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THESSALONIKI

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THESSALONIKI

link the town's civic centre (Dikastirion Square, see p. 35) and Kassandrou Street with Aristotelous Square and the seafront. All along the street there are buildings the facades of which all follow specific architectural patterns with colonnades and arcades, and they house offices, bookshops, stores, hotels, state agencies, residencies etc. The junction of Aristotelous and Ermou Streets is the location of the church of *Agia [Saint] Theodora* (1937) built on an old monastery site now housing a community of monks; facing north you will see *upper Aristotelous square*.

1.2 Shopping streets (see p. 27)

2 NIKIS AVENUE

It starts at the harbour from the west and goes eastward to the White Tower (see p. 24) and it is known as *Palia Paralia* [Old Seafront]. The Turks opened it up in 1882, following an urban plan for modernising the city, after the seafront city walls were demolished. For many decades, traders and warships, fishing boats and yachts would dock along the

wharf. Today, this is one of the top places in Thessaloniki, crossed daily by thousands of locals and visitors. One side of the avenue is lined with cafés and cosy little bars and the opposite wide pedestrian area next to the sea gets filled with strollers, cyclists, street artists and vendors. Among the modern blocks of flats, you will see some of the city's major landmarks: past Eleftherias square, the three-storey interwar period mansion where *Olympos-Naousa* a once popular restaurant used to be; *Aristotelous square*; *Koniordou Mansion* (at the corner with Kar. Dil street); *Tyrolai Mansion* built during the Interbellum (located between Kar. Dil and Agia Sofia Streets), where Tottis coffee shop used to be for many years; *Mandalideio Mansion* (1931) and *Exarchopoulos Mansion* (1935) - the two last ones are situated at the junction with Vogatsikou street; at 63, Nikis Avenue you will see the three-storey building of the *Thessaloniki Club* (1926); at number 73, *Pallas*, an old cinema theatre, houses the State Orchestra of Thessaloniki.

3 ELEFThERIAS SQUARE

The square is close to the harbour and it is used as an open-air car parking lot. This is the spot where, back in 1943, the German Occupation forces mustered about 50,000 Jewish residents in order to ship them to concentration camps. To commemorate this event, the *Holocaust Memorial of the Jewish Greeks of Thessaloniki* was placed in 1997 at the square's northeast side, crafted by the sculptor N. Glid. At the junction of Mitropoleos and I. Dragoumi streets stand the imposing buildings of the *National Bank of Greece & the Bank of Greece* (1928) and of the *Ionian and Popular Bank* (1929 - today Alpha Bank); elements of late neoclassicism and interwar period eclecticism are evident on the outside of both buildings.

MUST SEE:

3.1 Kalapothaki Street.

It starts at Ladadika area, ends at Dimosthenous street and its biggest part is now pedestrianised. There are some very interesting

neoclassical and Bauhaus-style buildings with popular cafés, bar restaurants, and small hotels. Stein Building is at the corner of El. Venizelos and Kalapothaki Streets; it was built in 1908 in order to house a department store and it is one of the very few buildings that were spared destruction at the 1917 great fire. Notice the glass globe on the top of the building, a point of reference in Eleftherias Sq. In the neighbouring *Komnion Street* it is worth noticing the eclectic style on buildings such as *Luxemburg Hotel* as well as *Tourist* and *Excelsior Hotels* at the junction with Mitropoleos streets.

4 PORT

The area is one of the biggest ports of the country and of the southeastern Mediterranean, with a significant trade and passenger traffic. This is where the first artificial harbour of the town was constructed by Constantine the Great during his short stay in Thessaloniki (322-323 AD); later on during the Turkish Occupation it was banked up with earth.

10



10.
Bustling Nikis
Avenue and
the White
Tower in the
background.

Construction for the first wharf of the port began in the late 19th c.; in 1910 six warehouses were built and all of them are fine examples of industrial architecture of that time. In 1997, on the occasion of events celebrating Thessaloniki as the European Capital of Culture, five of them were revamped and reopened: warehouses 1 and D housed the *International Film Festival of Thessaloniki* (see p. 108); warehouse A houses the **Thessaloniki Cinema Museum** and the **Museum of Photography of Thessaloniki** (to view the exhibits, see p. 77-78); warehouse B1 houses the **Thessaloniki Centre of Contemporary Art** (see p. 75); and warehouse C is now a bar-restaurant. This place is among the most popular ones for strolling, relaxing, and enjoying a fine view of the seafront.

MUST SEE:

[4.1] Customs House (Passenger Board).

This imposing 200 m. long building was built in 1910, designed by architect Eli

Modiano, and its structure bears the influence of early 20th c. french architecture. Since 1987 it is the city port's passenger board station.

5 LADADIKA

This is one of the very few main town areas that were spared destruction when the 1917 fire broke out. It was created in the 16th c. when the Turks banked the Byzantine artificial harbour up with earth, and ended in *Fragkomachalas* area (see p. 22); Ladadika quarter used to be located outside the city's western walls until these were pulled down. Marked as an area for wholesale trade close to the harbour, it was known for its spices and grain shops and after 1917 for its olive oil storage rooms. Street mapping has remained unchanged since the late 19th c. and most of the buildings – erected mostly during the 2nd half of the 19th c. – are two-storeyed and were constructed using industrial brick and wood although several were demolished later to make way for new streets or widen old ones. After

WWII the area was gradually downgraded; in 1985 it was proclaimed a historic area with listed buildings. Since the early 1990s, steps were taken to upgrade Ladadika, turning it into a hotspot area in town with numerous restaurants, clubs, cafés and venues where live Greek music is performed. A central spot where you can start your tour is *Morichovou sq.*; it is worth stopping by *Petrakaki sq.* where you will see the *Mansion of the Ottoman Post Office* (today a hotel) –among other sights. Other places of interest are *Aigyptou*, *Katouni*, *Lykourgou*, and *Edessis* streets (in *Emporiou sq.* or *Ano Ladadika*, past *Tsimiski* street) where you will see two surviving inns. There are still traces of smoke dating to the 1917 fire on the facades of buildings fronting on the harbour!

6 TSIMISKI STREET

This main street is among the busiest downtown places and connects YMCA square (see p. 26) with Ladadika. It was constructed after the 1917 fire and has turned into the top

trade and business-oriented area of the town in the post World War II period, as this is where most of Thessaloniki's best-known shops, offices and agencies are, not to mention the variety of popular cafés and bars.

MUST SEE:

[6.1] Kazes Building.

It is situated opposite the building housing the National Bank of Greece and the Bank of Greece (see p. 17), on the corner with *I. Dragoumi Street*. It was designed by Xenophon Paionidis and built in 1924; today it houses shops and offices. On the opposite side of *I. Dragoumi Street*, there is a 1925 listed building with curved balconies.

[6.2] Agios [Saint] Minas Church.

Situated at the market centre, the church was built on the location of an early Christian basilica, of which remains only the semi-circular conch of the sanctuary and the pulpit. It was burned twice since 1806 and in 1852 it was finally shaped as a three-

11.
A street in
Ladadika area.

12.
The Passenger
Station building
(old Customs
House), by the
harbour.

13.
Agios Minas
church is right
in the heart
of the city's
traditional
shopping area.



aisled post-byzantine basilica. The interior decoration is of particular interest as it shows influences from baroque, rococo and neoclassical styles.

[6.3] The Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki.

It is housed in a 1904 historic building (V. Poselli), which survived the 1917 fire and is owned by Jews. There used to be a shopping arcade there, once, and it has –at times– housed a bank and the offices of a jewish newspaper (for museum exhibits, see p. 73).

[6.4] Venizelou street.

A very busy street linking Eleftherias sq. with the Residency since 1867 (see p. 39). It is a shopping street lined with many interesting buildings of eclectic and art deco style, mostly up to Egnatia street (see p. 34). On the north side of the junction of Venizelou and Tsimiski streets, lies the Gategno-Florentin Building, a typical example of architectural eclecticism, built in 1925, by civil engineer J.J. Pleyber. It is a four-floor building and fronts three streets.

[6.5] Pazar (Yahudi) Hamami.

It was built in the early 16th c. in the marketplace area (Pazar) where Jews (Yahudi) settled a little later, when they were banished from the Iberian Peninsula. This was a *double* hamam [with two separate sections – for men and women]. The interior has been arranged as three spaces (keeping a cold, tepid and warm temperature) and walls have been built following the Byzantine style. There is an open-air flower market there and the area has been known as Louloudadika [as *louloudia* stands for flowers].

[6.6] Chamber of Commerce & Industry (29, Tsimiski Str.).

An impressive neoclassical building, constructed in 1930, fully refurbished in 2003. Opposite stands the Hirsch Building (Arcade), also known as Totti Arcade, nowadays a shopping mall (entrance via Mitropoleos street).

[6.7] Austrian Tobacco Monopoly Warehouses.

A complex of two 1926 art deco buildings (for tobacco

warehouses in Thessaloniki see also p. 62). To change it into a shopping mall (Plateia) in 1995-1997, it was completely reshaped with only the exterior remaining unchanged. Today it houses shops, cinemas, cafés and restaurants, all of which surround the central atrium.

[6.8] Buildings on Karolou Dil [Charles Diehl] street.

At the junction of Tsimiski and Karolou Dil Streets lie impressive buildings that date to the early 20th c., now housing shops and offices; they are absolutely worth your attention.

7 TRADITIONAL MARKETS

The area west of Aristotelous street and south of Egnatia Street encompasses the town's traditional market; it is dotted with small shops, malls and arcades, most of which date back to the time of the Turkish Occupation. Today, in these much visited marketplaces, you can find all kinds of products – food and spices, fabrics, jewellery, small boutiques and also tavernas,

ouzo restaurants and coffee shops.

MUST SEE:

[7.1] Modiano Market.

It was built in 1922 by engineer E. Modiano, and it is known as Modiano Market. It is a glass-roofed rectangular edifice containing 140 food shops inside its three arcades. You will find choice traditional products here and a number of particularly popular restaurants inside the complex as well as along the perimeter.

[7.2] Vlali-Kapani & Athonos-Vatikioti Markets.

Designed by Ernest Hébrard, they intersect Aristotelous street vertically and they are connected to it via special passageways. These are complexes of two-storeyed malls with archways on the ground floor. *Vlali-Kapani market* is located on the west side of Aristotelous street, where *Un Kapani* (flour market) used to be during the time of the Turkish Occupation. This spot is a food and spices market; in the small



14 & 15.
Inside Modiano arcade [Market area] (left), you will find many a grocer's shop (right).



16.
An eclectic style building on Venizelou St.



17.
A typical local shop you will find in Bezesteni.

Vlali square you will find coffee shops and traditional restaurants. A memorial has been erected at the junction of Spandoni, Ermou and Venizelou streets, in memory of MP Gr. Lamprakis who was assassinated in May 1963. In *Vatikioti* market as well as in Athonos square, east of Aristotelous street, there are shops selling produce, spices, songbirds, packaging and shoe-making ware; in Athonos square you will find workshops selling wooden and wicker chairs as well as many tavernas and ouzo restaurants.

7.3 Bezesteni.

It lies at the corner of Solomou and Venizelou streets. It is a rectangular building with four entrances and six lead-covered domes with inscriptions of all of the craftsmen's names on them. It was built in the late 15th – early 16th c. as a textile market [bezesten] and a market of precious stones, which was guarded 24 hours a day. It has kept most of its character as there are over 110 shops in the interior as

well as in the exterior – most of them selling textiles or jewellery.

7.4 Stoa Saul.

The arcade's construction was completed in 1881 (plans by V. Poselli); after its partial destruction in the 1917 fire, it was rebuilt in 1929 (plans by C. Modiano). It combines neo-renaissance and art deco elements and initially it housed the bank of Saul Modiano and shops; today this is mostly an entertainment place.

7.5 Vas. Irakleiou – Fragkon Street.

A central road which used to be called *Fragkomachalas* [Frankish quarter] as there were many settlers from Western Europe in this area after the 13th c. It starts at Aristotelous Street and ends at Dikastirion district (see p. 59). Banks, foreign agencies and hotels used to be here at earlier times; today this is a commercial hub (including the side streets) which has evolved into an entertainment district as well, since nearby



Valaoritou Street and the neighbouring ones (*Syngrou, Vilara Streets* and others) are lined with cafés, bars and restaurants. In Syngrou Street, you will find *Chrimatistiriou Sq.* [Money-brokers sq.] and the building of **Stoa Malakopi** [Malakopi Arcade] – of neo-renaissance style- (1907, V. Poselli) which housed a bank until 1954 and commercial enterprises later on. The main feature in the centre of the pediment (in Vilara Street) is the clock which stopped at the time when the 1978 earthquake took place. In the arcade's interior you will find amusement areas and shops. At a stone's throw lies the **Catholic Church** (1898, V. Poselli), built on the location

of an older church which got destroyed in the 1917 fire. It lies in a serene yard and its 40 m. tall belfry is quite impressive. Notice the building housing the **State Conservatory of Thessaloniki** (1903), at the corner of Vas. Irakleiou and L. Sofou Streets; it was built in a neobaroque style by Turkish architects on the location of an old mansion which was blown up that year by Bulgarian nationalists as it housed the *Ottoman Bank*. Its garden is decorated with the oldest 19th c. statues found outdoors in town (named *Oikonomia* [Economy], *Pistis* [Faith] and *Triton*). Ermou St. runs parallel to Vas. Irakleiou St. and it is an interesting shopping centre.



18. Malakopi Arcade on Chrimatistiriou Sq.

19. You will find quite a few popular tavernas on Athonos Sq.

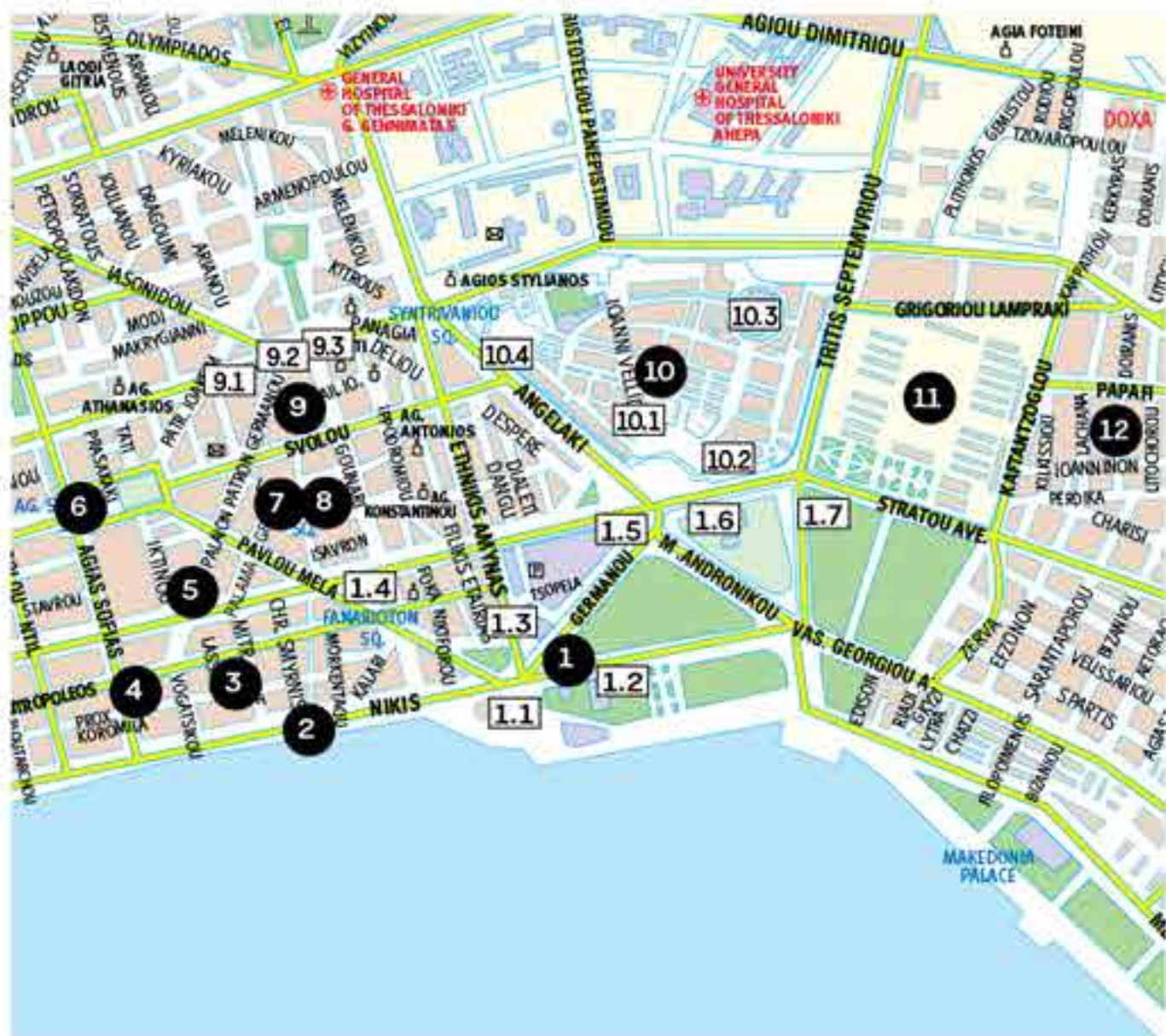
20. Traditional marketplaces in Thessaloniki offer top quality foodstuffs, vegetables and fruit.

