

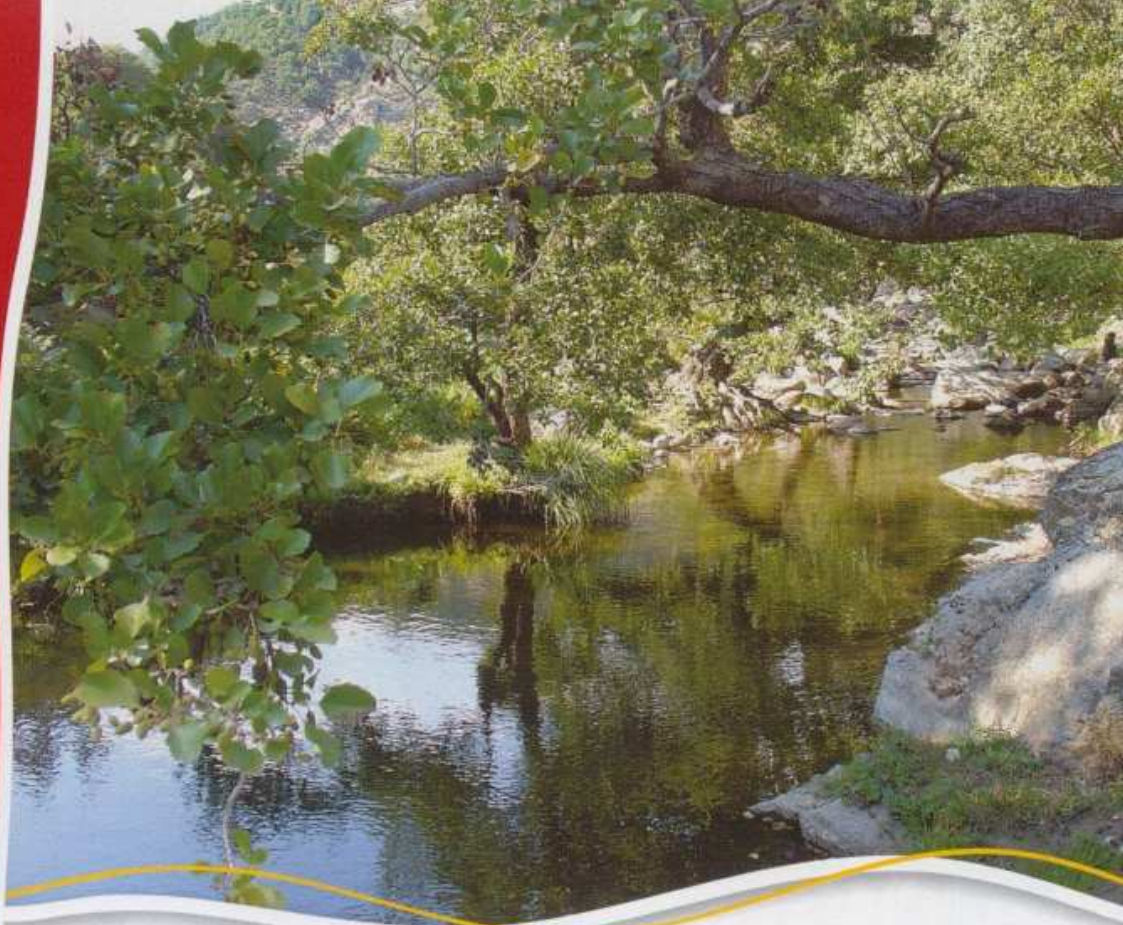


RODOPI

Unexpected land, Greece







beautiful land,

full of history, legends and traditions, like every part of Greece. Except that here there are no crowning images.

Everything here is linked to the slow rhythms of this tenacious land: the stately mountain range and the nature reserves of the plains, the ancient Thracian horseman and the Byzantine St. George, the mountain path and the Via Egnatia express highway, the East and the West, the hospitable tavern keeper on the waterfront and the naturalist from Northern Europe who comes every year to observe the migration of the “chouliaromyta”, or spoonbill.

With this same potent subtlety, Rodopi treats people of different tongues and religious heritages – it welcomes them and extends its hospitality to all.



simple, everyday, human,

a walk through Komotini, the old heart of Rodopi, takes us from the Old Clock Tower and the Yeni Tzami mosque to the tinsmiths', and from there to the old mansions: the Tsanakleios – formerly the Deanery of the University of Thrace, the Club of Komotinaioi, the Public Library.

