheatrically on the hill; at the hilltop is the ancient **Acropolis**, which during the Byzantine era was converted into a **Castle**. The ancient walls, as well as remnants of Byzantine and Venetian fortifications are still intact. The **Monastery of Aghios Georgios**, on a fortified position, dominates the scene. It has excellent wall paintings and a wood iconostasis. It was built during the 10th century by the Emperors



Faltaits Museum

Tsimiskis and Fokas.

The **Archaeological Museum of Skyros** includes exhibits from the excavation at **Palamari** and from the **temple of Apollo** on **Fourka** hill, while the **folklore collection**, also in the same building, is noteworthy and includes a model traditional **Skyrian home**.

The **Faltaits Museum** is one of the best Greek folklore museums, and is also a **Centre for Traditional Studies**.

The excellent **church of the Aghia Triada** is located on a **square** that holds the statue of **Robert Brooke** (*sculpted by Professor Michalis Tombros*), English poet and Philhellene. Here there is a lovely view of the **Kambos** and the long beach at **Magazia**. Brooke died on Skyros in 1915, while serving on a British war ship, and his grave is at **Treis Boukes**, a natural harbour on the southernmost point of the island, which is secured by three corridors (boukes) between two large islands at its mouth, **Sarakiniko** and **Plateia**.

At **Palamari** there is an excavation of a third millennium settlement, whose inhabitants had developed trade with other islands on the archipelago. Skyros was inhabited from the early Neolithic Age.

Skyros has approximately **300 churches and chapels**, many of which



Palamari

Skyros



have important features. Each chapel has its own position and its own particular grace.

The island has countless beaches. To mention just a few there are: **Magazia** also known as **Gialos, Molos, Gyrismata, Pouria, Pefkos, Aghios Petros, Kyra Panagia, Agios Fokas, Acherounes, Kolympada, Treis Boukes, Kalamitsa, Achilli, Aspous, Palamari, Pappou to Houma, Atsitsa.**

The island is divided into two parts, connected by a flat strip of land from **Kalamitsa to Achilli** (the bay from which Achilles is said to have left for Troy). The northwestern part is verdant and covered by forests of **pine trees** and the Southeastern portion is mountainous and rocky, creating quite a contrast.

Kochylas (alt. 792m) in the southern and more inaccessible portion of the island is part of the **NATURA 2000** Network (GR2420006). It is worth hiking round the mountain, which despite being overgrazed and burnt off, still has **Kermes oaks** (*Quercus coccifera*) and **Montpellier maples** (*Acer monspessulanum*) in tree/shrub form. Achilles' spear was made of maple. A unique small-bodied **Skyrian Pony** (a



form of *Equus caballus* that grows no taller than 1.07m or 11 hands in height) has lived free and half-wild on Kochylas for centuries.

Skyros Chora (AT5011062), the bay of **Kalogria, Atsitsa** and the nearby **Pine forest** (AT2011032) as well as the **island of Sarakino** (AT5011061) are designated **Landscapes of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**



Island of Evia

Monasteries and Places of Worship



*The Monastery
of Agios
Nikolaos
Galatakis
(Photo:
Giannis Fafoutis)*

There are monasteries, monuments of Greek Orthodoxy, all over Evia, which are an integral part of our national heritage and a major tourist attraction, thrilling to all fans of religious tourism.

Churches and Places of Worship

- **Church of Osios Ioannis the Russian** was built in 1951 in **Prokopi Kireos**. The Relics of the Blessed Ioannis, brought over by devout refugees from Prokopi in Cappadocia in 1925, are kept in the church.
- **Panagia Faneromeni in Nea Artaki.**



Church of Osios Ioannis the Russian

- **Early Christian Basilica of Agia Paraskevi, Chalkida.** The «tall and awkward church», as described by Alexandros Papadiamantis in his novel «Fonissa», is probably the only Greek early-Christian monument that remains intact. It is near the port and the School of Infantry.
- **The Church of Agios Dimitrios of Avlonari.** A cruciform church in Chania Avlonariou. Perhaps the most beautiful church in Evia, in terms of architecture.
- **The Church of Agia Thekla.** Featuring notable religious art, including some characteristic larger-than-life representations of Saints.



