

Exploring Route One towards Lamyra



Overview

This walk explores Route One (R1) from Chora. It takes you through the villages scattered on the hills behind Chora, and into the watery interior of the island.

It is wooded and lush in parts with olive, fig, apricot and cyprus trees, there are lots of interesting wells and irrigation channels, and great views back to Chora. There are often hawks circling overhead, and the usual lizards underfoot.

It's moderately easy walking, a little bit uneven under foot at points. There is a bit of a pull up rough stone steps at the start, but it's a really beautiful and easy paved path in places. As it goes round the side of the mountain it isn't unrelentingly steep. It's sheltered from sea winds, and there is some shade from trees.

Time

The walk described below took me about 2 ½ hours for the round trip. You can basically adapt this to fit your energy levels and the time available.

We're really just trying to give you an idea of the possibilities for exploration - even if you only fancy following this path for 30 minutes it's still worth doing.

If you think you'd like to do a longer hike, I'd strongly recommend printing out the excellent guide on Raymond Verdoolaege's site for the *Chóra - Ypsilou - Lámyra - Ménites and back walk*.

Raymond's instructions are more detailed than mine, and he gives timings so you know how long each section takes. If you've got this with you, you'll have the option of going on further if the fancy takes you.

Places to eat or drink

There is a taverna in Ipsilou, just off the path. You'd need to check out beforehand exactly how to get to it if you wanted to stop here. If you make it all the way to Menities, there is a taverna and cafe there.

As usual, opening hours are limited out of season. There are several wells along the way where you can refill water bottles.

Directions

You can pick up the start of Route 1 from Chora, or from Nimborio beach.

Finding the start of Route 1 from Chora

1. To get to the start of R1 from Chora, walk inland along the main street, past the big church of Panagia tis Kimisis on your left.
2. Just past the bollards that mark the end of the pedestrianised street (i.e. where it

joins the road out of town) is the Eleni Hotel. Turn right down the small lane running by the side of the hotel. There is a R1 marker on the side of the hotel.

3. Go down this lane for a few minutes, crossing an asphalt road, and continuing down the lane until you see another R1 marker on a lane going off to your left.

4. Follow this lane, which runs between houses, for a few minutes. Look out carefully for a R1 marker on a lane going downhill to your right.

5. This takes you steeply down some steps until you come to a wooden bridge. Just before the bridge is a big wooden signpost for R1 (Chora – Lamyra – Menites). Continue straight on along the lane (don't turn left up the river bed, even if in the dry season this looks a more convincing path!)

6. The lane (running roughly parallel with the beach) goes past house on your right, fields on your left. After a few minutes the lane ends, and immediately opposite the end of the lane is the start of R1. This is marked with a metal plaque with a red and white square with 1 on it.

Finding the start of Route 1 from Nimborio

1. At the Chora end of Niborio beach there is a small shopping street with a bakers, supermarket and Karamanalis cycle hire shop in it. On the righthand side of the street is a run of tavernas (which face out on to a terrace and the sea on the other side).

2. Go along this street, past the garage, until you come to a bridge crossing a dry (in summer) river bed going up to the left.

3. Keep to the left of the river (don't cross the bridge) and go along a small pavement by the side of some houses. This runs out quite quickly, and you'll have to walk along the river bed. In the summer this will be dry and is basically used as a footpath. I'm not sure how full it gets in the spring or winter - it there's been a lot of rain you might not be able to walk up it.

4. After 10 mins or so walking along the river bed you'll reach a wooden bridge and sign - you are now in the same place as point 5 above.

Directions

1. Now you are at the start of R1 the foot path is clearly marked and easy to follow. The path curves beautifully round the hill, and then dips down through woods to a footbridge across a stream.

It then climbs upwards again, until you come to a pretty little white church on your left. We sometimes just come up to this point - a round trip of about an hour. If you are continuing, you need to turn right here.

2. Continue along the path, following markers which take you up steeply, keeping to the left. As you come into the village the path turns into concrete steps. The village seems to be scattered houses – we didn't find a centre to it. Lots of barking dogs but all safely locked up!

3. Walk along the concrete steps for 5 mins or so, keeping an eye out for a marker taking you sharp left.

4. The footpath emerges onto a road. There are no clear route markers here. Cross the road and take the path slightly to your left (not the more obvious steps immediately opposite which go straight up the hill).

5. This footpath goes across a bridge and past a well on your right. Follow the path round and you'll see more route markers.

6. About 10 minutes up this path there's another wooden sign, indicating that you are on your way to Lamyra. This little bit of path is very pretty, with lots of little waterfalls and springs.

7. The route is now quite well marked, with wooden signs saying 'pros Lamyra' as well as R1 markers.

There are lots of washing places, streams, wells and shady trees. You go past a white-washed well on your right with a wooden sign saying (in Greek) 'traditional fountain of Ipsilou' and shortly after that you come to some houses. Turn right here (don't continue straight on down the hill).

8. Follow the R1 marker and go right at the next fork in the road, and you'll come out on to an asphalt road. Turn left down the road (there's a R1 marker on your right). Follow the road for a few minutes until you come to Panagia Church. There are wooden route signs here, and steps down through the wood.

9. Continue on this flat path until you get to a shady square in Lamyra, Plateia 28th October, with a large plane tree and some benches around it.

I just retraced my steps from here, but as I said at the start, you can keep on going to Menites if you want. You get lovely views of beautiful Chora appearing through the trees as you return.