We stand before two imposing edifices for religious worship: the beautiful Esqui Tzami mosque, which was built in 1608, and the Metropolitan Temple of the Assumption with the wood-carved temple and the portable icon of the Virgin Mary our Guide, an exceptional work of art from the 16th-17th centuries.





We return to the marketplace, in Hephaestus Square: antique shops, goldsmiths' workshops, haberdasheries, stores selling kavourmas – a traditional local dish, seasoned camel meat, soutzouk loukoum – a sort of turkish delight, sesame pulp and fragrant coffee beans, next to the traditional chick-pea shops with the brick kilns, that make the most delicious chick-peas in the country. This is where everyone convenes, locals and visitors alike, at the most authentic and unpretentious amalgam of East and West.



4

5



multiform and vital,

the people of Rodopi do not exhaust the scope of their identity to the archaeological and folkloric wealth or to the natural beauty of their region. Here, the locals, the students at the Dimokriteio University and the visitors all become one; they revel without the pretence of the big city, they can enjoy the companionship, the delicious tastes, the music – they can enjoy life. Day and night life! The city of Komotini is well-known for it. Bars, tavernas, night clubs – with rebetika music, art-house, pop, folk – they become poles of attraction for people from all over Thrace. All ages. All tastes.







varied and enjoyable,

this land brings together and combines recipes and tastes from the Thracian, the Black Sea, the Turkish, the Sarakatsan and the Armenian culinary traditions, but also from the cooking of Kappadokia and Eastern Romilia. Komotini was rightfully declared the gastronomic centre of the Balkans, by the Ministers of Tourism of the Balkan countries.





Do note some of the delicacies you should definitely taste or purchase to take home with you: soutzouk loukoum, baklava, treacle pastries such as malebi and samali, halva from Maroneia, sesame pulp, molasses, cheese pies, pies with spinach, rice, milk, or squash filling, sesame pies, twist pies – sweet or with cheese filling, bougatsa – sweet cream pies, home-made pasta, trahana – wheat boiled in milk and dried, egg noodles, peppery, salty, sweet or caramelised chick peas, dried nuts, crisp cherries, freshly roasted fragrant coffee, wine from Ismaros, ouzo, grappa, kebab, sausages, kavourmas, “babo”, sarmas – minced meat with rice, spicy cheese dip, stuffed lamb, chicken with pickled cabbage, beans with cabbage, rice pilaff, tash kebab, potato pie, leek pie, piroshki, hapsia, thracian mousaka, stewed meatballs, yalantzi dolma – vine leaves stuffed with rice, sea shells, shrimp, steamed or fried briar, mountain greens, local feta cheese. A proper feast!



8
9

beautiful and majestic,

unexpectedly variant in form and, most importantly, untouched, almost virgin, the land here is a challenge to every visitor, as it transforms itself ceaselessly every year, every season, every hour. Mountains, forests, endless plains, rich flora, lakes, aquatic nature reserves, rivers, seas with magnificent beaches, mythical caves. Fertile, rich, often majestic land.

No matter how well one knows this land, no matter how much one has admired its rare beauty, Rodopi always gives the impression of a terra incognita, the sense that, here, there is always something very important that hasn't been discovered yet.





With Komotini as our starting point, the furthest distance within the Prefecture of Rodopi is no more than an hour. Find out about the rare species of birds that you will encounter in the region's aquatic nature reserves. Dare to take breathtaking hikes or mountain bike rides. Camp out at Fanari, one of the best camping sites on the Balkan peninsula. Tour the area. Fill your mind with gorgeous images. Collect even greater memories.