Panagia Faneromeni in Nea Artaki

Island of Evia

Monasteries and Places of Worship



Agia Kyriaki,
in Kambia
(Photo:
Vasilis Sykas)

Monasteries

- **Monastery of Agios Georgios Ilion.**
- **Monastery of Osios David Rovion.**
- **The Monastery of Agios Nikolaos Galataki of Limni**, at the foothills of Kandili. There is a medieval (16th century) defensive fortress/tower in the Monastery's courtyard.
- **Monastery of Panagia Perivleptou Politikon.**
- **Monastery of Osios Ioannis Kalyvitis Psachnon.**
- **Monastery of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Makrymallis.**
- **Monastery of Agios Georgios ARMA.**
- **The Monastery of Agios Nikolaos of Ano Vatheia.**
- **Monastery of Agios Charalambos Lefkon.** It owes its name to the tall aspen trees (lefkes) that surround it.
- **Monastery of Agios Ioannis Karyon.** A cruciform church with excellent frescoes, including a wonderful fresco of the Crucifixion.
- **Monastery of Agios Dimitrios Katarrakti Oktonias.** The fresco of the Second Coming on the western wall is renowned for its diversity of themes excellent micropainting.
- **Mantzari Monastery of Oksylithos.** The oldest in Evia, after the Galataki Monastery.
- **Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Saviour of Kymi.**



The cave
of Agios
Christodoulos
in Limni
(Photo:
Vathy Galazio)



Monastery of Panagia Perivleptou Politikon (Photo: Vathy Galazio)

Island of Evia

Monasteries and Places of Worship

- **Monastery of Agios Georgios of Skyros.** It dominates the landscape from its prominent position. It features interesting religious art and a wooden icon screen.

There are around **300 churches and chapels** in Skyros, many of which are of great significance. Each chapel is important and charming in its own way. Some characteristic names include: **Archondopanagia, Panagia i Lemonitria, Panagia t'Thodori, Panagia Tsyrapsonou, Panagia ton Viskon, Panagia D'chounia, and Christos t'Arkoudi.** Of special interest are also several **churches carved out of the rock or built inside caves**, which are commonly found in remote and hard-to-reach locations.

The following monuments are also worth visiting, for their special architectural, structural or historical features:

- The chapel of **Agios Georgios**, between **Drosia** and **Loukisia** features wonderful religious art from the 14th to the 17th century.
- **The Monastery of Ypapanti Erion or Monomeritissa, in Katherous.** Built in 1637, according to an inscription.



The Monastery of Ypapanti Erion in Katherous.



*Agios
Dimitrios
of Avlonari*

- **Agia Paraskevi of Loutsa.** The fresco of scenes from the Second Coming on the western wall is similar to the one in Agios Dimitrios Katarrakti, in terms of artistic value, theme and micropainting.
- **Agia Kyriaki**, a chapel in **Kambia Stenis.**
- **The Monastery of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary or Panagia Chilliadou.** It is rumoured that it named Chilliadou (one thousand) on account of being the one thousandth monastery built by the Byzantine Empress Theodora.
- **Post-Byzantine chapel Panagia Amboudiotissa**, on the outskirts of a fir forest, with alpine meadows, NE of **Setta.**
- **Church of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary in Aliveri**, a cruciform church built in 1393, featuring several fine frescoes.
- **The cave of Agios Christodoulos in Limni.** The hermitage of Osios Christodoulos, during the late 10th century.
- **Agios Vasileios Oreon**, a Byzantine church, whose Altar is carved out of the rock.
- **Agios Dimitrios in Ferekambos, Skyros.**



*Agios
Nikolaos,
Pouria-Skyros*

Island of Evia

Culture, Events



Cultural events and local festivals are organised in the towns and villages of Evia all year round. Cultural events include concerts, exhibitions, plays and movie projections, sports, etc. Festivals are an opportunity to experience a different kind of entertainment, which connects the traditional with the contemporary. Join the locals and enjoy yourselves, while listening to traditional music and sampling the traditional local cuisine.