21. A striking building dated to the early 20th c., near Bezesteni.

18

20

21



3rd walk: HISTORIC CENTRE (2) MUSEUM AREA

The area is considered as one of the most privileged places downtown on account of its proximity to the beach; it is traditionally regarded as the residential area of the well-to-do. There are many well-known shops here, green spots, as well as some of the most important museums and cultural institutions.

1 THE WHITE TOWER AREA

This central location is where major city roads meet (Nikis Ave, Megalou Alexandrou Ave., Pavlou Mela, Ethnikis Amynis, Germanou) and where the old part of the waterfront meets the new one. It affords a lovely

view of the sea; there are green areas and many shops, cafés and bars.

MUST SEE:

1.1 The White Tower.

This is the city's most famous landmark - monument. It was probably built in the late 15th c. on the location where the city's eastern and seaside walls meet; it is also believed that a tower existed there in Venetian times. It is a round six-storey construction, rising 33.90 m. high, and measuring 22.70 m. in diameter; it was surrounded by fortifications until the early 20th c. Over time, it acquired

various names; in the 19th c. it was called *Tower of the Janissaries* or *Blood Tower* as it served as jail for prisoners on death row whose life was eventually taken by the Janissaries on the ramparts. In 1890 it was painted white thus acquiring its current name. A particularly interesting exhibition is held in the Tower on the history of Thessaloniki (see p. 73); from the top of the Tower you can enjoy the panoramic view. The small square around the monument is one of the hotspots in town; this is where small **boat bars** leave for a short run within the Thermaic Gulf, serving coffee or a drink. Opposite lies the **Park of the White Tower** where you will find the open air *Municipal Garden Theatre*, a bar, a playground and a skate spot.

1.2 Royal [Vasiliko] Theatre.

It was built in 1940, got renovated in 1996, and it has a seating capacity of 800. This is one of the winter halls (Melina Merkouri Hall) of the State Theatre of Northern Greece (S.T.N.G., see p. 110).

1.3 Ethnikis Amynis Street.

It leads from the White Tower to Synterivaniou Square (see p. 37) and to Agiou Dimitriou Street (see p. 39). It was laid out after the 1889 demolition of the eastern city walls (a section of its Byzantine ramparts still stands on *Filikis Etaireias* Street which runs parallel to Ethnikis Amynis Street. Until 1912 it was called *Hamidiye Boulevard*, in honour of the Sultan Abdul Hamid II, as all the buildings along the street were his property. Today, this is the location of the Theatre of the **Society for Macedonian Studies** (1962, V. Kassandras) housing the *State Theatre of Northern Greece* (S.T.N.G.) as well as the *Gallery of the S.M.S.* (see p. 77), and the adjacent Building A' of the S.M.S. (1951, A. Nikolopoulos), the **Hellenic Army Club** (1953, P. Mylonas) and **Alexandros cinema**. The small **Tsirogiannis Park** is situated nearby and around it you will find some popular cafés and bars.

1.4 Diagonios.

This typical downtown



quarter covers the area around the junction of *Tsimiski* and *Pavlou Mela* streets. It was named after the diagonal tracing of P. Mela street.

1.5 YMCA Building.

This emblematic building (1934) houses the Young Men's Christian Association of Thessaloniki. It bears a significant mixture of elements of neo-colonial and byzantine architecture. The building also houses *Avlaia theatre*; among the surrounding constructions are an outdoor basketball field and a tennis court, an indoor gym and a cultural centre. In front of the building lies the small YMCA square. The **Armenian Church** (1903, V. Poselli) is at a very short distance, between *Dialetti* and *Ant. Kamara* Streets.

1.6 Archaeological Museum.

It was designed by P. Karantinos, a major Greek architect, and it was inaugurated in 1962. Inspired by the ancient Greek Revival Architectural style, it is considered as one of the most typical examples of modernist

architectural design in Greece. An annex was added in 1980 and in 2003 the museum was extensively remodelled to accommodate contemporary needs. There are rooms for periodic exhibitions, events and educational programmes, a café and a shop (see p.70 for museum exhibits).

1.7 Museum of Byzantine Culture.

It was built during the years 1989 – 1993, following the designs of architect K. Krokos. It combines elements of modernism and Greek architectural tradition and it is considered one of the best contemporary constructions meant for public use in Greece. In 2001 it was declared a *listed historic monument* and a work of art. Inside there is a small amphitheatre, a café-restaurant and a wing for hosting periodic exhibitions (see p. 71 for museum exhibits). The adjacent building is the new **Town Hall** (inaugurated in 2009); at the back there is a **park** (formerly named *Pedion Areos*, a section of an old military camp), with a playground, a small lake and

a café as well as the *eclectic-style (military) building* at the corner of Vas. Georgiou and Kaftanzoglou Streets, now housing the local branch of the Greek Scouts.

2 NIKIS AVENUE (see p. 16)

3 SHOPPING STREETS

In the area including *Proxenou Koromila* and *Mitropoleos* roads and the adjacent streets such as *Palaion Patron Germanou-Vogatsikou*, *Chrysostomou Smymis*, *Mitropolitou Iosif*, *Lassani*, *Agias Sofias*, *Karolou Dil* (lined with remarkable buildings of the interwar period) and *Tsimiski* street, you will find some of the most expensive shops (selling clothes, shoes, jewellery, furniture, accessories etc) as well as a number of the most well-known shopping malls in the city. You will also find haute couture boutiques by Greek and foreign designers and several art galleries. Thessalonians visit the area for their shopping as they

go out for a coffee, a meal or a drink in the numerous hangouts lining the streets.

4 MUSEUM FOR THE MACEDONIAN STRUGGLE

The building is among the very few purely neo-classical ones in town; it was built in the years 1890-1893 to plans by Ernst Ziller after the 1890 fire. Until 1912 this building housed the Greek General Consulate and during the period 1923-1978 it provided the space for the state elementary schools. After that, the facility has housed collections of the Museum (see p. 74). Right next to it, you will see the metropolitan church of **Agios Gregorios Palamas** (1914, plans by E. Ziller and Xen. Paionidis); it is classified as a Byzantine domed octagon type with neo-Romanic and neo-classical elements. Behind the church, at the corner of *Vogatsikou* and *Mitropoleos* streets, you will see the **Ecclesiastical Museum of the Metropolitan Church of Thessaloniki**, where a major collection of

23.
The Y.M.C.A.
building.
Notice the
neo-byzantine
architectural
elements.

24.
A panoramic
view of the
Archaeological
Museum of
Thessaloniki.



icons, church heritage items and relics are on display.

5 TSIMISKI STREET

(see p. 19)

6 AGIA SOFIA SQUARE

This beautiful square, adorned with greenery, has been shaped after the 1890 fire and encompasses the grounds of Agia Sofia church (see p. 9) and sections of *Ermou Street* (up to Kar. Dil Street) as well as *Agias Sofias Street* (up to Egnatia Street). Agias Sofias St. is pedestrianised up to Tsimiski Street. Halfway the street there is a monument in memory of the *Genocide of Pontic Greeks* (2006, El. Valvi); several buildings around it are also very interesting, such as the 1925 *Longos Building* (the Red House) located at the corner of Ermou and Agias Sofias streets, and the 1924 *Chatzidimitriou Building* (at the point where Ermou and Kar. Dil Streets meet). The square is also the location where *Pavlou Mela* and *Iktinou* (pedestrian zone) Streets begin; along with the adjacent *Zefxidos Street* they are a hot spot area

for buys, or a coffee, a drink or a meal.

7 NAVARINOU SQUARE

This place is traditionally considered as a student area and one of the *alternative* places in town. Cafés, bars full of atmosphere, tavernas, ouzo restaurants, cinema theatres and concert halls are to be found around the square that faces the *Palace of Galerius*, and also in the nearby streets (*Gounari pedestrian zone*, *Gonata*, *Vyronos*, *Isavron*, *I. Michail*, *Theochari Streets*). Visit also the book shops in the area as well as other interesting places selling records, antiques, clothes etc. In the square's centre there is a fountain adorned by the sculpture titled "The whistling child" and a small playground. Notice the perspective from Gounari Street towards Kamara and Rotunda and also towards the sea. Make a point of visiting the neighbouring church of *Nea* (or *Megali*) *Panagia* (at the intersection of Gounari and Mitropoleos Streets) dating back to 1727.

8 PALACE OF GALERIUS

It is an open-air archaeological museum located in the heart of town. Its construction began in the late 3rd – early 4th c. by Galerius and is part of the **Galerian Complex** (area: 150,000 m²) which included the Hippodrome, the Arch or Kamara (see p. 37) and Rotunda (see p. 10), as well as other buildings to suit various purposes, now situated under modern structures. Until its destruction in the 7th c., other emperors stayed here besides Galerius, (such as Theodosios I and others). It is considered as one of the major monuments of the Late Antiquity, nationwide.

MUST SEE:

8.1 Octagon.

This was a throne and audience hall with a double-apsed anteroom and an octagonal shape. It boasts an exceptional interior decoration and elaborate floors. It used to communicate with the sea via a propylaeum and a large peristyle, part of which is the

impressive marble decorative arch with Galerius' bust on display at the Archaeological Museum (see p. 70).

8.2 Colonnaded yard.

There were rooms on its three sides. Stoas with tessellated floors isolated the atrium from other constructions.

8.3 Tank.

This two-storeyed building was used as a cistern for collecting water from the roofs of the palace and the Basilica.

8.4 Basilica.

This monumental building too was used as an official audience hall. The outstanding tessellated floors in the arcade are particularly interesting.

8.5 Bath house.

Located next to Basilica, the construction included rooms for bathing with cold, tepid and hot water and an entrance hall with a fountain.

8.6 Hippodrome.

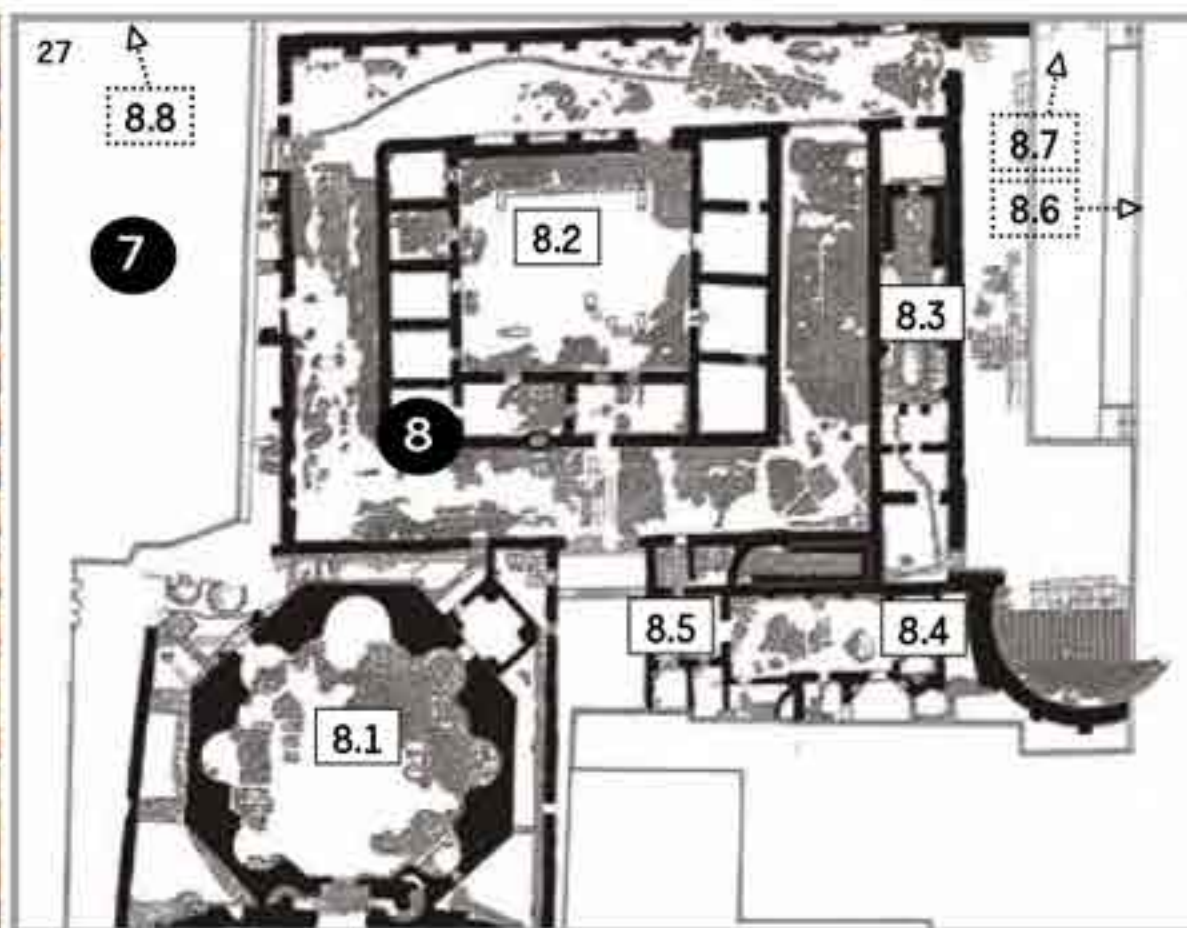
Fragments of the construction remain under the blocks of



25.
The Red House and the monument of the Pontic Greeks Genocide on Agia Sofia Sq.



26.
A detail from the Palace of Galerius.



27.
A plan of the Palace of Galerius and its environs.

flats facing the adjacent *Ippodromiou square*. This was a 450 m. long and a 95 m. wide structure and it used to be the centre of social activity for citizens until 390 AD, when emperor Theodosius ordered the massacre of 7,000 Thessalonians there; the event led to the close-down of the Hippodrome. It is worth visiting the *Thessaloniki History Centre*, situated in the square's south side as well as the remarkable 18th c. **Agios Antonios** church in Margariti street nearby.

[8.7] Arched Hall.

It lies at the intersection of Gounari and Svolou streets. This was a place with heating installations for holding symposia and ceremonies. It had a direct access to the imperial box in the Hippodrome.

[8.8] Theatre - stadium in Apellou Street.

The remains of a building have been located at 5 & 7 Apellou St., and they are considered to have been part of the theatre-stadium of the town, which was in use from

the 1st until the 4th c. AD. There are references connecting this place with the martyrdom of Agios Dimitrios, the city's patron saint.

9 THREE CHURCHES

On the south side of Egnatia Street, between K. *Palaiologou* St. (to the west) and *Agapinou* St. (to the east) there are three interesting churches at a short distance from each other that are definitely worth visiting.

