Olympos and Pieria – self-guided:
8-day backpack trekking along Olympos and Pieria mountain ranges 2019 (OPWT3191)

Our hiking philosophy: the hikes may be rough and tyring, but in the afternoon we’ll have a good meal and a comfortable as possible bed in a small-scale accommodation.

We invite you to join us!

more information: www.annahiking.nl
About AnnaHiking
In 1991 we visited Greece for the first time. Our love for the country, the culture, the climate, the food, the language and the Greek has grown ever since. We feel at home here and want to communicate this feeling to others.

Many people are familiar with the Greek beaches: is there more? Sure! The mountaineous mainland offers the traditional way of living, close to nature. Here you won’t find beaches, but gurgling streams with waterfalls, small houses hugging the mountainside and welcoming people. We’d love to introduce you to this side of Greece!

We developed this tour together with our Greek colleagues S-Cape. As an individual traveller we offer you a roadbook with route descriptions, GPS-tracks and marked detailed maps, so you can find your way easily. We also offer you an information package with background information, tips for the best meals and several other useful trivia.

The tour location

General tour information
An impressive trek staying in mountain refuges along the route in the mountains of Mount Olympos and the Pieria mountain range in Northern Greece. You start with a 4-day hike over the mystic mountain Olympos, the highest mountain in Greece and home to the Greek Gods. Continuing to the north you cross the Mt. Pieria from east to west via the Flambouro summit. The hike ends in a comfortable hotel in Velvendos. No luggage transfer is possible, although you may have one bag transported to change clothing half-way the tour.

The walks are between 4 and 7½ hours (that is excluding breaks) and take you through forests, along river gorges and over barren slopes. You walk on stony footpaths, gravel roads and only occasionally asphalt. The routes are mostly signposted.
We advise you to start the trip trained and fit with well worn-in ankle-high hiking boots. Good shoes enable you to walk without worries about your feet so that you can fully enjoy the surroundings.

The tour is for people who do not shrink from hefty walks and who want to clear their head while enjoying the mountains.

**About the tour region**

The **Olympos** mountain range has the highest summits of Greece and is considered the home of the Greek Gods. The most important summits are the Mytikas (2918m), Skolió (2911m) and Stefani or “Throne of Zeus” (2907m). The Mytikas was first climbed in 1913. This gritty and steep summit is not fit for mountain walking, although it is possible to do it on all four without any climbing gear. We keep to the Skolio as highest peak; the views are just as good and there is a path.

The mountain range is much trodden, especially from the Spilios Agapithos refuge. The route along the “Zonaria”, underneath the “Throne of Zeus” is much quieter and on the ascent along the north-east side you probably only encounter the mule train.

You really find yourself in the high mountains here, with the according alpine flora and fauna (chamois!) and the according unreliable weather. It is great though to walk in the presence of the Olympic Gods!

The **Pieria** mountain range is situated north-west of the Olympos. The area is not as high but just as craggy as the Olympos and hardly known by hikers and tourists. The most important summits are Pente Pirgi (1705m) with views over the Olympos range and the Flambouro (2195) highest peak of the area with views over the Polyfyto artificial lake near Velvendos. Both summits are in the trail.

**The accommodations**

You stay in 4 mountain refuges on dormitories with shared facilities. In most refuges there is no hot water available! The other 3 nights are in hotels and a guest house.

**Bookable**

Because of the altitude and snow conditions this arrangement can be booked from 10 June until 22 October (final start date 15 October without extension).

**Prices per person, from 2 persons on**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># travellers</th>
<th>room type (not in refuges)</th>
<th>price</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 persons</td>
<td>single room</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 persons</td>
<td>single room</td>
<td>€ 400</td>
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</table>

www.annahiking.nl
# OPWT319I: 8-day self-guided trekking Olympus and Pieria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># travellers</th>
<th>room type (not in refuges)</th>
<th>price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 persons</td>
<td>double/twin room</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 persons</td>
<td>2 double/twin and 1 single room</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 persons</td>
<td>2 double/twin rooms</td>
<td>€ 310</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 persons</td>
<td>triple room</td>
<td>€ 320</td>
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</table>

Note:
- Price is per person, flight excluded, from 2 persons on (it is not advised to travel alone in this area).
- Specified room type ONLY on day 1 and day 6 and 7. Day 2 until and including day 5 are in mountain refuges on dormitories with shared facilities.
- From January 1st 2018 in Greece a new ‘overnight tax’ is applicable. This tax has to be paid at check-in at your accommodation. The rates per room per night are: € 0,50 for 2*-hotels, € 1,50 for 3*-hotels, € 3,00 for 4*-hotels and € 4,00 for 5*-hotels. It’s not clear yet whether mountain refuges also have to collect this tax.