The most important events, in chronological order:

- **Skyros Carnival.** Its origins disappear in the depths of time, and it has its roots in the timeless human quest to understand life and death. It takes place without any particular schedule, thanks to the involvement and enthusiasm of the locals.
- **Aghia Anna Carnival.** The carnival of Aghia Anna, one of the most famous of its kind, takes place in the village square, in a Dionysian atmosphere.
- The **Kazanitsa** custom is practiced on Easter Monday in **Loutsa, Dirfy**. It



Island of Evia

Culture, Events

symbolises the transition from winter to spring, and the ascent of the shepherds from the low plains up to the lush mountainsides.

- The **Festival of Osios Ioannis the Russian** is held in **Prokopi Kireos** on **May 27th**. It includes a majestic procession of the Saint's Relics, and is attended by thousands of pilgrims, many of who arrive from Chalkida on foot.
- The **Youth Festival “Nikoleta”** takes place in **Neochori** in early May.
- The **Cherry Festival** in **Metochi, Kymi** and the **Tea Festival** in **Setta** take place in early June.
- The **International Festival of Aidipsos** is held in late June.
- The **Kalamari Festival** in **Chilliadou Beach, Dirfy**, the **Ouzo Festival** in **Nea Lampsakos, Lilandia** and the **Sardine Festival** in **Aghioi Apostoloi, Petria**, all take place in early July.
- The **Chalkida Bazaar** on **July 26th** lasts for 7 days, and celebrates the memory of **Agia Paraskevi**, the city's patron Saint.
- **Elymnia, Limni**. A series of cultural events in July and August.
- **Kyzikeia, Nea Artaki**. A series of cultural events in July and August.



- **Kanareia, Eretria**. A series of cultural events in July and August.
- **Messapeia, Psachna**. A series of cultural events in July and August.
- **Cultural Summer, Karystos**. A series of cultural events in July and August.
- A major traditional festival takes place in **Kymi**, as well as in numerous other towns and villages across Evia, on **August 15th**.
- The **Fig Festival** in **Vitala, Kymi** is held on **August 16th**.
- **Setta of Amarynthos Theatre**. The **Kastalia theatre group** puts up plays every weekend in August.
- **Wine Festival, Vasiliko**. In late August, in the **ASAX** facilities.
- The **Avlonari Bazaar**, a large bazaar in **Chania**, takes place on **October 6th**.
- **Greek Documentary Festival**. For five days in early October, **Chalkida** becomes the place where all Greek Documentary Filmmakers meet.





Island of Evia

Alternative forms of tourism in Evia



Diving

The geography, coastline and seabed of Evia are such that incredible dives may be enjoyed 365 days a year, regardless of weather conditions. Its geographical position and strong local sea currents help preserve the exceptional biodiversity of the area's seabed.

Major diving spots are in Marmari and Karystos in Southern Evia, around Chalkida and Kymi in Central Evia, in Lichadonisia, Artemisio, and Pili in Northern Evia, and along all coasts of Skyros, where there are remarkable underwater caves.

The following **diving centres** operate in Evia:

- **Houlieris Diving Chalkida, Sport Apollon and Thalassa Diving in Chalkida.**
- **Diving Travel in Aidipsos.**
- **Lihadonisia Diving Center in Lichada.**
- **Kalamos Divers in Kymi.**
- **Dive In Evia and Karystos Dive Center in Karystos.**

- **Skyros Diving Center in Skyros.**
- **Petries Divers in Aghioi Apostoloi.**

Windsurfing

Regular northerly winds and sheltered, safe waters between the western coast of **South Karystia** and the **Petalioi** islets, combined with the strong currents in the narrow channel, make **Marmari** an ideal location for windsurfing, according to several specialised European publications and organisations.