MUST SEE:

[9.1] Panagouda Church (Panagia Gorgoeepikoos

– Our Lady Quick to Hear) – also called the Church of Mikri Panagia. This building (1818) was erected on the spot of an older church destroyed by fire in 1789, and it was located at the heart of the city's Greek quarters during the Turkish Occupation. According to 12th – 14th c. historical references, this used to be the location of the Monastery of Panagia Gorgoeepikoos and it is still known by that name. Next to it you will see the historic neoclassical building of the

Greek Highschool (1893).

[9.2] The Transfiguration of Christ Church

(see p. 10)

[9.3] The Presentation of the Lord Church.

It was built in 1840, on the spot where a chapel had been constructed in 1543 dedicated to Saint Joel. Today only the chapel's holy doors still remain, depicting the Annunciation (according to the Cretan School of Art). The church lies on the same level as Egnatia Street during the Byzantine times. The icon screen depicts the Annunciation and dates back to 1843; the five larger icons were crafted in 1943.

10 THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL FAIR (TIF)

It was inaugurated in 1926 in nearby Pedio Areos; in 1940 though, increasing needs led to its relocation in today's facilities; in 1951 it assumed its activities after a break during the war. During the 50's and 60's many pavilions were built, based on the

commands of the modern times; they were planned by major Greek architects such as A. Konstantinidis, N. Valsamakis, I. Rizos, P. Tsolakis, D. Kapsampelis, A. Zannos etc. Moreover, the TIF grounds house two modern **convention centres**, namely **Ioannis Vellidis** offering seating for 2,100 and **Nikolaos Germanos** with seating for 400. You can enter through the gate on the YMCA square, the one on Angelaki street or through the two gates on Egnatia street (for TIF, see p. 108).

MUST SEE:

[10.1] Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art.

It was established in 1979 and it is the first museum of modern art in Greece. Since 2001, it has been housed in a building that covers a 4,000m² area. In the courtyard there are modern sculptures, such as "Umbrellas", a construction of moveable parts with water. (1995, G. Zongolopoulos, see also p. 51); there are also roman graves and a road on display dating to the 2nd – 3rd c. AD (for museum collections



28.
The
Macedonian
Museum of
Contemporary
Art.

29.
View of the
Thessaloniki
International
Trade Fair
facilities.

30.
The OTE Tower
commanding
the city.



and exhibits, see p. 76).

10.2 OTE [Hellenic Telecommunications Organisation] Tower.

It was built in 1969 to plans by architect Al. Anastasiadis, as the Organisation's exhibition pavilion, and for covering the city's telecom needs. It dominates against the city's horizon as it reaches a 70-metre height – including the antenna. Its storeys house radio stations and at a higher level there is a caffè with a rotating floor (completes a revolution in 70 min.), where the city and seafront views are amazing. At a very short distance lies the **Radio Museum** which is worth your visit (see the exhibits on p. 78).

10.3 Alexandreio Melathron.

Also known as Palais des Sports, this sports arena is located on the NE side of the Thessaloniki International Fair grounds. Constructed in 1966, it has played an active part in Thessaloniki's history ever since, as major sporting, art as well as political events have

taken place in it over the years. It is a round edifice with a seating for 4,800, and it used to be the largest indoor sports arena in Greece until 1985. Today, it is the home ground of *Aris* basketball team.

10.4 Angelaki Street.

It runs along T.I.F.'s west side and it is lined with cafés and bars that are particularly popular with students at the adjacent University campus. This is also where several radio stations have their main offices as well as *ERT3* – the state-owned TV station. At the location where Angelaki and Egnatia Streets cross (Syntrivaniou sq, see p. 37) you will notice the impressive 18-metre tall *sculpture*, (1966, G. Zongolopoulos).

11 3rd ARMY CORPS

It is outlined by 3rd *Septemvriou*, *Stratou*, *Kaftantzoglou* and *Lampraki Streets* and it covers part of the former *Pedio Areos*. The **main building** (Headquarters) in *Stratou Ave.* was built in the years 1900 – 1902 by the Italian architect V. Poselli

to be used as the Turkish army barracks. In 1916 – 1917 it served for several months as the seat of the temporary "Government of National Defence" led by El. Venizelos. The **War Museum** is housed in a building, designed by V. Poselli during the same period, in *Lampraki Street*, (see p. – for museum exhibits). Under the west side of 3rd *Septemvriou Ave.* paved surface there are visible remains of a **cemetery basilica** (4th – 7th c.) as well as of a *grave of a Christian martyr*.

12 PAPAFI AREA

It extends east of the grounds of the 3rd Army Corps and it was named after Papafeio Orphanage that once dominated the area.

MUST SEE:

O Melitefs Papafeio Orphanage (33, *Papafi* and *Katsimidou Sts.*). Construction was completed in 1903 (to plans by Xen. Paionidis), after a bequest made by a Thessalonian called I. Papafis (1792 – 1866) who lived

and died in Malta (former name: *Meliti*). This is a typical classical style building with three floors and a propylaeum in the main entrance. It served as a male boarding school and it was also used as military barracks and hospital. It is surrounded by impressive gardens with a small church built there of late.

YFANET textile factory. Located at a short distance from *Papafeio Orphanage*, the factory covered an area of 4,000 m² and used to be one of the largest textile units in Macedonia from 1926 until 1964 when it was closed down and deserted. Plans are made to transfer here the *State Museum of Contemporary Art* (see p. 75). Until this is done, locals use the place as a venue for various events and there is also a library, a reading room and a caffè. At a short distance you can visit one of the very few remaining *macedonian tombs* (3rd c. BC) that were unearthed in the town at the corner of *Papanastasiou* and *Omiron Sts.*, as well as the remarkable 1891 neoclassical edifice of *Ippokrateio Hospital* at 49, *Konstantinoupoleos St.*



31. Papafeio Orphanage after which the surrounding area was named.
32. Exterior view of Alexandreio Melathron Sports Arena (aka Palais des Sports or Nick Galis Hall).



4th walk: HISTORIC CENTRE (3)

1 EGNATIA STREET

This central avenue has been there practically since Thessaloniki's founding, as it is a section of the road constructed by the Romans in the 2nd c. BC, and connected Dyrrhachium (Durrës, in modern day Albania) with Constantinople. It starts at Dimokratia square (see p. 58) and ends at the TIF grounds (see p. 31) and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, splitting in two the town's historic centre. It is a busy shopping area with numerous remarkable buildings of eclectic and art deco style dating to the early 20th c. (mostly old hotels) that are absolutely worth observing, as well as some of the city's most important monuments.

MUST SEE:

1.1 Kolomvou Square.

The crossroads where Egnatia Street meets

Antigonidon Street is indeed a bustling one! It was named after G. Colombo, an Italian who opened a hotel there in the early 20th century. This is the location of **Kolomvou Archway** (31, Egnatia St.) which has become a leisure hub with cafés, bars and restaurants inside.

1.2 Hamza Bey Mosque.

It was built in 1467 by the daughter of Hamza Bey, the military commander of Sultan Murad II. It is the only mosque in Greece with a peristyle (a colonnaded yard). For many decades it housed a cinema named *Alkazar*. Currently there are renovation works under way. Once they are finished, it will house an exhibition of finds unearthed during the metro excavations. Right behind it you will see the City Manor which housed the Town Hall until recently. It is known at *Karavan Serai* as there used to be an ottoman inn here. (early 16th c.).

1.3 Plateia Dikastirion [Court house square].

A spacious green square situated towards the end of Aristotelous Street. The Hébrard plans placed construction of the Court House as well as of other state buildings on this location (to create a civic centre); in 1966, however, excavations on the spot revealed the Ancient Roman Forum and the process was halted. In the centre of the square stands the imposing *bust of Eleftherios Venizelos* (1977, G. Pappas), who remained a prime minister of Greece for more than 12 years during the period 1910 – 1932. There are small copper workshops in the adjacent *Chalkeon* and *Kleisouras* Streets, and their business has been an ongoing tradition since the byzantine period.

1.4 Panagia [Virgin Mary] Chalkeon.

(see p. 9)

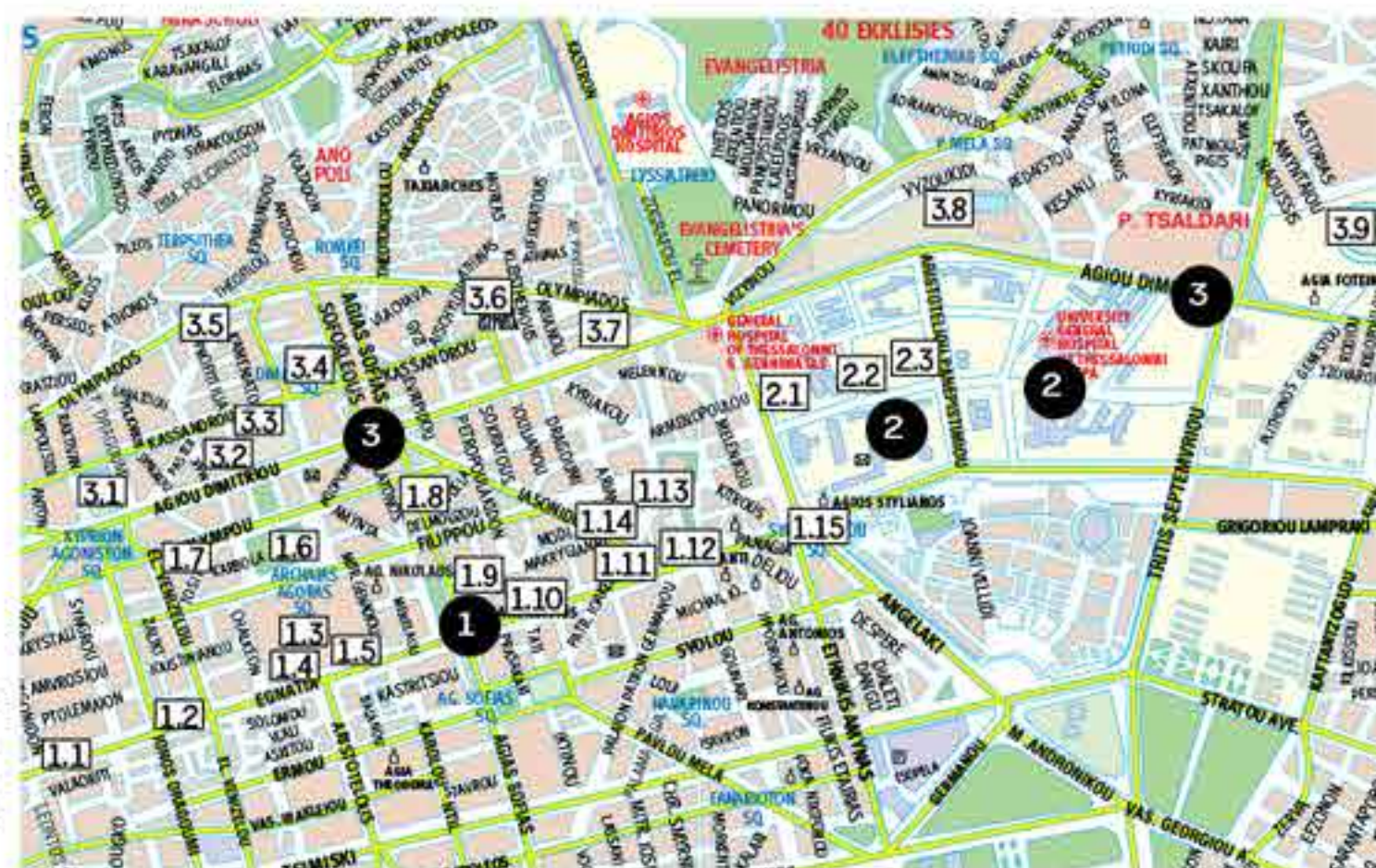
1.5 Bey Hamami.

It lies on the SE side of Plateia Dikastirion. This impressive edifice was built in 1444 and it is the country's largest

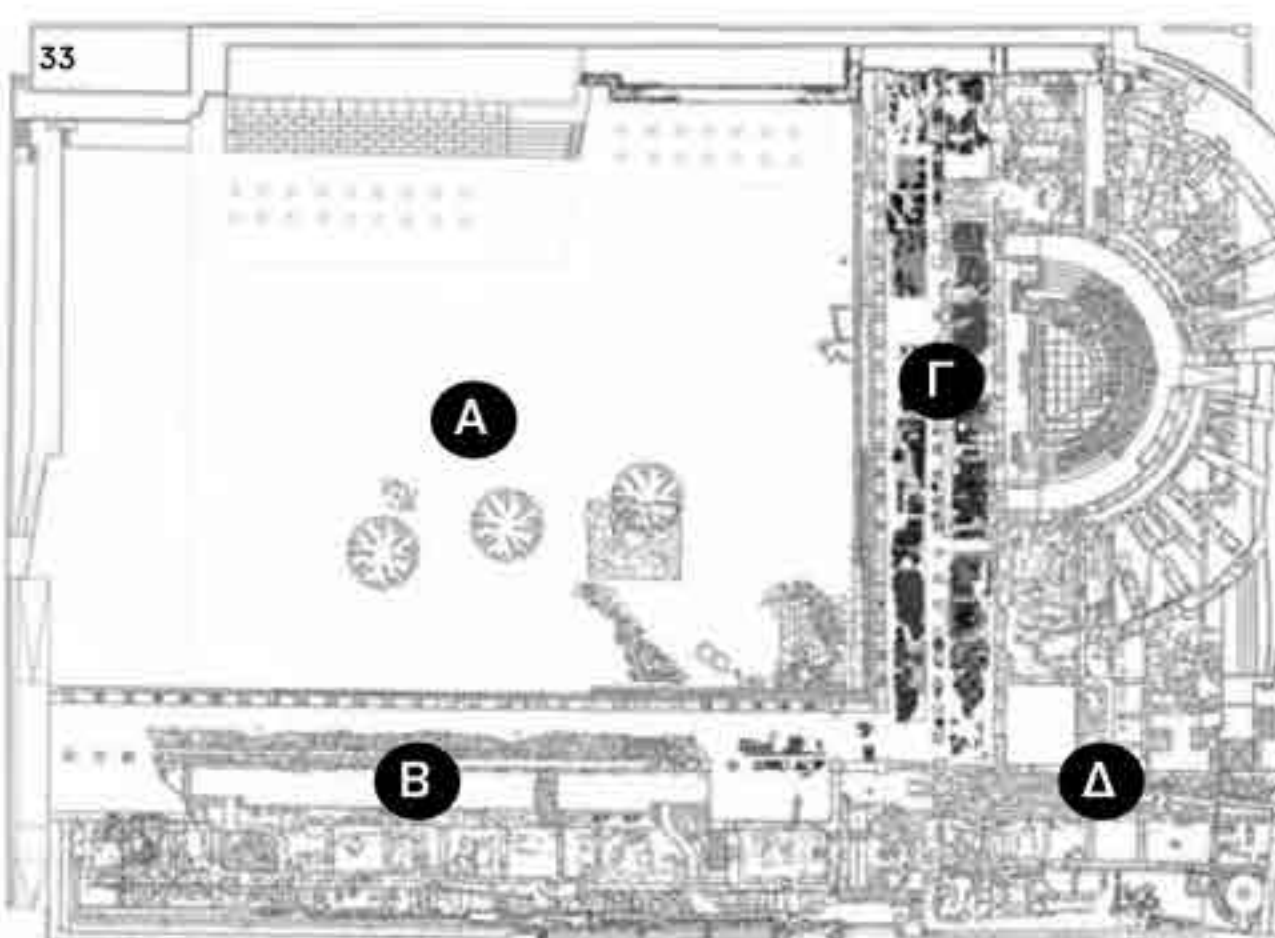
ottoman bath house, a multi-domed construction with separate rooms for males and females, structured along two parallel ways. It is divided in three sections (cold, tepid and hot areas) and there is also a vaulted tank for heating water. It is widely known as the *Paradise Baths* and it went by that name until 1968. Right next to it there is a *roman platform* that is indicative of the ground level 2000 years ago.