*with a view
over the Thracian sea,*



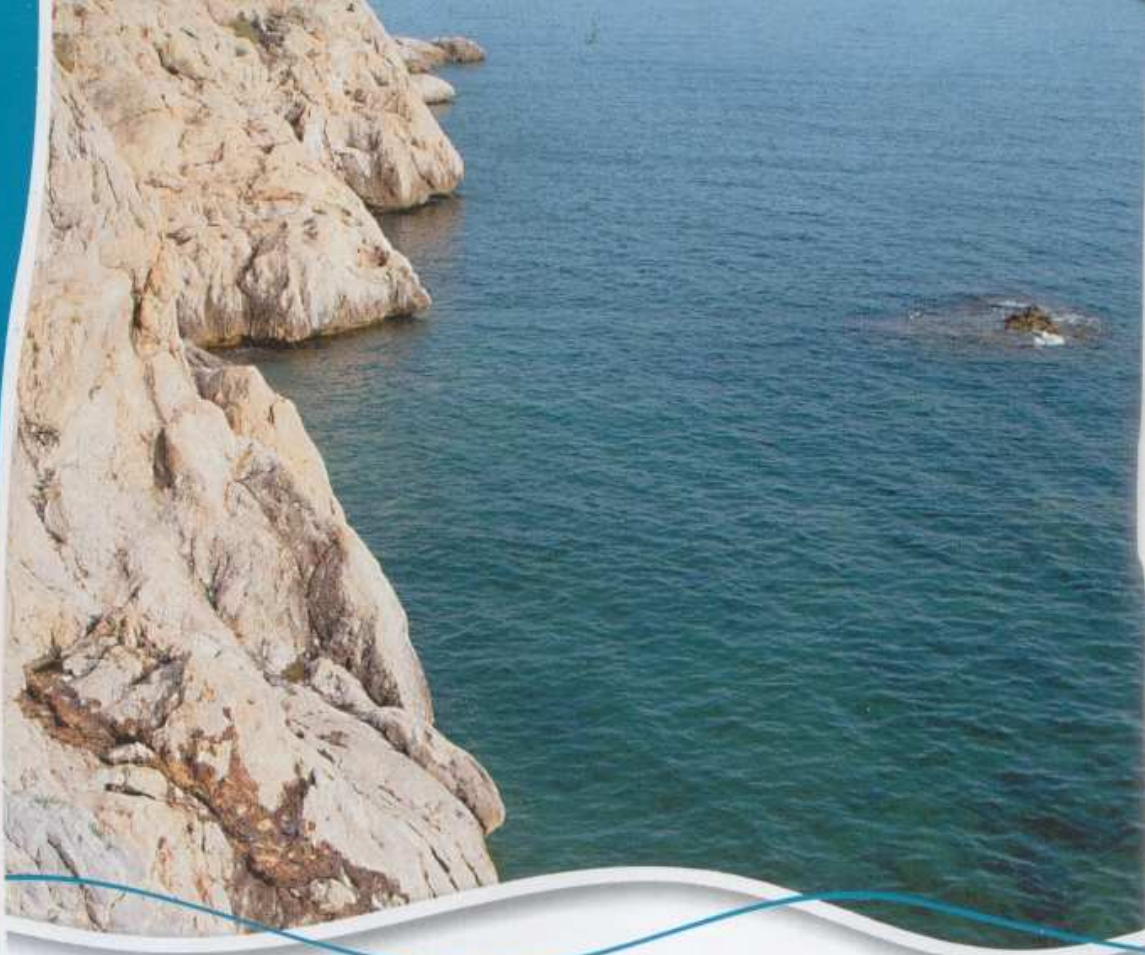
the picturesque Maroneia, the fishing port of Fanari, the coastline of Arogi and Mesi, Profitis Elias, Alkyona and Platanitis, or the peninsula of Molivoti, all form a different, charming side of Rodopi.

Maroneia stands out for its long and distinguished history and its noble character. The wine-press from Homeric times; the ancient theatre and the temple of Dionysus, where a terracotta visor of the god was found dating back to the 4th century BC; the mosaic floor of a residence from the 3rd century BC; the walls and the monumental entranceway or propylaea from Roman times;



the paleochristian basilica from the 6th century AD; the tower of the Byzantine fortification and the Episcopal church from the 11th-12th centuries; all these are examples of the unfailing presence of an advanced civilisation in the area. It is still visible today, as one rests under the perennial sycamores in the village square, gazing at the sea through the vineyards and the olive groves.

Maroneia is still a note-worthy and elegant tourist destination, a stop along the now contemporary Via Egnatia express highway.



12

13

unique beaches,

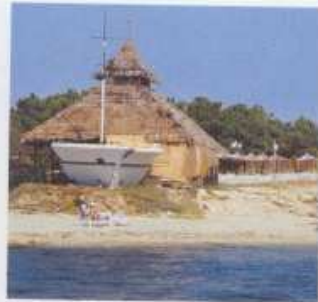
crystal clear waters, a coastline so varied that the visitor is left with the impression of travelling to different places: from the cluster of lakes and lagoons of Vistonida, to Fanari with its vast sandy beach, to the small and pure white beach at Kageles.

Some more and some less developed for tourist use, all the beaches of Rodopi – Mesi, Arogi, Fanari, Profitis Elias, Alkyona, Platanitis, Marmaritsa, Synaxi, Petrota – reward their visitors with their blue flags for clean waters, their unexpected natural beauty, and the variety of water sports available. You can swim, surf, scuba dive, relax at the organised beaches with umbrellas and sun beds, or stay at the local camping sites. Enjoy!