Island of Evia

Alternative forms of tourism in Evia



Canoe-Kayak

The rushing waters of the **Manikiatis River**, in the **Municipality of Konistra**, are becoming more and more popular among fans of the sport. The river is suitable for both racing and leisurely tours.

Horse riding

An **Equestrian Club** operates in **Chalkida PEI**, in a wonderful, green location with excellent facilities and a canteen.

Horse riding centres also operate in **Taksiarchis** and **Kamatriades** in **Northern Evia**, and offer horse riding activities in their facilities or across mount Telethrio.

A horse riding centre operates in **Andonianoï**, in Southern Evia.



Therapeutic Tourism

There are more than eighty thermal springs in **Loutra Aidipsou**, with temperatures ranging from 28° to 86° C. Their healing properties are beneficial in the treatment of numerous conditions. Spa therapies are available at the **GNTO's** ultra-modern **Spa Centre**.

Several hotels offer spa treatments, and some like **Thermai Sylla Spa Wellness**, **Knossos**, **Eirini**, **Avra**, **Kentrikon**, and **Skourtanioti** include organised spa facilities, which are open all year round.

Smaller thermal springs also exist in **Gialtra** and **Ilia Aidipsou**.

The water from the **healing spring in Choneftiko Kymis** is known for its beneficial effects on kidney disorders.

Conference Tourism

Fully equipped conference centres for business meetings and conventions, and accommodation for the participants, are available in several large hotels.

- **Palirria**, **Lucy**, and **Pelagos** hotels, in **Chalkida**.
- **Negroponte Resort**, **Palmariva**, and **Eretria Village** hotels, in **Eretria**
- **Thermai Sylla Spa Wellness** hotel, in **Loutra Aidipsou**.
- **Marmari Bay** hotel, in **Marmari**.

Island of Evia

Alternative forms of tourism in Evia

Hiking-Mountaineering

For extra adventure, look no further! Evia offers an extensive network of signposted hiking trails, most of them relatively easy. There are also quite a few uncharted areas, where steep paths through the forest succeed beautiful plateaus, and mountain tops with views that take your breath away. The **Mountaineering Refuge of Dirfy MICHALIS NIKOLAOU** (altitude: 1,100 m) is on Mount Dirfy, past Steni, on a pass with astounding views of both the Aegean and the Euboikos Gulf, and it can accommodate a minimum of 50 people, with all mod cons. The smaller and more basic **Mountaineering Refuge of Ochi** is located in the region of Karystos.



Mountaineering
Refuge of Dirfy
"Michalis
Nikolaou"

Central Evia - Trails

- **Steni-Dirfy Refuge**
(Duration: 2.5 hours, easy)
- **Dirfy Refuge-Ksirovouni**
(Duration: 2.5 hours, easy)
- **Stroponon Gorge-Chilliadou**
(Duration: 4 hours, easy)
- **Lamari-Chilliadou**
(Duration: 2 hours, easy)
- **Dirfy Refuge-Agali Gorge**
(Duration: 5.5 hours, moderate)
- **Agali Gorge-Glyfada Pass**
(Duration: 4 hours, easy)
- **Dafni-Melouna**
(Duration: 2 hours, easy)
- **Euboikos-Olympos**
(Duration: 2.5 hours, easy)
- **Ambousiotissa-Skoteini**
(Duration: 3.5 hours, easy)
- **Androniano-Metochi**
(Duration: 6 hours, easy)

Northern Evia - Trails

- **Agios-Prokopi**
(Duration: 6 hours, easy)
- **Mnimeio-Pyksarias**
(Duration: 6.5, moderate)
- **Vlachia-Pyksarias**
(Duration: 6 hours, moderate)
- **Pili-Pyksarias**
(Duration: 2 hours, easy)
- **Troupi-Strougitsa**
(Duration: 3.5, moderate)
- **Mount Kandili (Makistos)**
(Duration: 7.5 hours, moderate)
- **Nileas Gorge (Arapis)**
(Duration: 2 hours, easy)
- **Drymonas Falls-Mount Ksiron**
(Duration: 3.5 hours, easy)
- **Mount Ksiron** (Duration: 3 hours, easy)
- **Mount Thelethrio, Kastaniotissa-Simia** (Duration: 4 hours, easy)
- **Lichada** (Duration: 2 hours, easy)