1.6 Roman (Ancient) Forum

During the roman period, this 2-hectare area used to be the social and religious centre of the city. Construction was completed in two phases (in the mid-2nd and mid-3rd centuries AD) and it was gradually abandoned after the 7th century. The NW section of the archaeological site is covered by a large rectangular **square [A]** with traces of marble paving. In the S section of the square lies the largest part of the double underground **Cryptoporticus [covered passageway] [B]** which was most probably used as a public storehouse. On one of its walls a valuable *early Christian mural* was uncovered and this shows



33.
A plan of
the Roman
(Ancient)
Forum of
Thessaloniki.





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that the place had been used by Christians as well, during the late Roman period. South of the passageway there were shops dating from the 1st until the 13th century; the underground *Museum of the Roman Forum* (see p. 71) was built there as an extension. A 2nd - 4th c. AD **Odeon [C]** was found behind the well-preserved **eastern stoa**. It has been restored and it is now used as a venue for cultural events. A **mint** and an **archive office** are right next to it. In the SE side, a round **bath house [D]** was unearthed which has been in use since the 1st c. BC. Parts of a *colonnade, mosaic floors, marble stairs, a section of a stone-paved street, sewer pipes, silver coins, stone and marble sculptures* were all found in this archaeological site. The forum is also where the **"Enchanted Ones"** (las Incantadas) were discovered, a two-storeyed colonnaded archway with Corinthian-order columns and pillars four of which have survived. They are decorated with figures in relief in their interior as well as their exterior side ("Stoa of the Statuettes"). It is estimated that the Stoa's location was

at the south entrance to the forum (from Egnatia Street); in 1864 the pillars were removed and escorted to their present location at the Louvre Museum (Paris) by E. Miller.

1.7 Bit-Pazar.

An edifice with lots of atmosphere, Bit Pazar (meaning Small Market place) is a spot where the town's antique shops are to be found. Its ground level was constructed in 1930 and higher floors were added in the 1960s. Facing the inner square and lining the surrounding streets namely *Tositsa* (where the main entrance is), *Venizelou* and *Olympou*, there are many second-hand shops, antique dealers' and furniture shops. In recent years the variety of restaurants, ouzo tavernas and café-bars has made it a hot spot particularly among students. Within a short distance (at 35, Syngrou St.) you will see the **Jewish Monastirioton Synagogue** the only one to have survived the 2nd World War.

1.8 Experimental School.

It was built following the plans of D. Pikionis, a leading Greek architect, from 1936 until

1970. It combines elements of modern and traditional Macedonian architecture with references to the style of the Mount Athos monasteries.

1.9 Acheiropoiitos church. (see p. 9)

1.10 Agios [Saint] Athanasios church.

This timber-roofed church is located in the SE side of Acheiropoiitos church. It was built in 1818 as a three-aisled basilica and until 1880 there were ruins of an ancient structure in the churchyard. It is now a parish church.

1.11 Nedelkou Building.

(109, Egnatia st.). This 1909 building is a two-storeyed piece of fine architecture (Xen. Paionidis). In the past, the ground floor housed shops and the 1st floor was the house of the Nedelkou family. It combines renaissance, baroque, neoclassical and art-nouveau elements and has an interesting interior decoration. Today it houses the **Mount Athos Centre** where the stay permits are issued to those who wish to visit the Mount Athos monasteries (see p. 92);

there is also a bookshop and an exhibition area.

1.12 Galerius Arch (Kamara).

One of the town's major landmarks, this arch is the usual rendezvous place for locals. It was built in 295-305 AD following the incontestable victory of Galerius over the Persians and it was a monumental arch on the north side of his palatial complex (see p. 28). Its west section still stands and you can see embossed depictions of Galerius' military successes. It is connected to Rotunda via a wide pedestrian way. Right next to it lies **Panagia Dexia** church (1950s), built on the location of a postbyzantine church. In it there is a rare icon of Panagia (Virgin Mary) holding little Jesus on her **right** side.

1.13 Rotunda. (see p. 10)

1.14 Agios [Saint] Panteleimon (see p. 11)

1.15 Plateia Synttrivaniou [Fountain Square].

It was named after the marble fountain with the obelisk, located

34.
The renovated
Roman Forum
Odeon.

35.
The Arch
of Galerius
(Kamara)
decorated with
relief carvings.

36.
The fountain
[Synttrivani]
in the square
named after it.



at the centre of this transport hub. It was built in 1866 by Sultan Hamid as a gift to the city and it was at that time situated outside the east walls (Cassander's Gate). During the Interwar Period a large part of it was removed to make Egnatia Street wider; it was restored to its original shape in 1977.

2 ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI (AUTH).

This is the first University Campus in Greece (covering a 50 hectare area) to have been built following complete architectural plans. It was planned to be constructed on the location of the old Jewish cemetery (see p. 61), according to the Hébrard committee plan; construction finally began in 1938, yet the works were interrupted during the war and resumed in the 1950s. Since then, several buildings were erected on these grounds by leading Greek architects following mostly the Modernist design, such as the main Administration Buildings as well as those built for the Schools of Chemistry, Law,

Theology and Education and the two buildings of the Main Library; all the above form a major ensemble of modern architecture. Today there are over 100,000 enrolled students (the biggest campus in Greece) who add verve and youthfulness to the city.

MUST SEE:

2.1 Old Building of the Faculty of Philosophy.

This impressive construction took place in 1887, designed by V. Poselli. In 1908, two two-storey side wings were added and in 1927 the then newly established University of Thessaloniki (1925) was moved here from its former seat in Allatini Villa (see p. 54). A number of schools of the Faculty of Philosophy of the AUTH are housed in this building today.

2.2 Museums of the A.U.Th.

Plaster casts of ancient sculptures and copies of miniature art, murals dating from the Minoan up to the Byzantine period as well as Byzantine icons are all on display at the **Cast Museum**. The **Geology & Paleontology**

Museum houses exhibits of human skulls, known worldwide to have been found in the area of Axios river (aged 9.5 million years) and in the Petralona Cave (see p. 92), aged approx. 200,000 – 400,000 years. Other similar places are the **Biblical, Folk Art, and Criminology** Museums, noteworthy theatre, Modern Greek literature and Education Academy **archives**, and also **collections** of manuscripts, books etc.

2.3 Observatory.

One of the finest buildings of the A.U.Th. complex is this one, constructed in 1954 to plans by I. Triantafyllides; its circular shape bears a direct reference to Rotunda.

3 AGIOU DIMITRIOU STREET

This large road in the north section of the historic centre is one of the oldest in the city. There are many a beautiful block of flats dating to the Interwar Period in the surrounding area, that have survived the postwar increased building activities, particularly on *Pasteur, Profitis*

Ilias and *Kameniatou* Streets. In recent decades, emigrants settled in Kassandrou Street and the neighbouring area, mostly coming from Eastern Europe, and opened shops and small restaurants, adding a multinational colour to the area.

MUST SEE:

3.1 Dioikitirio.

It was built in 1891 by architect V. Poselli to be used as the ottoman Administration House [Konaki] of the city. The style is neoclassical with renaissance features and originally it was a three-storey building (the fourth floor was added in 1955). Today it houses the Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace where protest marches usually wind up. In 1990, following excavations which took place in the square in front of Dioikitirio, fragments of roman, early-christian, byzantine and ottoman houses were unearthed; this shows that the area has always been the administrative centre of the city.

3.2 Agios Dimitrios [Saint Demetrius]

(see p. 11)



37.
The grand building of the Faculty of Philosophy, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

38.
View of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki campus area.

39.
The neoclassical building of Dioikitirio [Government House].

[3.3] Yeni Hamam (Aigli).

It was built in 1531 on the site of a roman or byzantine bath. Only 1/3 of the building remains, and the two domed halls were joined into one in the 20th c., given that until 1944-45 it was used as a bathing place for males and females. It is known as *Aigli*, the name it had when it was a cinema and later a multi-purpose hall.

[3.4] Alaca Imaret.

It was built in 1484, according to an inscription located above the main entrance. Named after a poorhouse (*imaret* in turkish) located on the grounds, it featured a minaret adomed with multi-coloured (*alaca* in turkish) stones, the only remaining part of which is the base. Surrounded by tall blocks of flats in recent years, this imposing building is an example of symmetric, skilled masonry and includes a central hall with two rounded domes and an arcade covered with five cupolas. Occasionally, it becomes the venue for exhibitions and cultural events.

[3.5] Profitis Ilias [Prophet Elijah] Church

(see p. 12)

[3.6] Panagia Lagoudiani Church (Virgin Mary Guiding All Men).

This small three-aisled Byzantine basilica is located on the outskirts of Ano Poli. This 14th c. monastery *katholikon* [main church] took its current shape in the 19th c. It was named after Lagoudatos, the man who founded it, or –according to another story- after a hare [Lagos in Greek – compare Lagos with *Lagoudiani*] who led to the finding of the icon of Panagia. *Odigitria* (Virgin Mary Guiding All Men) as well as Saint Demetrius are honoured as patron saints of the city.

[3.7] Ataturk Museum.

It is adjacent to the building of the Turkish consulate (75, Ap. Pavlou St.). This three-storey residence was built in the late 19th c. and it was the house of Kemal Ataturk, born in Thessaloniki (1880? - 1938). In the yard, you will see a pomegranate tree his father had planted there. It is a building now painted in its original colour - pink - and houses

42



a small museum dedicated to the founder of the modern Turkish state. To visit it you need an identity card or passport (for museum exhibits, see p. 74).

[3.8] Teloglion Foundation of Art.

Built on elevated ground in the north side of the Campus, it is a modern building complex covering a 3,200 m² area and it was inaugurated in 1998. There are spacious exhibition areas, an amphitheatre, a library – reading room, as well as rooms for research and educational programmes, a shop and a café-restaurant (for the foundation's collections see p. 76). Thessaloniki's *National Swimming Pool* is located east of Teloglion.

[3.9] Kaftanzogleio Stadium.

It was built in 1960, following a donation by L. Kaftanzoglou, a member of a very old family of Thessaloniki; until 1982 this used to be the largest stadium in the country in terms of capacity. It is the home ground of *Iraklis* team which was founded in 1908 – the city's oldest football team! This stadium was one of the official sports fields for the Athens Olympic Games in 2004 and it is often used for domestic and international sports events. The **Olympic Museum of Thessaloniki** is located within a short distance, where Agiou Dimitriou and 3rd Septemvriou Streets cross (see museum exhibits on p. 78).

40

40 & 41. Kemal Atatürk's house (left) is a museum nowadays and houses an atmospheric café (right).



41



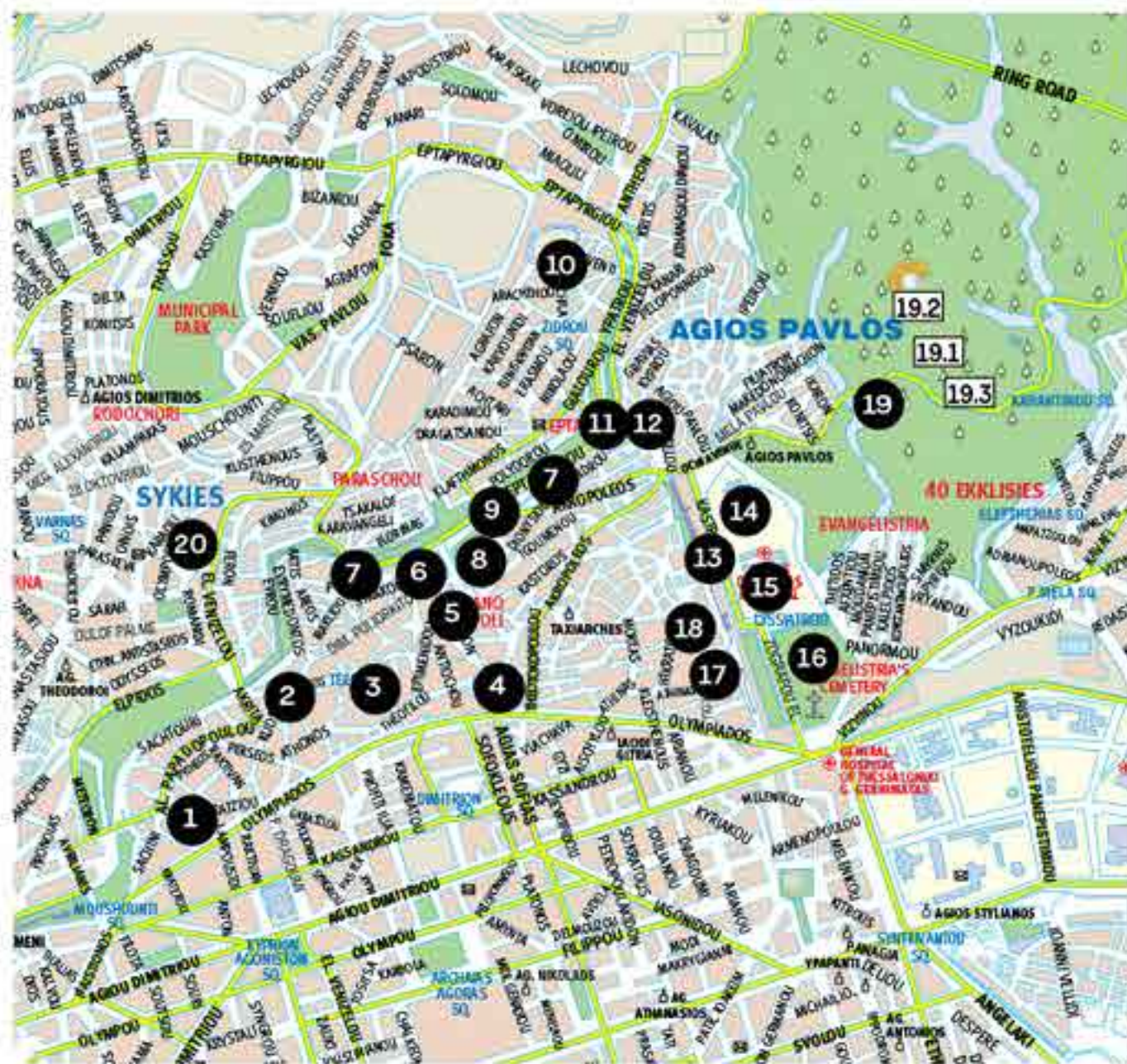
43



41

42. Kaftanzogleio Stadium is the largest one in the city.

43. Teloglion Foundation of Art.



5th walk: ANO POLI (OLD TOWN)

Thessaloniki's Old Town is full of atmosphere. It covers the area in between the city walls (to the north and east) and Olympiados Street (to the south), and has had the luck to remain untouched by the 1917 great fire. It was virtually uninhabited until the mid-15th century, when it was conquered by the Ottomans who selected it for settlement on account of its fine climate, panoramic views and strategic position. The two and three-storey houses bear mixed Macedonian and Ottoman architectural elements (*sahnisia*) [*Şahnış* in Turkish]; there are also residences with neoclassical and eclectic style motifs where the *Dönme* lived, i.e.

44. The bust of Vasilis Tsitsanis has been placed in the square named after the composer, in Ano Poli.

45. One of the refugee houses built along the line of the city walls (Ano Poli).

converts to Islam who secretly remained Jews. After 1922 many refugees settled in the area. Despite the construction of newer buildings and the opening up of new streets in recent decades, it has kept its original town planning, to a large extent, with narrow alleys and scant squares, as well as its original architectural features, particularly in the west and east part of the town. This particular atmosphere has lured intellectuals, artists and students who chose it for settlement in recent years.

1 AGIA AIKATERINI [SAINT CATHERINE] CHURCH

(see p. 12)

2 TSINARI

This area was named after the plane tree which was planted there in the early 20th c. (*çınar* is Turkish for plane tree). You can reach it through Al. Papadopoulou Street, one of Ano Poli's hallmark areas as are *Tsamadou*, *Sachtouri* and *Isminis* Streets. In *Isminis* Street you will find the House of Pontian Greeks. This is Ano Poli's downtown spot and people who want to reach the neighbouring Sykies area go through here. In the centre, there is an Ottoman fountain with a marble Roman sarcophagus; this is also where you will find the oldest restaurant in town (open since 1885), a café and small shops.