**Start and finish**: Litochoro c.q. Velvendos.

**Included**
- 7 overnight stays including breakfast.
- Taxi transfer from Agios Konstandinos to Ano Milia on day 5.
- Jeep transfer to Katafygio on day 6.
- Roadbook with detailed route descriptions, marked maps and GPS-tracks.

**Not included**
- Flight, insurances and the transfer from and to the airport.
- Overnight tax (€0,50-€3 per room per night).
- Lunches, diner, drinks and other personal expenses.
- Everything else not mentioned under ‘included’.

**Optional services (to be booked in advance)**
- Transport of one bag per person from Litochoro hotel via Agios Konstandinos – Ano Milia to Velvendos, allowing you to change part of your luggage during the taxi transfer to Ano Milia. You’ll retrieve your bag again in Velvendos.

**Flight and transfer from and to the airport**

**From Thessaloniki to Litochoro**
- You fly to Thessaloniki airport, there are many carriers which offer this flight.
- You take the public bus (half-hour service) or a taxi from the airport to the interlocal bus station Makedonia (40-50’).
- You take the public bus to Litochoro (hourly service, travel time 1½ hour, last bus leaves at 20:45).

**NB:** with a late flight you’ll have to add another day for an overnight stay in Thessaloniki.

**From Velvendos to Thessaloniki**
- You take the public bus (6 times per day) or a taxi from Velvendos to Kozani bus station (20’).
- You take the public bus to Thessaloniki bus station Makedonia (hourly service, travel time 1½ hour).
- You take the public bus (half-hour service) or a taxi to the airport.

**NB:** with an early flight you’ll have to add another day for an overnight stay in Thessaloniki.
Possible extensions/alterations/abbrevations
You may extend your stay in every accommodation for a rest day.

We can book a hotel for you in Thessaloniki for a city trip. Close to the airport is the commuting and beach town Perea, very suitable for a beach extension.

Finally you can combine the arrangement with (parts of) other tours we offer. From Thessaloniki you’ll easily reach the Pindos area (bus to Ioannina) or the Pilion (bus to Volos). We’ll arrange the logistics for you.

For all your wishes: ask for advice and an estimate!

Luggage
You carry a trekking day pack with water, lunch, warm and rainproof clothing, items for overnight stay and personal care, binoculars/camera etc. The refuges may provide you with dinner, water, lunch package and snacks. You’ll carry your own waste down.

In the refuges is present: bed with blanket and pillow, slippers and facilities with toilet paper. In the huts no mountain boots are allowed. You carry with you: sheet or sleeping bag, pillow case, torch, towel, possibly your own slippers (your size may not be available), clothing and everything else you may need during the tour.

The road book contains a list of essential and advised items.
Day to day program

(You can download the elevation profiles separately.)

Note: walking times mentioned are net times without breaks. The elevation profiles are not all on the same scale.

**Day 1: To Litochoro (OP-A)**

You travel to Litochoro, a picturesque small town at the foot of Mt. Olympos from where most hikers start their challenge to the Summits. On the square you’ll find several cozy tavernas and a beautiful church. From the square a street with lots of shops descends along a park. Here you may make your last preparations for the hike starting tomorrow.

*overnight stay: Litochoro*

**Day 2: From Litochoro to the Agapitos Spilios mountain refuge (OP-01)**

Today your trekking over Mount Olympos starts. You have 3 options: the entire route from Litochoro or start at the old Dionysios monastery or start at Prionia. In the last two cases you take a taxi to the starting point. You follow the European long-distance trail E4.

The start through the Enipeas gorge is almost continually uphill, with some steep descents. The Enipeas river provides the village with drinking water and is crystal clear. Wooden bridges allow you to cross the river easily. Sometimes you walk close to the water, sometimes high above. You’ll see the first glimpse of the summits.