Island of Evia

Alternative forms of tourism in Evia



Southern Evia - Trails

- **Petries-Neromyloi-Stomio**
(Duration: 2 hours, easy)
- **Charakas Styron Gorge**
(Duration: 2 hours, easy)
- **Drakospita of Styra - Armenon Acropolis** (Duration: 2.5 hours, easy)
- **Agios Dimitrios Gorge, The Trail of Sara**
(Duration: 2.5 hours, easy)
- **Dimosaris Gorge**
(Duration: 4 hours, easy) **
- **Myloi-Refuge-Drakospito-Ochi Summit**
(Duration: 4 hours, easy)
- **Archaboli Beach-Archaboli Gorge**
(Duration: 1 hour, easy)

*** Organised excursions take place in Dimosaris during the summer, run by the Municipality of Karystos and local travel agencies.*



Some good **rock climbing facilities**, in various levels of difficulty, are run by the Chalkida Mountaineering Association around Dirfy.

Mountain biking is a new activity with many loyal fans. The mountains of Northern and Central Evia are ideal for beautiful journeys through thick forests. Telethrio and Ksiro Oros in Northern Evia, and the regions of Dirfy, Olympos and Kotylaioi in Central Evia are perfect for short expeditions or day trips.

In **Papades Nileos** there is a newly built **Forest Village**. The huts are made of wood and stone, and surrounded by lawn, flowers, stone walls and pretty alleyways. The village is located in a forest of pine and oak trees.



Forest Village, Papades Nileos

Island of Evia

Healing Spas and Wellbeing

Healing springs are natural thermal springs whose waters have healing properties. **Loutra Aidipsou in Northern Evia** is renowned for its healing springs. The springs of Aidipsos are considered some of the most potent and most effective in the world.

Nowadays, there are more than 80 healing springs, with temperatures ranging from 28°C to 80°C.

Reports by specialist doctors and other

scientists all conclude that the healing waters of Aidipsos and Yialtra are suitable for the treatment of conditions such as: Arthritis, Rheumatitis, Spondyloarthritis, Lumbago, Ischialgia, Ankylosis, Migraine, Tendonitis, Chronic Gynaecological Conditions, and Angiopathy, as well as for rejuvenation and beauty.

Spas with healing properties are also located in Yialtra and Ilia.



Loutra
Aidipsou

Island of Evia



Agrotourism - Cooperatives

- The “Kyzikos” Women's Cooperative in Nea Artaki.
- The “Artakeia Krini” Women's Cooperative in Nea Artaki
www.artakia.gr
- The “Avalona” Women's Cooperative in Chania Avlonariou
- The Women's Cooperative of Kymi makes the infamous **koukoularika**, craft items out of silkworm cocoons.
- The Women's Cooperative of Limni makes **woven items** using traditional patterns.
- The Agricultural Cooperative of Rovies produce and package **organic olives**.
- The Agricultural Cooperative of Taksiarhis Oreon was founded in 1928 and produces **dried figs**.
- The Agricultural Cooperative in Kalimerianoï produces the famous **Kymi fig-PDO** www.figkimi.gr.

Several **wineries**, both small and large, around Chalkida (Avlida, Lilandio) and South Karystia, produce some quality wines. Most are open to the public.

A **trout farm** operates in **Kambia Stenis**, and the fish it produces may be sampled at the village's tavernas.

Several **notable** agrotourism units operate in **Northern Evia**, **South Karystia** and **Skyros**.

Gastronomy

The **local cuisine of Evia** is **rich and interesting**.