3 TERPSITHEA SQUARE

Take a good look at the remarkable listed buildings and the more recent ones as you walk along *Pileos* Street and head for Terpsithea Square. The buildings surrounding the square are amazing and offer a wonderful view of the town and the seafront; in the centre there is a playground and a small open-air theatre. Another impressive monument

is the *Türbe* (Tomb) of Musha Baba (1543), one of the late Ottoman monuments of Thessaloniki, shaped as an octagon with decorative pointed frames on windows and a once lead-covered dome.

4 ROMFEI SQUARE

This is Ano Poli's central square. To reach it, take *Theofilou* Street where the neoclassical building housing the Vice-Mayor's office for Culture is located. In the square, you will see a Byzantine bath-house known as *Koule Kafe* (see p. 12); the entire area has been named after it. On the NE side of the square (7, *Krispou* st.) you will notice the architectural masterpiece of a 19th c. neoclassical building which houses the municipal *Library of Ano Poli*. On *Theotokopoulou* Street, near the square lies the 14th c. Byzantine church of the Taxiarchs [Archangels] which used to be a monastery *katholikon* [main church] and has undergone later changes.

5 HOSIOS [VENERABLE] DAVID Church

(Moni Latomou, see p. 13)



6 TSITSANI SQUARE

This small square with beautiful, well-tended houses is located in between Moni Vlatadon and Hosios David where you can go if you take *Timotheou* Street (notice the ottoman fountain) and *Dimitriou Poliorkitou* Street. In the square centre you will see the bust of V. Tsitsanis (1915 – 1984) a leading Greek popular composer who lived and worked in the town during World War II.

7 EPTAPYRGIOU STREET

This is one of the most interesting roads of Ano Poli quarter. It follows the interior line of the northern city walls which used to be the ramparts of the Acropolis (see also p. 14 for the city walls). It is worth taking a walk from the corner of Eptapyrgiou and Palamidiou Streets (to the west) where the 3rd Gate is – also known as “*Eski Delik*” – and head for the main Gate. Besides the interesting traditional buildings and the deserted *Zihne Camii* [Mosque] (1902) you will pass by the old refugee houses called “*kastroplika*”; these were built along the line of the city walls or

adjoining them – as far back as the early 1920's. Similar houses can be seen also on the eastern and western walls.

8 MONI VLATADON

(see p. 13)

9 PORTARA

This is one of the two main gates (the other one is *Eski Delik*) on the northern city walls. Near the gates, the construction of the walls was done particularly carefully and many spots were decorated with ceramics, inscriptions etc which can be seen best from *Polydorou* Street. This location is a very busy road junction and you will find tourist shops and tavernas nearby.

10 ACROPOLIS – EPTAPYRGIO (YEDI KULE)

This impressive fortified area is situated on the NE end of the city walls, within the *acropolis* – one of the few remaining citadels that are still populated worldwide. To get there from Portara, follow *Polydorou* Street, alongside the northern walls and then take

Gialourou and *Erasmou* Streets. Eptapyrgio was built in the 12th c., presumably on an older 9th c. fortress and took this name as at first there were seven towers there. The current structure includes ten towers and a small street that goes around it. The north side used to be a part of the city's Early Christian walls, whereas the towers on the south side were added during the Byzantine period. In 1431, the Ottoman Turks made certain modifications to them, according to an inscription placed above the entrance. Circa 1890 the construction was changed in order to house long-term convicts and newer buildings were added on the inside as well as on the outside area. In 1989, the prison, known by its Turkish name – *Yedi Kule*, was housed elsewhere and the fortress became a monument open to visitors. It is well worth crossing the ring dirt road of the fortress where an *early Christian cistern* remains as well as parts of an *early Christian basilica* – the spot affords a lovely view!

11 PALAIOLOGINA'S GATE

To reach Trigoniou Tower, you will go past the picturesque *Agioi Anargyroi* square, under

a blanket of plane trees, where you will see *Agioi Anargyroi* church and small, traditional *caffés* and restaurants. This is the location of the double gate of Anna Palaiologina (the one lying west is also called *Gate of Agioi Anargyroi*), constructed by the Byzantine empress in 1355, during her stay in the city.

12 TRIGONIOU TOWER

Also known as *Alyseos* [Chain] Tower, this building stands on the spot where the north and east walls meet. It was built in the 16th c. possibly in the place of an earlier tower dating to the Venetian period; the White Tower (see p. 24), Vardariou Tower (see p. 59) and Trigoniou Tower formed part of the construction works completed by the Turks for the fortification of Thessaloniki. Known as *Kastra* [meaning Towers], this is a popular sightseeing area for locals and visitors alike since the view of the eastern walls as well as of the entire city is breathtaking from this location.

13 MAIANDROUPOLEOS STREET

Central *Maiandroupoleos* Street and *El. Zografou* Street



46. Portara, a gate in Thessaloniki's northern walls.



47. Eptapyrgio (Yedi Koule) and part of the eastern city walls.



48. Trigoniou Tower area is popular to residents and visitors alike.

connect Agios Pavlos area and Agiou Dimitriou Street. From here you will enjoy the wonderful view of the external side of the city's eastern walls, which remain in an impressively good condition (see p. 14 for the city walls).

14 GARDENS OF THE PASHA

They were built in 1904 by an unknown architect and are the only specimen of eccentric architecture in town. They cover a 1000 m² area, the decorations are quite peculiar and they include an art nouveau fountain which is no longer functional. At the far end lies *Agios Pavlos* [Saint Paul] church in the area by the same name. According to the legend it was named after the fountain where Apostle Paul drank water during his stay in town.

15 AGIOS DIMITRIOS HOSPITAL

Originally a Municipal Hospital, it was most probably built in 1902-3 and the architectural plans appear to have been signed by Xen. Paionidis (or by V. Poselli according to

other sources). It is a two-storey, oblong building with four wings on the edges and shares the same architectural style with the edifices of the 3rd Army Corps (see p. 32), the Customs House (see p. 18) and the Administration House [Dioikitirio] (see p. 39), with pronounced classicist and baroque elements. In 1984, the central building and the surrounding area became a listed monument.

16 EVANGELISTRIA CEMETERY

Evangelistria is a privileged area in the city centre, thanks to its low buildings and ample green spaces. This is the location of the city's oldest Christian cemetery created in 1875 by the Charity Brotherhood; some of the greatest personalities of Thessaloniki were buried here. On the opposite side (on El. Zografou Street) you will see the *Armenian* and *Protestant* cemetery as well as the *machine works / foundry of E. Axylithiotis*, which closed down in 1990 and is now a historic monument, used as a venue for cultural events. The *New Golden Gate* used to be at



the corner of Agiou Dimitriou and Olympiados Streets and it was one of the central gates of the eastern walls which were demolished to make way for the opening up of two roads (very few segments remain). Opposite the cemetery you will spot the neoclassical building of *G. Gennimatas hospital*.

17 AGIOS NIKOLAOS [SAINT NICHOLAS] ORPHANOS

(see p. 14)

18 KALLITHEAS SQUARE

Take Olympiados and Ap. Pavlou Streets to reach the

picturesque *Kallitheas Square* (with a small playground) in Ano Poli, where major streets begin, such as *Irodotou*, *Andokidou* and *Gorgous*. The last street will lead you out of the city walls. The *Children's Museum of Thessaloniki* (see p. 79) was housed in one of the street's traditional buildings until 2009.

19 SEICH SOU (CEDAR HILL)

The Seich Sou forest (*the spring of the Sheikh*) or Cedar Hill or Thousand Trees is the biggest forested area bordering the city, covering



49. *Agios Nikolaos Orphanos church, amid serene green surroundings.*

50. *The art-nouveau style fountain in the Gardens of Pasha.*

51. *Panoramic view of Thessaloniki and its environs from Trigoniou Tower.*



a 3,000 hectare area. Only a small section of the old oak forest remains in Kouri area as a result of the exploitation that occurred during the Byzantine period. Today's landscape is the result of systematic reforestation that took place in the 1930's. Despite the spreading of the adjacent suburbs and the 1997 big fire, it remains a particularly popular destination for Thessalonians who come here to enjoy hiking, mountain biking and other sports, picnicking or just to drink in the lovely view.

MUST SEE:

19.1 The Zoo.

You will find it in the section that lies south of the city's ringroad. It covers a 5.8-hectare area and is home to dozens of mammal and bird species of Greek wild fauna. Visit also the *Museum of Natural History* (opened in 1994) and the *House of Reptiles* (opened in 2000).

19.2 Forest Theatre.

[Theatro Dasous]. Within a short distance from the Zoo,

this open-air theatre (with seating for 4,000) is a summer venue for great concerts given by Greek and foreign artists, as well as other cultural events.

19.3 Theatre of the Earth.

[Theatro Gis] This impressive open-air theatre (with a seating for 4,300 spectators) is located in the area of Triandria (north of Kaftanzoglio Stadium, see p. 41). It was inaugurated in 1997 in view of that year's celebrations for Thessaloniki as the European Capital of Culture. It is considered as one of the best venues for cultural events in Greece.

How to get there: Take the bus no. 24 on Eleftherias sq. stop. The terminus is at the Zoo's car park.

20 SYKEES

This beautiful area is to be found NW of Ano Poli, outside the city walls. Despite the rising trend in house-building in recent decades, it is still dotted with detached houses dating to the Interwar Period.



The quarter was created mainly to provide housing for the refugees who settled there in the early 20th c.; however traces of settlements exist which date as far back as the 2nd c. AD. In the lush greenery of the *Municipal Grove* there is a *Municipal Theatre*, where major cultural events are held during the summer months, and an *open-air cinema*. Further south, on a low hill, you will see the imposing church of *Agioi Theodoroi*, built on ruins of a 7th c. Byzantine

church, where the view of the entire city is amazing. In the neighbouring *Elpidos Street* towards the city walls you will see a group of *refugee houses* – the area is in the process of being changed into a "Cultural Neighbourhood".

How to get there: To reach Sykees, you can either walk from Ano Poli or take the bus no. 23 (terminus at Eleftherias sq.) and get off at *Agios Charalampos* stop.

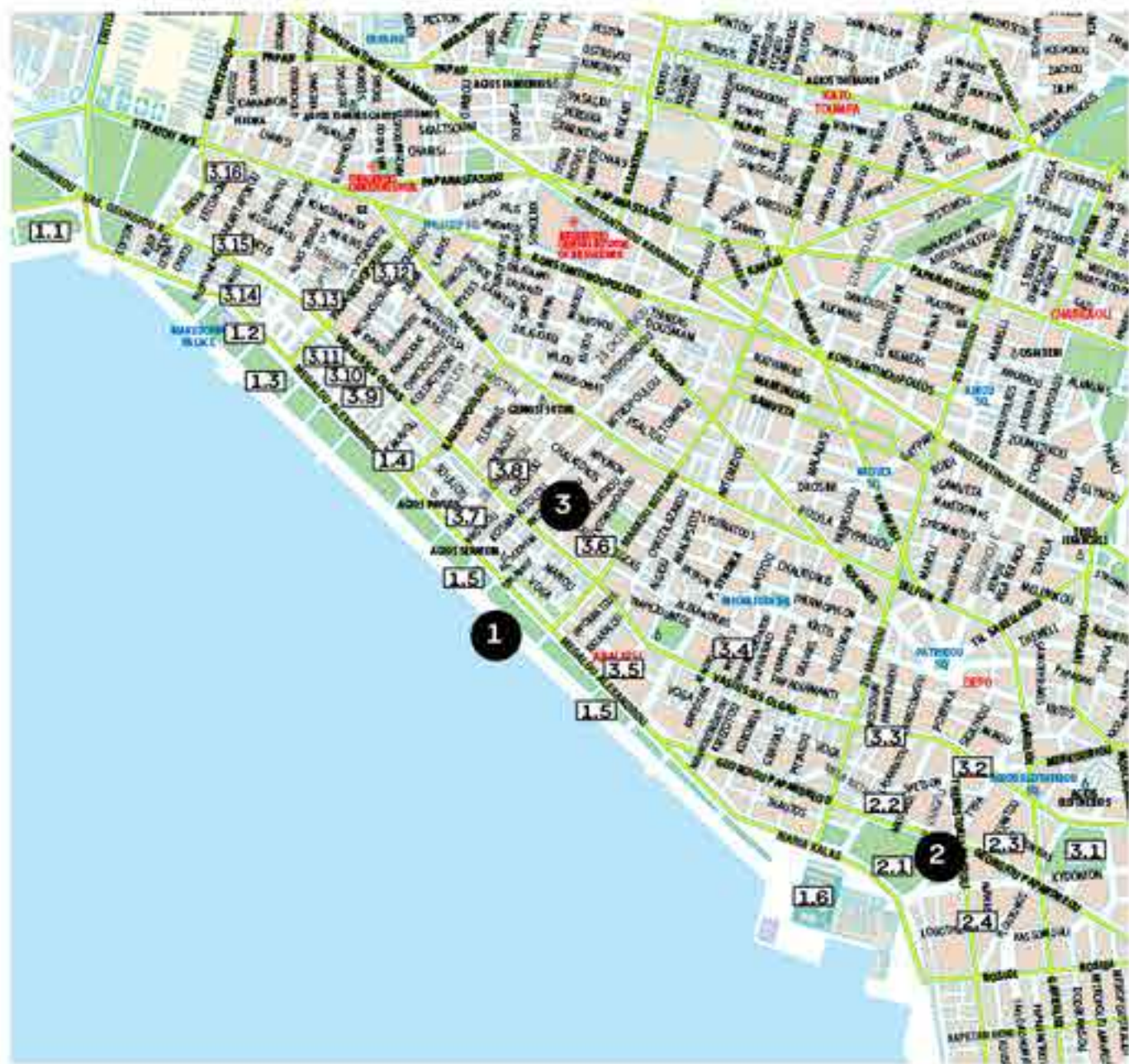


52.
The zoo entrance in Seich Sou forest.

53.
View over Agios Pavlos district from the Seich Sou forest.

54.
Seich Sou is very popular with locals who enjoy coming for a walk, for leisure and relaxing.





6th walk:

NEA PARALIA – VASILISSIS OLGAS AVENUE

The area started to grow in the late 19th c., after the demolition of the eastern city walls and the adoption of the tramway (horse-drawn in 1893 and power-driven in 1907). Its first name was *Exoches* [meaning *Countryside*], on account of its rural character, or the *Villas quarter*, as luxury residences with large gardens began to emerge following the European standards of the time. Contrary to the way life used to be within the city walls, various nationalities namely Greeks, Turks and Jews coexisted in this area, with wealth as their sole standard in life. From the 1930's the area gradually fell into decline and from the

1960's onwards it evolved into a typical urban area.

1 NEA (ANATOLIKI) PARALIA [NEW (EAST) SEAFRONT]

It took its present shape in the 1960s. It stretches along *Megalou Alexandrou Ave.* from the White Tower (see p. 24) all the way to the Thessaloniki Concert Hall and it is one of the most popular parts of the town for exercising, strolling and other forms of leisure. Thessalonians can be seen here 24 hours a day, particularly on weekends. Furthermore, its orientation offers a fascinating view of the Thermaic (Thermaikos) Gulf and Mount Olympus, especially during the sunset.

55. The statue of Alexander the Great on horseback stands out in the city's waterfront area.

56. *Umbrellas*, a renowned work of art by N. Zongolopoulos, in the new seafront area.

MUST SEE:

1.1 Monument of Alexander the Great.

This monumental sculptural synthesis (E. Moustakas, 1974) commands the waterfront right next to the White Tower and the Royal Theatre (see p. 25). The equestrian statue of Alexander the Great (6 m. high and 7 m. wide) is fixed on a base; there is a frieze around it with an embossed depiction of the battle of Issos (333 BC) as well as 8 macedonian shields with even-numbered spears. Within a short distance you will see the statue of the Macedonian politician *Konstantinos Karamanlis* (1907 – 1998) who served as Prime Minister of Greece for 14 years in the post war period and as President of Greece for 10 years. The *Monument of National Resistance* is also nearby (1989, E. Moustakas).

1.2 Makedonia Palace Hotel.

One of the landmarks in Thessaloniki's urban planning is this hotel built in the 1970's on a privileged location. The place was fully renovated in 1995 and in 2003. It is considered one of the top luxury hotels in

Greece. It is also the regular choice of stay for the prime minister and ministers while attending the Thessaloniki International Trade Fair; among its clientele are also many Greek and foreign personalities (politicians, artists etc).