ΠΡΩΤΗ ΕΠΙΣΤΑΣΗ





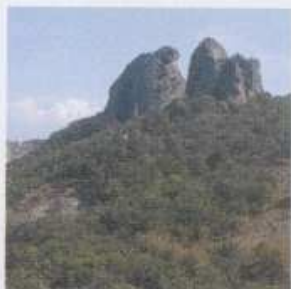
14

15

mountain routes,

that commence right outside the city of Komotini, in the suburban forest of Nymphaia and, higher, at the “Charalambos Dimou” lodge, at an altitude of 1050m.

The European hiking path E6 passes through the verdant slopes of Rodopi, the ravines and the copses of lindens, elms, hazels, walnuts, cedars, and a host of herbs and aromatic plants. Above Maroneia, hike on the Ismaros and discover its disarming beauty, see the ancient wine-presses and the Megalithic Gate. Seek the Cave of Maroneia, which is currently being developed for visitors, a sacramental place with complexes of stalactites and stalagmites in galleries stretching over 2km. Towards Iasmos, the traveller comes across spectacular, vertical rock formations – known as the “Thracian Meteora”, from the similar landmarks of Central Greece – and herds of wild horses, before reaching the triple-arch stone bridge near Polyanthos. Further East, in the forests of Nea Santa and, to the North, in the traditional mountain villages, Rodopi continues to stand supreme.



16

17



traces of an age-old history,

that survive everywhere in Rodopi, from the Papikio mountain and the forest of Nymphaia, from Anastasioupoli to Maroneia, remind us of the civilisations that granted the region prestige and prosperity. Here was the favourite land of Orpheus. Here stands the Ancient Theatre of Maroneia, the Temple of Dionysus, the Roman Gate in honour of the Emperor Adrian (124-125 AD).

Here where found the Byzantine fortifications near the new Via Egnatia express highway, the Byzantine castle of Gratini – seat of the son of Emperor Katakouzinos VI, the medieval arched bridge of Polyanthos and the Macedonian Tomb at Symvola.





ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM



In the Archaeology Museum there are findings dating from 4000 BC to the Roman Period. Among these findings you may find the statue of Markus Aurilius and the clay mask of Dionisus.

Inside the Papanikolaou Foundation, the Byzantine Museum boasts a rare Byzantine collection, one of the most esteemed in Greece.





traditions and celebrations,

different flavours and musical styles, feasts and festivals: the "Babo" or the day of the midwife is celebrated on January 7th in Xylagani, Imeros, Proskinites, and Fanari; "St. Tryphonas", the patron-saint of vineyards, is celebrated on February 1st in Aigeiros; the "Enderlez", an ancient gypsy tradition, is celebrated in the summer in Komotini; the carnival in Sapes; the "Isnafia" on the first Monday of Lent in Xylagani; the "Egg Fights" in Easter at Thrylorio; "Piperouga" in July in Nea Adriani; the "Feast of the Pyre" every July in Maroneia; the "Panegyria" and the "Wrestling Matches" at Ypsoma Hilia every August; the "Momogeria" in December; the cherry festival in Sosti; the festival of "Saint Marina" in Thrylorio;





the week of "Prophet Elias" in Iasmos; the celebration of Xylaganiotes (residents of Xylagani) everywhere, on August 15th; the feast of sardines on August 15th in Fanari.

And museums: the Folklore Museum, the Imaret – Ecclesiastical Museum, the Folklore Museum in Karydia, the Folklore Museum in Xylagani, the Basket-weaving Museum, the Thracian Education Museum, the Military Museum of Nymphaia.



*unexpected, beautiful land,
simple, everyday, human,
multiform and vital,
varied and enjoyable,
beautiful, majestic,
with a view over the Thracian sea,
unique beaches, mountain routes,
traces of an age-old history,
traditions and celebrations,
this is Rodopi.*

Hotels

KOMOTINI

ACHILLION (4 ****, 32 rooms, 68 beds)
4th kms National Road Komotini - Xanthi
tel.: +30 25310-83880, fax: 25310-83882

FILIA (4 ****, 50 rooms, 101 beds)
Ampelokipi, tel.: +30 25310-27500, fax: 25310-70524

ANATOLIA (3***, 56 rooms, 92 beds)
53 Anhiolou St., tel.: +30 25310-36242-7, fax: 25310-23170

ARCHONTIKO CHRISTOU - EVIS
(3***, 81 rooms, 153 beds)
3rd km Komotinis - Alexandroupolis
tel.: +30 25310-33560-3, fax: 25310-26979