Chalkida is famous for its unique *ouzeri* and *mezedes*. Fresh fish and seafood is prepared and cooked on demand, and served with ouzo or tsipouro. Similar *ouzeri* and seafood tavernas can be found in all seaside settlements. Karystia, Skyros, Central and Northern Evia are known for the quality and superior taste of their meat and cheese products. All restaurants and tavernas grill **delicious lamb chops** and serve a wide range of stewed and baked dishes. Some also serve local sausages and **traditional bread**.

The specialities of Karystia are kid-goat, ewe or goat cooked in a variety of ways, and **chicken cooked in tomato sauce with kourkoubines or goglies** (traditional homemade pasta).

Just as famous as Evia's tavernas serving meat dishes, cheeses, pastries, wine, tsipouro and a variety of *mezedes*. In Skyros, don't miss out on the infamous *astakomakaronada* (spaghetti with lobster).

Try traditional baked **desserts**, *baklava*, *amygdalota*, dried figs, the local **pasteli**, and **homemade preserves**.

Sample the wines of Evia, the local tsipouro, ouzo, liqueur, etc.







Island of Evia

Information

Access to Evia is very easy. Chalkida is only 80 Km from Athens. Long-distance coaches (KTEL) run regular daily services from Athens (Liosia station and Kato Patissia) to Chalkida, Kymi, Loutra Aidipsou, Istiaia, Aliveri, and Karystos, and from Thessaloniki, Patra and Ioannina to Chalkida.

There are also daily regular rail services from Athens (Larissa Station) to Chalkida.

Evia is connected to Attica and Central Greece by ferries running daily services:

- From Rafina, Attica, to Marmari
- From Aghia Marina, Attica, to Styra and Almyropotamos
- From Oropos, Attica, to Eretria
- From Arkitsa, Fthiotida to Loutra Aidipsou
- From Aghios Konstantinos, Fthiotida to Aghios Georgios Lichadas
- From Glyfa, Fthiotida to Agiokambos
- From Kymi to Skyros, the Sporades and the North Aegean

Addresses - Telephone Numbers

- **Direction of Tourism:**
2221024060, 2221061156
www.evia.gr
- **Province of Skyros:** 2222091840

Municipalities

- **Aidipsos:**
2226350303, 2226350322
www.edipsos.net
- **Amarynthos:**
2229037790, 2229039090
- **Anthidona:**
2221351600, 2221062171
www.anthidona.gov.gr
- **Artemisio:**
2226040650, 2226040950
- **Avlida:**
2221031228, 2221031000
- **Avlonas:**
2223032350
www.avlonari.gr
- **Dirfy:**
2228051220
www.dirfion.gr

- **Dystos:**
2223051373, 2223052122
www.distos.gr
- **Elymnia:**
2227031215, 2227031603
www.elimnion.gr
- **Eretria:**
2229062207
www.dimos-eretrias.gr
- **Istiaia:**
2226052146
www.istiaia.gr
- **Karystos:**
2224022246
- **Kireas:**
2227350200, 2227350212
www.dimoskireos.gr
- **Konistra:**
2222058333, 2222059835
www.konistra.gr
- **Kymi:**
2222024000
www.kimi.gr
- **Lilandia:**
2221063000
www.lilantio.gr
- **Marmari:**
2224031280, 2224032380
www.marmari.gr
- **Massapia:**
2228022505, 2228024929
www.messapia.gr
- **Nea Artaki:**
2221042122, 2221044022
- **Nileas:**
2227061115, 2227061220
- **Skyros:**
2222091207
www.skyros.gr
- **Styra:**
2224051235, 2224051202
www.dimos-styreon.gr
- **Tamineon:**
2223022555
- **Chalkida:**
2221022314, 2221086300
www.chalkida.gr
- **Oraioi:**
2226071454, 2226071987
www.orei.gr

Island of Evia

Information

Communities

- **Kafireas:**
2224025802
- **Lichada:**
2226033298, 2226033280
www.lixada.gr

Hospitals

- **Chalkida Hospital:** 2221021901
- **Kymi Hospital:** 2222029300
- **Karystos Hospital:** 2224024001