1.3 *Umbrellas*.

This emblematic sculpture (height: 13 m.) created by the significant Greek visual artist George Zongolopoulos, was fitted in place in 1997; another of his sculptures by the same title is decorating the entrance to the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, (see p. 31). In 1993 this piece of art represented Greece in the Venice Biennale. It is one of the newest and most photographed monuments of the city.

1.4 Agioi Kyrillos and Methodios [Saints Cyril and Methodius] Church.

This imposing church (on *Megalou Alexandrou Ave.*) is among the city's newest and is dedicated to the two brothers who contributed decisively in bringing Christianity to the Slavs in the 9th c. and devised a new type of writing in the Slavic language. A well-tended garden surrounds the church.



6th walk:

NEA PARALIA – VASILISSIS OLGAS AVENUE

1.5 Theme gardens.

Along Megalou Alexandrou Avenue towards the direction of the sea, 12 Theme Gardens cover an area of 76,657 m² and are just the ideal place for spending your leisure time, strolling or relaxing. They are as follows: **Garden of Alexander**; **Garden of the Afternoon Sun**; **Garden of Sand** (with a café, tennis courts and a playground); **Garden of the Seasons** (includes an amphitheatre open for various events and a café); **Garden of Odysseas Fokas** (playground inside); **Garden of the Mediterranean** (café included); **Garden of Sculptures** (outdoor contemporary art sculptures); **Garden of Sound** (with flowing waters); **Garden of Roses** (with ornamental flower beds and a playground); **Garden of Memory** (with basketball grounds and tennis courts); **Garden of Water** (you will see lakes with plants growing in water, a small waterfall and a skatepark); and **Garden of Music** with a space reserved for music events. You can also ride along the area's 3 km cycle path. This is also the location of the Nautical Club of Thessaloniki.

1.6 Thessaloniki Concert Hall.

It was inaugurated in 2000 on a privileged location. The town's

Byzantine history was the source of inspiration for its architectural planning and it is one of the best equipped concert halls in Europe. The facilities include a hall providing seating for 1464 where concerts, dance and opera performances as well as conferences are held, and a restaurant. The neighbouring **2nd building** of the Concert Hall (designed by Japanese A. Isozaki) includes halls for concerts and conferences, a Museum of Musical Instruments and a Music Library. The **Poseidonio Sports Centre** is located nearby.

2 DEPOT AREA

The area was named after the site of the tram depot buildings and this complex has been listed as a Historic Monument, situated at the corner of Vas. Olgas and Typa Streets. The tram used to connect the city centre with this area from 1893 until 1957. It is the easternmost part of the *Exoches area* [meaning Countryside] where traces of its older atmosphere still remain in several places.

MUST SEE:**2.1 Allatini Mills.**

Deserted since 1990, this

complex of 14 listed industrial buildings is quite impressive. The complex's construction date is 1854 and the town's first steam-driven flour mill was located by the sea. Originally under French ownership, they became property of the Allatini family in 1882.

2.2 Vafopouleio Cultural Centre.

Two contiguous buildings form this structure which was inaugurated in 1983 by the Municipality of Thessaloniki. The Centre hosts visual art exhibitions, theatre and music performances as well as discourse events. Other facilities include three libraries one of which is a Children's library which contains over 14,500 volumes.

2.3 Ouziel quarter.

This complex of very picturesque semi-detached houses (defined within *Papandreou, Ploutonos, Chaironeias* and *Dimitrakopoulou* streets) were built to house the workers employed in the tramway construction and was named after the French contractor Ouziel. In 1985 it was declared a protected architectural monument and in recent years a new generation

of residents occupies the area. Built in the early 20th c. as a private residence, the neighbouring **Zardinidi Villa** (or Morpourgo) houses the School of Music Studies, the Conservatoire of Northern Greece and an open air bar

2.4 Sofouli Street.

This main road connects the eastern districts of the Municipality of Thessaloniki with the district of Kalamaria (see p. 64). Along most of the way it is lined with trees in front of shops, cafés and restaurants – a hotspot for the locals; the seafront section of the road affords a lovely view of the city and you will also find cozy little bars and ouzo tavernas there. Between Logothetou and Rossidi Streets notice the *complex of four detached houses* with a garden, which bear a direct reference to that area's past *countryside atmosphere*.

3 VASILISSIS OLGAS AVENUE

It used to be called the Countryside [*Exochon*] avenue or the Villas [*Pyrgon*] avenue and it was a favourite promenade area for the Thessalonians as it was built along the waterfront amid green surroundings. Nowadays,



57.
The church
of Saints
Cyril and
Methodius.



58.
The
Thessaloniki
Concert Hall.



59.
Allatini Villa in
Depot area.

it is a busy street along which *Depot, Analipsi, Salamina* and *Faliro* Districts extend from the east towards the city centre. Despite the area's urbanization, you will still see here several impressive buildings dating to the late 19th – early 20th c. which paint a vivid picture of its older character and continue to be one of the best promenade places in town.

MUST SEE:

[3.1] Allatini Villa.

This impressive red brick mansion is surrounded by a large garden and was built in 1898, to plans by V. Poselli, as a country residence of K. Allatini, owner of the Allatini business establishment. The Ottoman Sultan Hamid II was confined to this place for three years, after the Young Turks Movement took power in 1908. In 1926 the then newly founded University of Thessaloniki was housed in the villa (see also p. 38); during World War II the premises were used as a military hospital. Today it is the seat of the Region of Central Macedonia offices. In the neighbouring Delfon St, at no. 201 you will see another **residence** dating to the same period.

[3.2] Casa Bianca.

It was built in 1912 by Dino Fernandez-Diaz, to plans by P. Arrigoni, and it was named after his wife, Bianca. The building features eclectic and art nouveau elements and it has been a scheduled one since 1976. Today it houses a branch of the Municipal Art Gallery. At 203, Vas. Olgas Ave. you will come across the eclectic **Nehama Villa**, which was built in 1907 by Al. Nehama, a banker. It was originally a two storey building; a third storey was added in 1940-1945.

[3.3] Mordoch Villa (Municipal Art Gallery).

This impressive eclectic style construction (1905, X. Paionidis) is located at the corner of Vas. Olgas Ave. and 25th March Street. It was built as the residence of the Turkish officer Seifulah Pasha, but it became finally known as Mordoch Villa, after the last owner, a Jewish Merchant by the name of S. Mordoch who died in a concentration camp during World War II. It was also used as military barracks and as a polyclinic; since 1986 it houses the Municipal Art Gallery (see p. 76). A copper sculpture by sculptor K.

Kampadakis graces its lovely garden. At a short distance, at the corner of Vas. Olgas Ave. and Gravias st., you will see the **Hirsch villa** (early 20th c., P. Arrigoni), a deserted building which once housed the 1st Police Department. Notice the old pillbox at the end of the yard – a remnant of the Civil War Period (1946 – 1949).

[3.4] Chatzilazarou Residence.

Also known as Siaga residence, this house was built in 1890 to plans by X. Paionidis. Next to it, you will see the impressive **Marokou Residence** which was used at earlier times as a boarding school; today it houses a Traffic Police Department. Opposite to it, there is a small garden with a small Roman Catholic chapel dedicated to the *Sacred Heart of Jesus*.

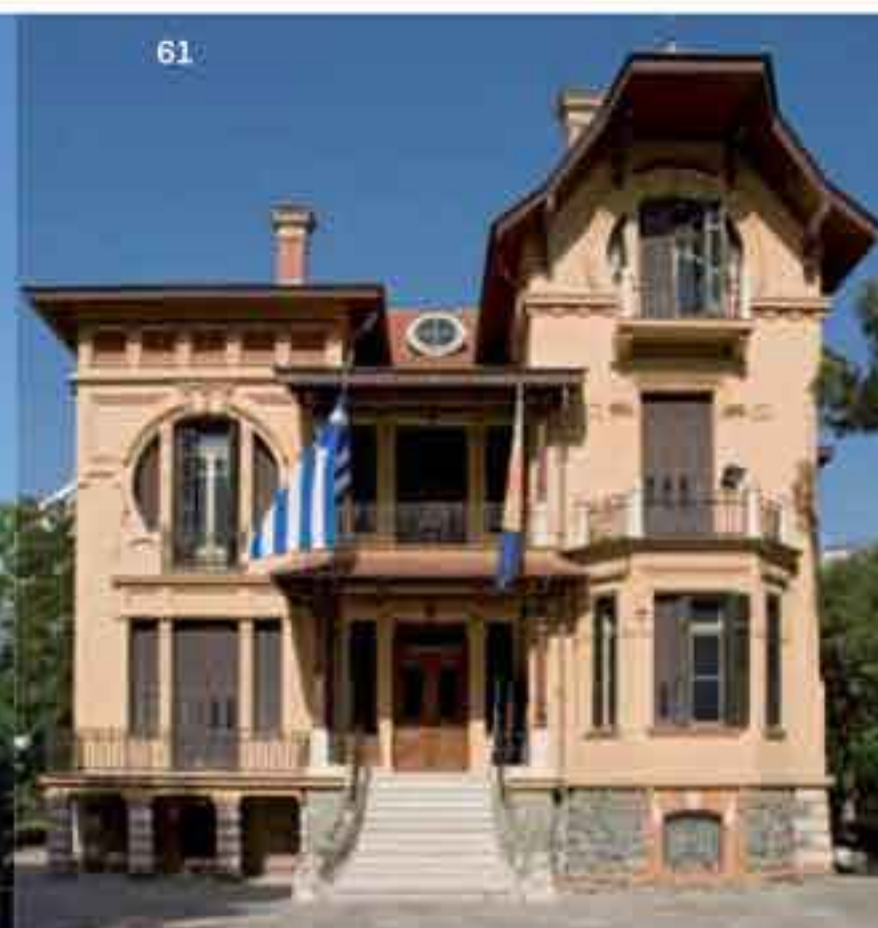
[3.5] Mehmet Kapanci Villa (108, Vas. Olgas Ave.).

The mansion was built in 1893 to plans by the Italian architect P. Arrigoni, within a 0.4 hectare garden, for Mehmet Kapanci, a Thessalonian Jewish merchant and banker. Following the central European architectural trend of the time, the main building is a three storey construction with

elaborate interior decoration and has access to a tower. Prince Nicholas, the city's first Greek military commander, was accommodated here in 1912; in 1916-1917 E. Venizelos stayed in the villa as head of the temporary revolutionary *Government of National Defence*. In 1928 the building was bought by the National Bank of Greece and during the years 1938 – 1961 it housed some of the city's highschoools. Since 1989, this is the location of the Thessaloniki Cultural Centre of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation (MIET, see p. 77). Next to it there is a red brick castle, known as **Chateau mon bonheur**, dating to 1890.

[3.6] Ahmet Kapanci Villa (105, Vas. Olgas Ave.).

It was built in 1905 by P. Arrigoni, as a country (seaside) residence for Ahmet Kapanci, a Jewish merchant and Mayor of the City. The architectural style is a mixed one as the eclectic features combine neoclassical, renaissance, art nouveau and gothic motifs. In 1926, the Greek State took ownership and since then the premises housed the Red Cross, the Gestapo, and NATO services until 1973. Offices for the 1997 European Capital of



60, 61 & 62.
Three
imposing villas
(mansions)
on Vas. Olgas
Ave.: [from left]
Ahmet Kapanci
Villa, Casa
Bianca and
Mordoch Villa.

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Christina Karkana, 7,5 years old.

The artwork on the cover is courtesy of the Museum of Greek Children's Art.

Through children's eyes and creativity, that enriches the collections of the Museum of Greek Children's Art, Greek history, tradition, everyday life and culture is depicted in the most disarming and eloquent manner. Discover the magic world of children's art in one of the few such Museums world-wide.

Museum of Greek Children's Art. www.childrensartmuseum.gr

Culture events in Thessaloniki were housed in this villa.

[3.7] Folklife and Ethnological Museum of Macedonia – Thrace (68, Vas. Olgas Ave.)

This eclectic building (you will get a better view from Megalou Alexandrou Ave.) was the residence of the banker Jacob Modiano in the early 20th c. In 1913 it was bought by the Greek State, offered to the Greek Royal Family and, later on, it became the residence of the Governor General of Macedonia, a Military School of Medicine and a Seminary. In 1970 it was granted to the Museum and in 1980 the premises were declared a scheduled monument (for museum exhibits, see p. 75). The adjacent noteworthy complex belongs to the *Goethe Institut* (1929).

[3.8] Building at 71, Vas. Olgas Ave.

A once private residence, it has also housed a private school in the past and today it is a private nursery school and kindergarten.

[3.9] Melissa Building (36, Vas. Olgas Ave.)

It was built in 1896 as the residence of a Turkish merchant and in 1908 it was purchased by the Bulgarian government. From 1922 until 1977, this

was the location of the *Melissa orphanage*; since 1978 it houses the *Centre for Byzantine Research* of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. It bears pronounced neoclassical and renaissance features and the ceiling paintings are particularly interesting. There is a small garden around the building.

[3.10] Building of the School for the Blind (32, Vas. Olgas Ave.)

It was built in 1907 as a private residence (Hafz Bey Mansion) and it has been used as a business school and a day nursery. Eclectic architecture elements are combined with motifs relating to late Renaissance. Since 1948 it houses the *Ilios* [meaning Sun] School for the Blind.

[3.11] Jeborga Villa (20, Vas. Olgas Ave.)

It was built in 1878 as the residence of Jeborga, a Jewish merchant of French descent, and the architectural plans are attributed to X. Paionidis. From 1901 until 1978 it housed the Italian Consulate. It is now deserted. The stylish *Themeli villa* at no. 18 is quite impressive and is also known as Levi Modiano villa and Michailidis residence.

[3.12] Yeni Camii (New Mosque).

It is located at 30, Archaeologikou Mouseiou Street. It was built in 1902 by the Italian architect V. Poselli as the mosque for Jews converted to Islam (*Donmeh*). It combines features of the Muslim architectural tradition and eclecticism. In 1922 the building provided accommodation for refugees and during the period 1925–1963 it housed the city's Archaeological Museum. It is now a municipal exhibition area; in the yard there is a collection of marble sculptures dating to Roman and Early Christian times (sarcophagi, stelae and others), collected from the wider urban area.

[3.13] Hatzimisef Villa (3, Vas. Olgas Ave.)

This is yet another building typical of the style found in the area, housing the town's 1st High School. At no. 5, lies the *Joseph Modiano villa*, today uninhabited and barely discernible behind the fencing. A branch of the town's 1st High School was once located here.

[3.14] Bust of George I.

It is found at the corner of Vas. Olgas Ave. and Agias Triadas St. This is the spot where King George I was

assassinated on March 5, 1913 by Al. Schinas, a 43-year old teacher. Crafted by sculptor K. Dimitriadis in 1915, this piece of art is the first sculpture to be placed in public space in free Thessaloniki and it is considered as one of the finest in town.

[3.15] School Building (Ivan Hatzimisef Villa).

It is located on 27, Vas. Georgiou Ave. (Vas. Olgas Ave. changes to Vas. Georgiou Ave.). It was built in 1897 and until a few years ago it housed the 12th Primary School of Thessaloniki. Today it is used by locals as a venue for cultural events, film screenings and so on. Every Saturday, an organic food market is set up there. At 29, Vas. Georgiou Ave. you will see *Navarro Villa*, another interesting building which in recent years has been housing the head office of a private company; the *Hatzimisef brothers villa* at 25, Vas. Georgiou ave. is also worth noticing.

[3.16] Building at 34-36 Evzonon Street.

This impressive house with elaborate decorations combines classical, baroque and renaissance features. Notice the beautifully chiselled sculpture fitted on the façade.

