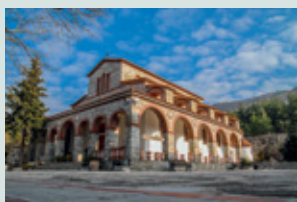


2. Religious Monuments

Three abbeys and one metochikos temple operate currently in the prefecture of Xanthi. The Abbey of Taxiarches is three kilometers from Xanthi. Its catholicon is the most ancient monument of Xanthi and is dated in the end of the 9th century. In this Abbey the Xanthi's ecclesiastical school operates.



3. The Abbey of Panagia Kalamous was initially built during the middle-byzantine period. It celebrates in 23 August and is daily open.



4. The Abbey of Panagia Archangelotissa was founded during the middle-byzantine period. Its catholicon in its current form was built in 1841, after the disastrous earthquakes of 1829. The Abbey celebrates in 15 August. On the east side of the Abbey the ecclesiastical museum of Xanthi's metropolis operates, where a significant number of portable icons and other religious vessels and heirlooms. The Abbey is daily open.



5. The Byzantine Castle of Anastasioupolis - Topeiros



6. The Byzantine Archbishop of Avdera (Polystylon)



Suggested cultural religious routes in the district of Xanthi

Route 1. Old Xanthi - Monasteries

Route 2. Avdera - Porto Lagos - Vistonida

Route 3. Nestos straits - Riverside Forest of Nestos - Nestos Delta

Route 4. The villages of the region of Rhodopi Mountain



Touristic facilities in the regional district of Xanthi

HOTELS

AGRIANI, 4th km. Xanthi - Stavroupolis, (www.agriani-hotel.gr)
 ARTEMIS, Margatits Xanthi
 DEMOCRITUS, 28th October 41, (www.hoteldimokritos.gr)
 CASINO XANTHI (www.casinoxanthi.gr)
 XANTHI, Lefkipou 14, (www.hotelxanthi.gr)
 PETRINOS LOFOS, Mandra Xanthi, (www.petrinoslofos.gr)
 PHILOXENIA, Toxotes Xanthi, (www.hotel-filoxenia-xanthi.gr)
 ELENA, Leof. Stratou, (www.elehotel.gr)
 ELISSO HOTEL, Vas. Sofias 9 Xanthi, (www.hotelelisso.gr)
 JOHNNY, Kimmeria, (www.hotelgiannis.gr)
 LE CHALET (Pigadia), (www.lechalet.gr)
 NATASSA, 2nd km. N.R. Xanthi - Kavala, (www.hotelnatassa.gr)
 NEMESIS, Komnina, (www.hotelnemesis.gr)
 NESTOS, 1st km. N.R. Xanthi - Kavala, (www.nestos-hotel.gr)
 ORFEAS, M. Karaoli 40, (www.orfeashotel.gr)
 PORTO VISTONIS, Porto Lagos, (www.portovistonis.gr)
 PARIS, Democritou 12, (www.parishotel.gr)
 XANTHIPPEIO, 28th October 212
 Z PALACE, End G. Kondyli, (www.zpalace.gr)

HOSTELS

Woodland millage Eymanthos (Leivaditis)
 Agnanti, Avdera, (www.xenag.gr)
 Kamara Pipina, Avdera, (www.kamarapipina.gr)
 Lefkippos, Avdera,
 Iniochos, Komnina,
 Nostos, Stavroupolis,
 To Archontiko (www.toarchontiko.gr)
 Imera, (Toxotes), (www.hotel-filoxenia-xanthi.gr)
 Tzivaeri, Lykodromio, (www.tzivaeri.eu)
 Philidimos, Stavroupolis,
 Diava, Stavroupolis (www.diava.gr)
 Indoglou Mechat, Thermes Xanthi
 Nefeles, Toxotes Xanthi
 Kokkymelon, Toxotes Xanthi, (www.kokkymelon.gr)
 Agnantio, Ano Karyofyto, (www.agnantio-xanthi.gr)

Connectivity

The connectivity with the prefecture of Xanthi includes many ways. The airport which serves the prefecture of Xanthi is named "Megas Alexandros" and is located in Chrysoupolis (Kavala) south-west of Xanthi in a distance of 35 km from the town. By road mainly via Egnatia Odos which connects the borders of Greece-Turkey with Igoumenitsa. By train that passes through Xanthi's prefecture via the Railway Station of the town. There are daily routes to Thessaloniki, Athens and Alexandroupolis. The busses group of Xanthi is in recent years located in a new station that has the ability to service a bigger number of passengers with big comfort. There are interurban routes to all over Greece, as also to the outskirts and the villages. Someone can pass through Bulgaria via the road of Agios Konstantinos on the borders of the prefecture with the neighbor country as well.

European Cultural Route Project

The way to Jerusalem



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The way to Jerusalem

The project "The way to Jerusalem" emphasizes the value of the ancient terrestrial and maritime routes used by merchants and pilgrims, secular and religious figures on the long journeys to Jerusalem. The proposed itinerary, of cultural and spiritual interest, will link the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe with Mediterranean countries. This approach will also reveal a pronounced complexity, within which it is possible to grasp the historic relations between different geopolitical and economic contexts. The main objective of this program is to recover the memory of the centuries-old historic and cultural relationship between the various regions involved, promoting new opportunities for cultural and socio-economic dialogue and cooperation between European, Asiatic and African regions.