ASTORIA (B' class, 14 rooms, 24 beds)
28, Irinis Square, tel.: +30 25310-35054-5, fax: 25310-22707

KIRIDIS (3***, 23 rooms, 47 beds)
6, L. Sofou St., tel.: +30 25310-73250, fax: 25310-73253

ORPHEUS (3***, 79 rooms, 150 beds)
I, Parasiou, tel.: +30 25310-37180-5, fax: 25310-28271

RODOPI (3***, 16 rooms, 30 beds)
3, Ethnarhou Makariou, tel.: +30 25310-35988, fax: 25310-35991

XENIA (3***, 26 rooms, 46 beds)
43, Sismanoglou St., tel.: +30 25310-22648, fax: 25310-22237

DEMOCRITUS (2**, 52 rooms, 86 beds)
8, Viziou Square, tel.: +30 25310-22044, fax: 25310-23396

OLYMPUS (2**, 30 rooms, 50 beds)
37, Orfeos St., tel.: +30 25310-37690-2, fax: 25310-37693

HELLAS (1*, 14 rooms, 24 beds)
31, Dimokritou St., tel.: +30 25310-22055, fax: 25310-33618

ARCADIA (4****, 85 rooms, 170 beds)
Asomatoi, tel.: +30 25310-89100, fax: 25310-89119

MARONIA

DIONI (3***, 14 rooms, 30 beds)
I, Plataniti St., tel.: +30 25330-61101-2, fax: 25330-61103

ISMAROS (3***, 14 rooms, 30 beds)
Plataniti beach, tel.: +30 25330-61200-1, fax: 25330-61207

ROXANI (category C' 12 rooms, 22 beds)
Maronia, tel.: +30 25330-21501, fax: 25330-21500

KING MARON BEACH (3***, 54 rooms, 99 beds)
Platanitis, tel.: +30 25330-61345-6, fax: 25330-61347

FANARI

ALEXANDROS (3***, 10 rooms, 21 beds)
Fanari, tel.: +30 25350-31060

LIMNI (3***, 16 rooms, 33 beds)
Fanari, tel.: +30 25350-31446, fax: 25350-31448

VOSPOROS (3***, 20 rooms, 38 beds)
Arogi, tel.: +30 25350-31216, fax: 25350-31212

FANARI (2**, 32 rooms, 60 beds)
Fanari, tel.: +30 25350-31300-1, fax: 25350-31388

Travel information

Komotini is at a distance of 780km. from Athens and 270 km. from Thessaloniki. By car, you need 8.5 hours from Athens and 2.5 hours from Thessaloniki.

KTEL (Intercity Bus Service)

Buses depart daily from Komotini to Athens.

The journey lasts approximately 9 hours.

For Thessaloniki there are 7 daily departures and the journey lasts 4 hours.

KTEL telephone nos.

Athens: +30 210 5144905

Thessaloniki: +30 2310 595419, 595414

Komotini: +30 25310 22912

OSE (Hellenic Railway Organisation)

Several trains depart daily from Komotini to Athens

and vice-versa. With the INTERCITY the journey

lasts approximately 10 hours. From Thessaloniki

you will need 5 hours with the INTERCITY

and 7 hours with the regular train.

OSE telephone nos. (OSE Informations: IIII)

Athens: +30 210 3624405-6

Thessaloniki: +30 2310 599421

Komotini: +30 25310 22650

For your transportation within the Prefecture

of Rodopi, you may use the interurban buses

(tel. +30 25310 22912) which run on regular

schedules, as well as the railway.

In order to tour the Prefecture of Rodopi, you can also rent a car.

AIR TRANSPORT

The fastest and most convenient way to reach

Komotini daily from Athens is by aeroplane.

Olympic Airways and Aegean Airlines have several

daily flights scheduled. The Dimokritos Airport of

Alexandroupoli (tel. +30 25510 89300)

is located at a distance of 68km. from Komotini.

Olympic Airways telephone nos.

Athens: +30 801 1144444

Komotini: +30 25310 36900

Aegean Airlines: +30 801 1120000

SEA TRANSPORT

Komotini is also linked by boat with Alexandroupoli

and Kavala, with several islands of the Aegean

and, through connecting routes, with all

the Greek islands.

Port Authorities telephone nos.

Alexandroupoli: +30 25510 26468

Porto Lagos: +30 25410 96666

Fanari: +30 25350 31001

Agios Charalambos (Maroneia): +30 25310 73804

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Region of Eastern Macedonia - Thrace

tel. +30 25310 81830-50

MORE INFORMATION

www.remth.gr



REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE



EUROPIAN UNION GREEK REPUBLIC