63.
Yeni Mosque features quite a few eclectic architectural elements.

64.
Modiano Villa (Vas. Olgas Ave.) houses the Folklife & Ethnological Museum of Macedonia - Thrace.

65.
The imposing building of the School for the Blind, on Vas. Olgas Ave.





WEST OF THE CENTRE-STAVROUPOLI

1 DIMOKRATIAS SQUARE (VARDARI)

Since ancient times, this has been the most important entry point to Thessaloniki. This relatively disadvantaged area is a transportation hub connecting the west and northwest suburbs with the city centre; there are also several hotels, small shops, tavernas and cafés in the area. In the centre of the square you will see the statue of King Constantine (1868-1923), who entered the city in 1912 in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the Greek Army. The road distances (in km) where Thessaloniki is the starting point get calculated from this square.

66.
Vardariou
Tower (Top
Hane).

67.
Old steam
engine
fronting
Thessaloniki's
Railway
Station.

2 AROUND DIMOKRATIAS SQUARE

There are mostly faceless buildings in the area – among them you will find small manufactures or old industries. However there are also historic sites, as there are sections of the city's west walls here, Byzantine and ottoman monuments and other archaeological sites (temple of Aphrodite, 6th c. BC).

MUST SEE:

2.1 Railway Station.

It is on Monastiriou Street which is renamed at some point Egnatia Street (see p. 34). Construction began in 1939 and it became fully operational in 1951, but it was officially

inaugurated in 1962 (S. Molfesis, Th. Papagiannis). Its exterior side combines modern and classical elements with wings added on the sides. It connects Thessaloniki with the rest of Greece, the Balkans and Istanbul; it is also the bus terminus towards most of the city areas. This will be the location of the west metro line terminus under construction in Thessaloniki.

2.2 Old Railway Station.

It was built in 1894 near the harbour (Old Station Street) in the neoclassical style, and it gradually connected Thessaloniki with Skopje, Belgrade, Monastir and Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). Today it is exclusively used as a cargo train station. This is where the German occupation forces mustered about 50,000 Jewish residents, from March until August 1943, in order to send them by train off to concentration camps.

2.3 Top Hane (Vardariou Tower).

Situated where the west and seafront city walls used to meet, this Tower was built by the Ottomans in 1546 and it was known as the Armoury Tower. It is a six-sided, three-storey and 10-metre high tower

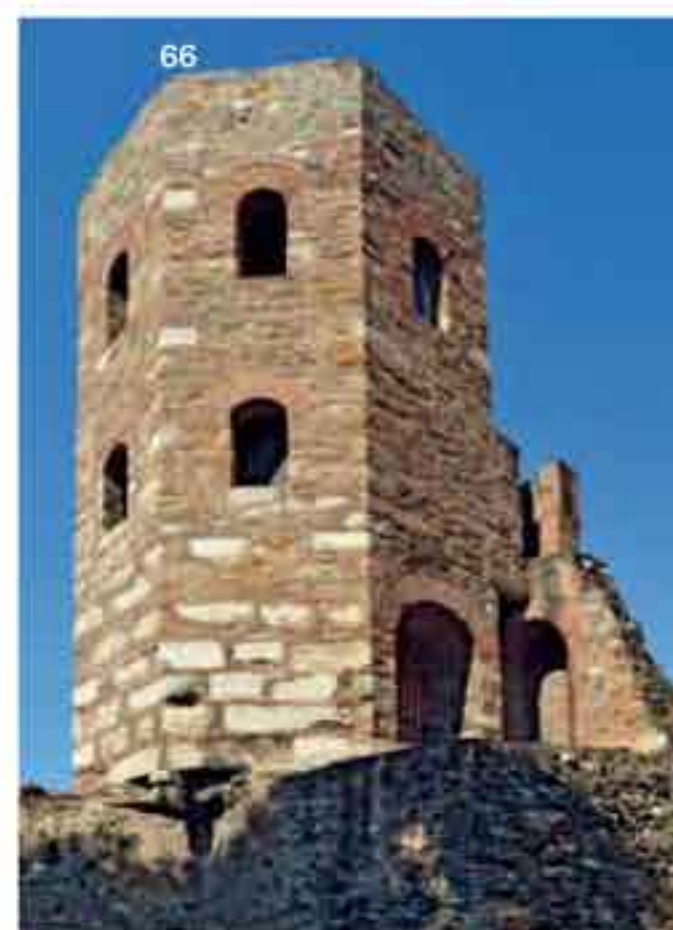
which used to be the main city stronghold. There is a small grove around it and in the wider area you will see sections of the west walls which remain in a good condition.

2.4 De La Salle Complex.

It was built in 1926 to house the De La Salle St Michel French-Hellenic College. The construction features elements of neobyzantine architecture and consists of two wings which intersect and form a monumental entrance at the corner of Fragkon and Moskof Streets. Today, the city's Administrative Courts are located in the premises. At a short distance lies the new **Court House** which was erected here after the demolition of the old building located in Ethnikis Amynis St. (see p. 25), following the damages it suffered after the 1978 earthquake.

2.5 Vienni Hotel.

It was built in 1925 (designs by architect G. Kampanellos), at the beginning of Egnatia Street, in an area where commercial activity was already on the rise in the 1880s. The façade displays the eclectic architectural trend of the time, with neoclassical influences. Today it houses private company offices.



[2.6] Holy Twelve Apostles Church

(see p. 8).

[2.7] West City Walls.

Sections of the city's west walls remain along Arkadioupoleos and Eirinis Streets and finds related to *Litaia Gate* have recently been located at the corner of Agiou Dimitriou and Agiou Nestoros Streets. This gate used to be one of the seven great gates of the fortified city and formed part of the Early Christian period walls; it was named after *Liti*, a Byzantine town to which the gate led. The *Golden Gate* was also located on the Egnatia Street level.

[2.8] Pasha Hamam [Paşa Hamamı] (Phoenix Bath house).

It was built during the 1520s by Cezeri Kasim Paşa. Also known as Phoenix Bath house, this used to be the last ottoman bath house open in town, as it closed down in as late as 1981. It is located at the corner of Kalvou and Pineiou Streets, near the west walls and the church of the Holy Twelve Apostles, and the structure of the building was planned with great care.

3 WEST OF THE HARBOUR

The area began to grow in the late 19th century, after the demolition of the seafront city wall and the ensuing pulling down of large sections of the city's west and east walls. The short distance to the harbour and the rail system construction were two decisive factors which led to large industrial unit installations in the area. In recent decades many of these buildings were changed into culture and entertainment venues, while others are scheduled to become sports or cultural centres. An example would be the listed building of the old *Municipal Slaughterhouse* (early 20th c.), near the FIX factory, after which the entire district was named.

MUST SEE:**[3.1] Vilka multi purpose venue.**

This is the old textile factory of Torres and Co., renamed *Vilka*, which closed down in 1988 and is now restructured into a space reserved for various events and entertainment, as it includes a theatre, concert halls, cafés and bars.

[3.2] Mylos multi purpose venue.

It is housed in the premises of the old Flour Mill [Mylos in Greek] of Chatzigiannaki-Altinalmazi (1924). In 1991 it passed to private owners and was changed into a culture venue that is well-known throughout the country. The biggest names of the domestic and international music scene have chosen to appear here; the cafés, bars and restaurants found in the complex are very popular with Thessalonians.

[3.3] FIX Brewery.

The brewery was founded in 1893 by Misrachi and Fernandez. Later on, annexes were added to the original installations and the firms *Olympus Brewery* and *Olympus-Naoussa Brewery* were successively set up. In 1926 FIX company took and retained ownership of the brewery until the mid-1980's when it was closed down. Today the place is deserted with the exception of certain newer storehouses which were restructured into concert halls. Since 2001, the **Water Museum** (see p. 79) is housed in the adjacent old main pumping station of the Water

Company (1890-94), which was running until 1978.

4 TERPSITHEA DISTRICT (STAVROUPOLI)

This is a relatively quiet area in Stavroupoli Municipality near the city centre; the urban and free space arrangement shows a good town planning. Along downtown *Lagkada Street*, you will see the old military camp and **Lebet mosque**, which will be changed into a park. Since 1938, the Jewish cemetery has been located in the space between Karaoli Dimitriou and Dendropotamou Streets; a number of marble pieces have been carried from the old cemetery which used to be within the grounds of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, (see p. 38) and was destroyed by the Germans during World War II. Once you've completed your tour you can return to the city centre taking the 27 and 29 bus lines (in the direction from Lagkada St. to Egnatia St.).

MUST SEE:**[4.1] Allied Military Cemetery (Zeitenlik).**

This is the largest military necropolis in Greece. There are five sectors to it and over 21,000 soldiers of the Entente powers were buried here (8,089 French, 8,000 Serbs, 3,000 Italians, 1,648 British and 400 Russian soldiers), all killed on the Macedonian front during World War I. Coming in from the main entrance (*Lagkada Street*) you will meet the impressive Serbian monument at the back of which there is a small Serbian church. The city's *catholic cemetery* lies in the neighbouring Koutifari Street.

[4.2] Moni Lazariston [Lazarists Monastery].

This impressive building was erected in 1886 by monks of the order of St. Vincent de Paul, also known as Lazarists after Saint

68. Mylos multi-purpose venue is one of the most popular places for hosting events and entertainments in Thessaloniki.

69. Moni Lazariston building complex houses the State Museum of Contemporary Art, among other foundations.



4.3 Kapnapothikes
[Tobacco warehouses].

Five old tobacco warehouses (tobacco shops) still stand in the area, as reminders of the city's booming tobacco trade from the mid-19th c.

until 1990. Most of them were built in the Interwar Period and bear art deco and Bauhaus architectural features. Today, one of them (opposite Moni Lazariston) is a luxury hotel; another one houses the School of Film Studies of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (located at the corner of Ikoniou and Ag. Dimitriou Streets); the *Red Tobacco* shop (Arapitsis Naousis St.) houses administrative offices and the neighbouring building of the Austrian Hellenic Tobacco Company was turned into a mall.

It is a 0.5 hectare garden within a 2.7 hectare green area with playgrounds, sports grounds, a café and an amphitheatre. It contains over 1000 species of flora (varieties of roses, cactus, medicinal plants and Mediterranean species among others), a greenhouse with banana trees and orchids as well as a gazebo built on a man-made hill on the location affording the finest view. Entrances to the garden are in *Perikleous*, *Olympou* and *K. Konstantinidi* Streets.



SUBURBS AND CITY OUTSKIRTS

Kalochori is situated near the city's west entrance, at a short distance from the centre (5 km W). It was created in the early 20th c. by refugees and despite its mostly industrial character it is a rapidly rising residential suburb, known for its ouzo and fish tavernas.

Gallikos River.

It stretches along Kalochori's west edge. The municipality has set up kiosks and facilities so that travellers can stop over, relax or go picnicking along the riverside. Further south you will see the river **delta** and **Kalochori lagoon** with herons.

pelicans, flamingoes and water buffaloes. A further while towards the west (beyond the city limits), you will see the wetland of the ***Delta formed by the rivers Axios, Loudias and Aliakmonas***. This is a 320 km² area, protected by the Ramsar Convention [a.k.a. The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance] and is also included in the Natura 2000 network. *The Axios – Loudias – Aliakmonas Estuaries Management Authority* offers free tours in the area (www.axiosdelta.gr).

It is located approx. 9 km NW of Kalochori and owes its considerable growth to the Thessaloniki Industrial Park



70.
The Serbian
monument in
the Zeitenlik
allied military
cemetery.

situated nearby. The small mounds in the field are ancient tombs; a Neolithic settlement was excavated in one of them with a cemetery dating to the Geometric and Archaic period. An impressive Macedonian tomb was also unearthed in *Agios Athanasios* area.

How to get there. Bus lines 40, 40A and 40K leave for Kalochori from the Railway Station Stop. If you travel by car, take the Athens direction on the national road and turn towards Kalochori.

2 KALAMARIA

This is practically an eastward 'extension' of Thessaloniki and the city's best known suburb, stretching along the waterfront, with many green spaces and a self-contained shopping centre. The first inhabitants are recorded in the early 20th c. and during the 1920's significant numbers of Greek refugee populations settled here and built their small houses. They came from Caucasus, Minor Asia and Pontus [modern-day northeast Turkey]. Today, despite the rising building trend in the area, several refugee houses remain, still keeping a flavour of times goneby.

MUST SEE:

[2.1] Sofouli Street
(see p. 53).

[2.2] Kyverneio [Government House] (Little Palace).

Situated on cape Mikro Emvolo or Karampournaki, Little Palace was built in the 1950's and used to be the country residence of the greek royal family; today the minister of Macedonia-Thrace and the President of the Hellenic Republic stay here when visiting the city. The ground floor includes the lounges, a dance hall and an atrium; the first floor includes two suites and secondary rooms. It is surrounded by a garden and it affords an amazing view of the city as well as Mts Chortiatis and Olympus.

[2.3] Kodra former military camp.

Building works are under way to change it into a park. The Municipality of Kalamaria often hosts cultural events and visual art exhibitions there. On-site excavations brought to light a settlement dating to the archaic and classical times (9th – 5th c. BC), which some scientists believe it is identified as the location of Ancient Thermi.

[2.4] Aretsou – Krini.

These two most popular areas of Kalamaria stretch along the seafront. The facilities of the local marine sports club are here, next to *Aretsou-Krini beach*; there is also an open air cinema and a *marina* (the only one in town) with a 242-berth capacity (there are power, water and telephone services). The waterfront *N. Plastira Street* is lined with café-bars and fish tavernas which get filled to capacity all year round.

[2.5] Komninon Street.

The longest part of the town's main street is for pedestrian use only and you will find shops, cafés, small bars and restaurants along the way. This is also where you will find the area's central square where the Town Hall and the church of the Transfiguration of Christ are. From the direction of the seafront, you can reach the area via I. Passalidis Street.

How to get there. Bus lines 5 and 5A leave from Eleftherias square. Get off at *Naftikos Omilos* [Marine Club] stop or at *Chamodrakas* stop in Aretsou area.

3 PANORAMA

One of the best suburbs of Thessaloniki is situated at a 12 km distance S of the city centre and was built on the slope of Mt Chortiatis, offering a panoramic city view. It was uninhabited until the early 20th c., although traces of a prehistoric settlement have been located on the area. The first inhabitants were refugees from Asia Minor and Pontus. Today its largest part is covered by luxury villas and impressive detached homes; there is a small shopping area in the centre. *Trigona Panoramatos* [a cream puff pastry] – one of the city's best known sweet delicacies – were created at a local confectionery in the 1950's.

MUST SEE:

Platanakia.

It is a nice place for relaxing, in a wooded ravine, with a small Zoo and a café. A 6 km path begins here and leads up to the artificial lake (dam) of Thermi. Along the way you will come across spots for a brief rest, short waterfalls and fragments of eight Byzantine watermills.

71



71.
Kyverneio
(Palataki)
overlooks cape
Karampournaki
(Kalamaria).

72.
Panorama
area offers a
fine view of
the city and its
environs.



72



3.1 Chortiatis.

Named after the mountain, this small suburb on Mt Chortiatis (elev.: 1,201 m.), stretches approx. 10 km NE of Panorama. Since the Roman times, Thessaloniki's water supply came from this place via Vlatadon Monastery (see p. 44); this is why you will see fragments of a Byzantine aqueduct at the suburb's border. The mountain is covered with chestnut, oak, beech and fir trees, there is a mountain refuge (*Kissos* location, elev. 1,201 m.) and it is the ideal place for hiking (there are 32 charted paths), for mountain biking and off-roading.

How to get there. Board the 58 bus on Egnatia Street and get off at *Dimarchio* [Town Hall], *Astynomia* [Police Station] or at *Platanakia* stop.

4 THERMI

This suburb is located a bit further away from town (15 km SE of the city centre) and more or less still keeps a countryside air about it. On-site excavations have shown that this was the location of the harbour of ancient Thermi, a major one in antiquity. The place was also

known for its hot springs – *thermae* – hence the name of the gulf (*Thermaikos*). During the Byzantine and Ottoman period it was known as *Sedes*; in modern times, refugees inhabited the area in the early 20th c.

MUST SEE:**Paramana Square.**

In 2009 Thermi's central square was awarded a prize for its futuristic design, in an architectural contest. The Town Hall and the two St. Nicholas churches (older and new one) are located here. This is where *Karaoli-Dimitriou* Street begins, the area's business hub, where you will also find café-bars and restaurants.