You’ll pass the old Dionysios monastery and the little cave church where the Saint Dionysios lived. Then you’ll reach Prionia refuge where you may stop for food or drink and fill up your water bottles. The road ends here: from this point you can only proceed by foot or mule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>walking time/distance</th>
<th>whole route</th>
<th>from Dionysios</th>
<th>from Prionia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7h30’ / 18.8km</td>
<td>6h / 14km</td>
<td>2h45’ / 6.1km</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2145m / 405m</td>
<td>1250m / 40m</td>
<td>1000m / 20m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
overnight stay: A-refuge (Agapithos Spilios hut)

Day 3: From the A-refuge via the summits to the Mousson plain (OP-02)

This is where it is all about! A hefty ascent through an alpine mountaineous area up to the Skala summit (2866m); on your way you’re likely to spot chamois. From this point you have a breathtaking view of the Mytikas summit (2918m) and its climbers. Then over a ridge to our highest point: the Skolio summit (2911m) where you can write your name in the register while enjoying the breathtaking view over sea and the Olympic summits.

A small descent and then up again to the Adonis summit with an old weather station. From here you look into the Tembi plain. You descend further and then traverse the Zonaria on the foot of the ‘Throne of Zeus’ until you reach the Plateau of the Muses. Here you’ll find the mountain refuge Kakkalos which is nestled among smaller summits with splendid view of the Stefani or ‘Throne of Zeus’.

walking time/distance: 6h / 11.0km 
ascent/descent: 1230m / 650m 
overnight stay: C-refuge (Christos Kakkalos refuge)

Day 4: From the Mousson plain via Petrostrounga meadow to the Koromilia refuge (OP-03)

Sunrise with view on the Stefani is breathtaking and we advise you to set out before breakfast to one of the smaller summits on the plateau. Return to the refuge for breakfast and then walk the plain to the narrow ridge Lemos (‘throat’). Along yet another summit with view on the A-refuge you come to the forested area again.

In the forest you’ll encounter the mysterious Petrostrounga meadow the in earlier years the shepherds had their summer dwellings. Nowadays there’s a well equipped mountain refuge where you may take a well-earned break. You descend still further on shaded paths interspersed with various views, and finally you reach the Koromilia refuge.
**Day 5: From the Koromilia refuge to the Pieria, Pente Pirgi summit (OP-04)**

From Koromilia you descend further to the east via forest trails, sometimes steeply. In between the trees you have beautiful views over the plains to the sea. The lovely spot near Orlias stream is an invitation for a break. From the church of Ag. Konstantinos you will be picked up by a taxi (from Litochoro) and taken to the mountain hut from the EOS Katerinis ‘Ano Milia’. Had you booked the optional luggage transfer, the driver brought your bag and you may change part of your luggage. The bag then proceeds towards Velvendos.

You may walk to the summit Pente Pirgi (literally: the 5 wells), a hike mainly on lovely forest trails offering great views of the Olympos summits where you have recently been.

**Day 6: From Ano Milia via Flambouro summit to Katafygi (OP-05)**

Todays walk is the longest of this trip and mainly follows the E4 long distance trail. Through dense forest you ascend easily to a plain with great views of the surroundings. You pass by a superb picknick hut where you find a spring with the clearest and coolest water you ever tasted!

Here you continue to the Flambouro summit, the highest of the Pieria: really worth the detour with the breathtaking views all around you! You see the mighty Olympos summits and the artificial lake of Polyfytos. You may skip the summit and thus save about an hour walking time.
You descend until the mountain refuge from the mountaineering club Kozani, unfortunately mostly closed. Depending on the road conditions (regular landslides occur) you will be picked up at the refuge or 3km further down (gravel road); you'll hear this just before departure. You'll be picked up by a jeep and taken to the guest house Katafygi.

walking time/distance: 8h / 25.5km  
ascent/descent: 1325m / 670m  
overnight stay: Katafygi

Day 7: From Katafygi along the Skepasmeno waterfalls to Velvendos (OP-06)

From the village of Katafygi an easy mountain trail winds down to the Skouliaritikos Lakkos stream, which you cross by a bridge. After the bridge there follows a gradual descent along forest paths down the slopes of the Alogomandria mountain. A sudden glimpse of the Polifitos Lake, than back into the forest.

After a while the whole lake unfolds before your eyes and then also the town of Velvendos comes into view. You reach the plain near the lovely little church of Agios Georgios, where you can take a break. We described an optional detour back and forth to the Waterfalls: the scenery is really worth the effort of 3 kilometers of quiet asphalt road. Back at the outskirts of Velvendos a path takes you to the stadion and then into the town.

walking time/distance: 5h / 19.1km (without waterfalls: 3h45’ / 13.6km)  
ascent/descent: 160m / 1155m (without waterfalls: 35m / 1030m)  
overnight stay: Velvendos

Day 8: Departure from the Pieria (OP-V)

After breakfast your arrangement ends. You travel on your own account via Kozani to Thessaloniki airport.