Evia Coaches (KTEL)

www.ktelevias.gr

- **Athens:** 2108317163
- **Thessaloniki:** 2310595409
- **Patra:** 2610623888
- **Ioannina:** 2651041248
- **Chalkida:** 2221020400

OSE (Greek Railway Services)

www.ose.gr

- **Athens:** 2105240601, 2105240646-8
- **Chalkida:** 2221022386

Nautical Agencies:

- **Aghia Marina:** 2294063000,
2294063000
- **Agiokambos:** 2226031245
- **Almyropotamos:** 2223053768
- **Arkitisa:** 2233091121
- **Glyfa:** 2238061255
- **Eretria:** 2229067007,-8
- **Kymi:** 2222022020, 2222022522
- **Loutra Aidipsou:** 2226023330,
2226060530
- **Marmari:** 2224032404,-5
- **N. Styra:** 2224041266
- **Rafina:** 2294024398, 2294024882
- **Skyros:** 2222091790, 2222091165
- **Oropos:** 2295032511

OLYMPIC AIRLINES

www.olympicairlines.com

- **Athens:** 2109666666
- **Skyros:** 2222091600
- **Skyros Airport:** 2222091625

Museums

- **Archaeological Museum of Chalkida:** 2221025131
- **Archaeological Museum of Eretria:**
2229062206
- **Archaeological Museum of Karystos:** 2224022472
- **Archaeological Museum of Skyros:**
2222091327
- **Folklore Museum of Kymi:**
2222022011
- **Folklore Museum of Limni:**
2227031335
- **Folklore Museum of Chalkida:**
2221021817
- **Folklore Museum of Psachna**
- **Folklore Museum of Kapsala**
- **Faltaits Museum:**
2222091232 www.faltaits.gr
- **Kerasia Museum of Fossil Vertebrates:** 2227061115,
2227061220 www.kerasiamuseum.gr
- **NAUTILUS Museum:**
2226031662, 69722406477
www.nautilusmuseum.com
- **Istaia Natural History Museum:**
2226052224
- **Anastasios Liaskos Historical-War Museum at Kontodespoti**

Cultural Organisations

- **General State Archives Chalkida**
Historical Archives: 2221085295
gak.eyv.sch.gr
- **Estia Gnosis (The Home of Knowledge) of Chalkida:**
2221077599, 2221077199
www.estignosis.gr
- **Lyceum of Greek Women, Chalkida branch:**
www.likioellinidonchalkida.gr
- **Greek Documentary Festival:**
2106981112 www.docfest.gr
- **Chalkida Mountaineering Association:** 2221025230
www.eoschalkidas.gr
- **Karystia Centre For Environmental Information:** 2224026200

Island of Evia

Sources:

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- FILOTIS Database for the Natural Environment of Greece www.itia.ntua.gr/filotis/main.html
 - Archives of the Society for Evian Studies
- The Bibliography of Theodoros Skouras • "H periohi tis Ochis" (The Region of Ochi), Vassiliki Vlami
 - Archaeologia Magazine, Issue 42 on Evia • Elliniko Panorama Magazine, Issues 33-45-51-52
- Tourist Guides to Evia (Guides to SE Evia 1997 & 2004, Guide to the Prefecture of Evia 1971, Michael Kortsakis Guide, Michael Toubis Guide 1982, Paradirfyas Koinotites 1998, DemoCom Guide 2005, Skyros Association Guide)
 - Tourist map of Evia, S.E. Evia • Footpaths of Evia, S.E. Evia
- Guides and websites of various Municipalities and other agencies in Evia

Photographic Material:

- The Photographic Archive of the Archaeological Resources Fund
 - The Photographic Archive of the Region of Central Greece
 - Elliniko Panorama Magazine • Vathy Galazio Magazine
- Giannis Fafoutis • Maria Volioti • Pantelis Angelou • Vasilis Sykas • Giorgos Giannakis
 - The Chamber of Evia



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Greek National Tourism Organisation
www.visitgreece.gr

www.evia.gr





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