The present study regards the support of Xanthi's participation in the cultural route "The way to Jerusalem" including the area's physiognomy and sightseeing, the matching with the pilgrimage movement through the time and the tourist product which is developed through the suggested route.

The Way To Jerusalem International Association, established in Brindisi-Italy on 6th sept 2013, submitted on 30th sept 2013 the dossier of the cultural routes project "The way to Jerusalem: Maritime, Cultural and Pilgrimage Routes" as candidate to receive the Cultural uncl of Europe certification.

Countries involved in the Itinerary

Italy
Croatia
Albania
Slovenia
Greece
Romania
Bulgaria
Cyprus
Turkey
Israel

Countries to be involved in the Itinerary

Morocco
Tunisia
Algeria



The Identification of Xanthi with the Holy Trip

The area of East Macedonia and Thrace is inextricably connected with the historical evolution of Christianity and Orthodoxy in Greece and Europe. During the Byzantine period, in 9th and 10th century A.C., the area flourished as Christian and monastic center. The large number of sacred monuments (Byzantine and post-Byzantine temples, ecclesiastic museums, iconographies, vessels) saved until today, but also local feasts and festivals compose a notable attraction for the area's visitors from Greece and abroad and they are suitable for visits during the whole year. Avdera was the honorary capital of the Roman Catholic Church in the province of Rodopi. Thus, it is normal for the pilgrims in Jerusalem who came from the nearby areas of Balkans to choose this route to visit and pray at the Holy Lands. The pilgrimages saved in Xanthi prove it. They regard the "holy brochures" from Holy Lands, given to the pilgrims of Jerusalem as souvenirs of their trip. In modern times the region of Xanthi keeps close ties with Jerusalem. Holy treasures of Christendom are hosted by the Metropolis of Xanthi as the Holy Cross to the faithful venerates the region.

Xanthi is located in a prime geographical position. From the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman period the famous Via Egnatia was maintained as it is today.

The natural tolls, the old commercial routes, connect the town with the north areas of Balkans. Avdera with its ancient port and a long history evolved the communication between the residents of the north and the south. The town is globally known for its philosophers, like Democritus, Protagoras and Anaxarchos, the historian and philosopher Hecataeus the Avdiron and the lyric poet Anacreon.

The town's ruins can be still seen in Cape Balastra. They cover seven small hills, and extend from the east to the west side of the port. In the southwest slopes there are the ruins of the medieval settlement of Polystylon. Avdera was the honorary capital of the Roman Catholic Church in the province of Rodopi.

Thus, it is normal for the pilgrims in Jerusalem who came from the nearby areas of Balkans to choose this route to visit and pray at the Holy Lands. The pilgrimages saved in Xanthi prove it. They regard the "holy brochures" from Holy Lands, given to the pilgrims of Jerusalem as souvenirs of their trip. Sanctuaries, monuments and stories from the Old and New Testament that



are related to the holy story of Christianity are portrayed on big items. In modern times the region of Xanthi keeps close ties with Jerusalem. Are frequent visits residents of Xanthi in Jerusalem during major Christian holidays such as Easter, Christmas and the summer months. Also holy treasures of Christendom are hosted by the Metropolis of Xanthi as the Holy Cross to the faithful venerates the region.

Religious Tourism in Xanthi District

According to old local verbal traditions, Xanthi's Christian residents wanted their town angel-guided. The monasteries of Panagia Archaggeiotissa, Panagia Kalamous and Pamegiston Taxiarchon, and the small monastery of Agios Nikolaos in the shallow of Vistonis Lake form a cross and sanctify the space, providing permanent holy presence and holy protection.

The temple of Saint Nikolaos in Porto Lago

1. The angel-guided town of Xanthi and its monasteries



The monasteries of Panagia Archaggeliotissa, Panagia Kalamous and Pamegiston Taxiarchon, and the small monastery of Agios Nikolaos in the shallow of Vistonis Lake form a cross and sanctify the space, providing permanent holy presence and holy protection. Xanthi's Christian residents wanted their town angel-guided.

According to the tradition the whole wide region of the town is sanctified and protected by Timios Stavros. The town is "crossed" and its monasteries "stavrata". The history of the monasteries which are built and rebuilt on the same foundations after destructions and natural disasters is unknown. Their known rebuild took place after the disastrous earthquakes in 1829 that razed the whole town. Xanthi's monasteries must be dated from the half-byzantine or the post-byzantine as it is seen by the tracks in their ledgers. In the historic settlement which is nowadays called "Old Town", there aren't any buildings built before 1830. It is a new town which is built after its razing by the earthquakes, on the outlines of the roads and forts that have been conserved for centuries. Xantheia, as a fortified settlement, has cyclical perimeter with an acropolis on its north end. A main road is seemed to cross the Old Town from East to West, while a second main road vertical to the previous one, leads to North. The center of the town is where these two roads are crossed. This is the Roman-Byzantine "middle" road, which forms a cross with its vertical road from South to North. The roads' intersection point is set as the town's "navel". The "navel" is usually the town's square, as also the church. There, having as center the cross of the church, a vertical intellectual axis is extended up to the sky and down to nadir. A cosmological crucifixion symbol in three dimensions is set and includes the spatial and empyrean universe. In other words, it is a typical byzantine secret symbolism, known from the grand concept of Konstantinos the Great during the designing of New Rome – Konstantinoupolis.