Artificial lake.

Bordering on the suburb, the lake was created when a dam was built to contain the water running through a gully. It is the ideal place to make you feel refreshed and relaxed; in the summer the *Dam Music Festival* takes place there. Further north, within a short distance you will see the *Environmental Park* with a playground, tennis courts, basketball and football grounds.

Noesis –Science Centre and Technology Museum

It is the only one of its kind in Greece! Construction of this 14,000-m² impressive, modern complex was completed in 2004 on a small hill affording a panoramic view of the area. It is considered as the modern successor of the Technology Museum of Thessaloniki. The premises include screening rooms, permanent exhibitions (Technology Museum), a conference centre, a digital library, spaces reserved for temporary exhibitions and educational programmes, an amphitheatre for carrying out Demonstrations and Experiments, a museum shop and a restaurant-café (for info about exhibitions and programmes see p. 79).

How to get there. Take the bus No. 10 from the Railway Station Stop or from Egnatia Street and get off at the terminus in *Charilaou* area, then board the 66 or 66B bus and exit at *Paramana square* or *Zoni Kainotomias* stop, to reach *Noesis*. If you travel by car, follow the Thessaloniki – Thermi route.

5 PERAIA – NEOI EPIVATES – AGIA TRIADA

These seaside areas are located 20 km S of the city centre. The area was inhabited for the first time in 1923 when refugees from Minor Asia settled here. Until then Peraia was the property of a *Turkish Bey* [a dignitary], Neoi Epivates was a Turkish estate (*Bahçe Çiflik* in Turkish) and Agia Triada was called *White Fountain*. Today, these areas have evolved into suburbs and seaside resorts. Along the entire waterfront you will find beaches, awarded the Blue Flag for beach quality, with facilities for water sports, beach volleyball and so on. There are fish tavernas, cafés and bars bordering the seafront pedestrian way, offering a fine seaview.

How to get there. You can take the buses Nos. 71 and 71A for N. Michaniona from the Railway Station Stop in July and August (get off at any stop from *Paralia Peraias* to *Agia Triada*). Throughout the year, bus lines O2 and O2A will get you to A.S. *IKEA* station where you can board any one of the 72, 72A, 72B

73



73.
On the slopes of
Mt. Chortiatis,
towards Thermi.

74.
Futuristic
Paramana Sq.
(Thermi).

74



buses to N. Michaniona or the 76 bus to Angelochori. If you go by car, follow *Ethnikis Antistasis*, *Georgikis Scholis* and *Michanionas* Avenues.

6 EPANOMI

This picturesque town (population: 7,500) is situated 25 km SE of Thessaloniki. In the vicinity there are beautiful beaches, namely *Ktima Karagiozi*, *Ormos*, *Palioura*, *Ageladariko*, *Mesimeri* and *Potamos*; you will also see a half-sunken wreck of a small merchant vessel lying there since 1967. *Tsairi* (4 km S of Epanomi) is the location of a wetland, a refuge for over 80 species of birds. **Gerovassiliou Wine Museum** is situated 2 km N. and is the only one of its kind in northern Greece (for the museum see p. 80).

How to get there. Take the buses nos. 70 and 70A from the Railway Station Stop during July and August. Throughout the year board any one of 69A, 69B, 69E, 69K, 69N, 69R, 69T or 69X buses at A.S. IKEA station. If you travel by car, head for the airport and then follow

Michanionas, Miaouli and Epanomis country roads.

7 NEA MICHANIONA

A major fishing centre (32 km S of Thessaloniki) with the largest fleet of deep sea fish boats in Greece! Once a refugee settlement, it is now a steadily growing area. The fish pier building by the picturesque harbour gets crowded especially during the early morning hours. The seafront road is lined with café-bars and tavernas. Popular beaches in this area such as *Tourbani* and *Angelochori* have been awarded the Blue Flag for their beach quality.

MUST SEE:

7.1 Angelochori.

This small village lies 4 km N. of Nea Michaniona. *Cape Megalo Emvolo* (or *Megalo Karampournou*) affords a wonderful view of the Olympus massif. It is worth noticing the particular architectural structure of the remaining parts of an *ottoman stronghold*, built there in 1884 by German civil engineers; there is also a lighthouse reaching a height of 10.50 m.

76



(1864); and a World War II gun emplacement. Further south there are *salt marshes* and a *wetland* where 178 bird species find refuge such as flamingoes, cormorants, herons, and black-headed gulls, to name but a few.

How to get there. Take the 71 or 71A bus from the Railway Station Stop.

The route goes through Angelochori and you will get off at the N. Michaniona terminus. Alternatively, bus lines 02 and 02A will get you to A.S. IKEA station where you will board any of the 72, 72A or 72B bus for N. Michaniona. If you go by car, follow *Ethinikis Antistasis*, *Georgikis Scholis* and *Michanionas* avenues.

75



75. Nea Michaniona is one of the greatest fisheries in Greece.

76. Peraia beach.

77. View of the seafront at Neoi Epivates.

78. You will find modern, well-equipped water sports facilities in the area from Peraia to Epanomi.

77



78



MUSEUMS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF THESSALONIKI

Works of art of outstanding value and excavated ensembles from the entire region of Macedonia are on display, covering all the aspects of private and public life in the area, from the prehistoric era to the late antiquity period. Exhibits are organised in six basic categories:

- **Towards the birth of towns.** (ground floor, room 4). The evidence on display shows that there were settlements in Macedonia dating to the Iron Age, from 1100 to 700 BC.
- **Macedonia from the 7th c. BC until Late Antiquity.** (ground floor, room 5). Eight large theme sections cover various aspects of private and public life in Macedonia from the archaic years, when the independent Macedonian kingdom was created, until the 1st – 4th c. AD, when the entire region was a province of the Roman Empire. Finds come mainly from excavations carried out in areas of central Macedonia.

- **Thessaloniki, Metropolis of Macedonia.** (ground floor, room 6). Historical and archaeological information is presented, starting from 315 BC when the town was founded. There is also a partial reconstruction of an archaic temple of Ionic order, whose original position is yet unknown; it was transported to the area of the Temples of Thessaloniki during the Roman occupation.

- **The gold of Macedon.** (ground floor, room 7). It includes exhibits of exceptional craftsmanship (e.x. diadems, crowns, rings, bracelets, earrings) removed mostly from cemeteries of the archaic and classical times; there is also a step by step depiction of the processing of noble metals. The museum owns a very large collection of gold crowns; particularly worthy of notice are also two singular items, the crater [type of vase-like vessel] and the papyrus of Derveni (4th c. BC).

- **Field-House-Garden-Grave.** (in the museum's

courtyard). Antiquities dating to the 2nd – 4th c. AD are divided in two sections: in the first one a reconstruction is attempted of a cemetery segment containing finds, sarcophagi and altars; the second one involves the re-creation of a Greco-roman house with mosaic floors on display and items of daily use.

- **Prehistoric Macedonia.** (basement, room 11). The items exhibited refer to Man's first productive stages in Macedonia (with activities such as hunting, fishing, agriculture, stock farming, weaving, metallurgy). There are also casts of skulls belonging to *Ouranopithecus Macedoniensis*, an early hominid primate, as well as of the Man found in Petralona cave (see p. 92).

- **Temporary exhibitions.** The museum organises each year a major thematic exhibition and 2-5 minor ones, where particular aspects of every day life in Macedonia are treated in connection with the Greek and the Mediterranean area.

THE ROMAN FORUM MUSEUM

Small yet very interesting, this museum was inaugurated

in 2010. A narrative of local excavations and information on the museum's building stages is on display in the vestibule; in the main hall, visitors will see a depiction of the area's history from the Hellenistic years until the 4th c. AD. Other exhibits of great interest are the Hellenistic Bathhouse, the ancient brothel, and the fountain associated with the *Stoa of the Statuettes* (Las Incantadas). There are also finds related to the period from the Turkish Occupation until the 1917 fire. Next to exhibited items, there are descriptive texts and photos.

MUSEUM OF BYZANTINE CULTURE

It is considered one of the best museums in Greece and ranks high among its peers across the globe, offering a detailed picture of the Byzantine culture. Among the 2,900 masterpieces of exhibits, there are murals, mosaics, icons, marble architectural members, whole Early Christian tombs, church vessels, items of personal dress, as well as objects of everyday use and tools used

70

79 & 80.
The Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki showcases unique finds from Macedonia, dating from prehistoric times to late antiquity.

81.
The Museum of Byzantine Culture is considered to be one of the top byzantine museums worldwide.



71

by tradesmen. Aspects of the Byzantine everyday life, art and culture are depicted, covering the times from the early Byzantine until the post Byzantine period. The exhibition is structured by dates, in the following thematic categories:

- **Early Christian or Early Byzantine period (4th – 7th c.).** It includes the chapters: i) The *Early Christian church* (room 1) where the general shape and the particular elements of churches of that period are described, ii) *Early christian town and house* (room 2), offering some insight into the public and private life of people in those times and iii) *From the Elysian Fields to the Christian Paradise* (room 3) dealing with the burial of the dead and the cemeteries of the early Christian period.

- **Middle Byzantine period (8th – 12th c.).** It includes the chapters: i) *From Iconomachy to the splendour of the Macedonian and the Komnenian Dynasties* (room 4) where the art and culture of the middle Byzantine period is shown, ii) *Dynasties of the Byzantine emperors* (room

5) where visitors can use learning resources to explore the imperial dynasties from emperor Heraclius (610 – 641) until the Palaiologan Dynasty (1261 – 1453) and iii) *The Byzantine Castle* (room 6) dealing with the creation and structuring of a castle in those times.

- **Late Byzantine period (1204–1453).** The chapter *The twilight of Byzantium* (room 7) describes the last centuries of the empire i.e. the period between 1204 when Constantinople was seized by the Crusaders and 1453 when it was conquered by the Ottoman Turks.

- **Post Byzantine period (1453 – 19th c.).** A chapter titled *Byzantium after Byzantium – Byzantine legacy in the years that followed the Conquest* unfolds in room 10.

- **Private collections.** The *D. Papastratos Collection* in room 8 includes 210 rare pieces of art – etchings with religious (orthodox) themes, and the *D. Oikonomopoulos Collection*, in room 9, counts 1,460 works of art of any type (coins, ceramics, icons and so on).

- **Discovering the past.** Excavated sites in the city and the procedure for creating and maintaining an archaeological museum are described in room 11.

- **Temporary exhibitions and events.** At times the Museum organises temporary exhibitions and cultural events, most of which are associated with Thessaloniki's and Northern Greece's Byzantine legacy.

WHITE TOWER EXHIBITION

Starting from the year it was founded until the present day, the history of Thessaloniki is depicted through an array of multimedia applications, special structures, printed graphic design compositions and archaeological material. The exhibition is organised in seven thematic categories, each one occupying one floor, as follows: **Space and Time** (ground floor), **Transformations** (1st floor), **Monuments and History** (2nd floor), **Homeland of the people** (3rd floor), **Along the trade routes** (4th floor), **Leisure and Culture** (5th floor), **Thessaloniki – Flavours** (6th floor). The

museum's shop is located on the last floor.

JEWISH MUSEUM OF THESSALONIKI

It was created following an initiative of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki to promote the Sephardic legacy in town, which dates as far back as the 15th c. It has been open to visitors since 1997. It houses a Centre of Research and Study of the Jewish History in Thessaloniki, an extensive library and an Audiovisual Centre. Permanent exhibitions are divided in four categories, as follows:

- **Jewish necropolis.** (ground floor). Tombstones and stelae with epitaph inscriptions are on display, from the great Jewish necropolis which used to lie east of the city walls. Photographs show the cemetery as it was in 1914.

- **Jewish history.** (1st floor). It occupies the central area with a narrative of the Jewish presence in Thessaloniki up to World War II.

- **Folk Art and Life.** (1st floor). A large array of exhibits paints a vivid picture of the

82



83



84



82, 83 & 84.
The Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki: (left & middle) permanent exhibits from the collection Jewish Necropolis; (right) the Jewish History exhibition.

religious and everyday life of local Jews.

- **Holocaust.** A special exhibition area depicts the genocide of the approx. 49,000 members of Thessaloniki's Jewish Community, who were sent off to Auschwitz and Bergen Belsen concentration camps to be exterminated.

- **Photography exhibits.** The museum hosts interesting exhibitions, such as the one titled *Thessaloniki, a Metropolis of the Sephardi Jews* by S. Marks.

MUSEUM OF THE MACEDONIAN STRUGGLE

The museum exhibits are on display in seven rooms on the ground floor, and show the main aspects of the history of Macedonia in the 19th and early 20th c. during the struggle for freedom against the Ottoman Turks. Greek revolts of that period in Macedonia are described in **Room A**; exhibits related to the Macedonian society of the late 19th c. are in **Room B**; a reconstruction of the office of the Greek General Consul is in **Room C**; the process of recruitment in the Greek guerilla forces of

those times is on display in **Room D**; the role played by the clergy is depicted in **Room E**; the Balkan Wars are described in **Room F**; the course of Macedonian history following the Balkan Wars is in **Room G**. Costumes and authentic *relics* from the Balkan Wars Period (arms, uniforms among other items), are exhibited in the **1st floor**, as is a collection of *miniature vehicles* of the Greek army.

WAR MUSEUM

Exhibits include objects such as uniforms, arms, maps, battleship effigies, documents and military decorations, which are connected with the most significant events of the modern Greek history, from the 1821 War of Independence until the 1944 liberation from the German Occupation forces. In the museum's courtyard you will see armoured vehicles, fighters and torpedoes used by the Greek Army in the past.

ATATURK MUSEUM

Exhibits occupy two floors: The **1st floor** includes the parlour, the living room, the

room of Kemal Ataturk's mother and the kitchen. The room where Kemal was born is in the **2nd floor** and his personal items and documents from school are exhibited in separate areas. The largest part of the furniture is authentic; there are photos on the walls that refer to various stages of his life.

FOLKLIFE & ETHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF MACEDONIA -THRACE

It was founded in 1957 as the Folklife Museum of Northern Greece and took its current name in 1993. 20,000 objects from Macedonia and Thrace are on display there, mostly covering the period from 1860 to 1960; there is a major folk art archive (photos, maps, sound and image records and other items) as well as a special library. Among the exhibits you will see folk costumes, embroidery, woven fabrics, miniature art and woodcraft, popular musical instruments, wooden and copper housewares and figures of the Shadow Puppet Theatre.

STATE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

It was inaugurated in 1997 and its major acquisition is the Kostakis Collection which includes pieces representative of the Russian Avant-Garde art movement which flourished in the first three decades of the 20th c. It comprises 1,277 works of art (e.g. paintings, sketches, constructions, pottery) crafted by well-known Russian artists such as K. Malevich, V. Kandinsky, L. Popova, A. Rodchenko, I. Kliun, V. Stepanova, N. Udaltsova, M. Matiushin and others; it is one of the richest collections of its kind in the whole world. The museum owns an extensive archive material on the Russian avant-garde and a remarkable collection of works of art by contemporary Greek visual artists (K. Giannakos, St. Antonakos, G. Vakalo and others); occasionally it hosts major temporary exhibitions. The *Thessaloniki Centre of Contemporary Art* (located in the port area) is a self-supporting section of the Museum and hosts temporary exhibitions of Greek and

85



85 & 86.
(left) The neoclassical building of the Museum for the Macedonian Struggle and (right) one of its exhibits.

87.
The building and grounds of the War Museum.

86



87



75

74

THESSALONIKI

DION – VERGINA – ANCIENT PELLA
PETRALONA CAVE – LAKES AREA

Ever since the 4th c. BC when it was founded, Thessaloniki has kept its urban character and has remained a civic centre and the hub of that region. The city's centuries-old multicultural history has been associated with great empires, as it has known the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Rule. The town was also greatly influenced by many ethnic and religious groups (Jews, Latins, Armenians and others) as well as Greeks from Constantinople, Pontus [modern-day northeastern Turkey] and Asia Minor [a.k.a. Anatolia]. The numerous monuments, dating to many historical periods, coexist in a singular and charming way and manifest Thessaloniki's historical multicultural and cosmopolitan nature.

Nowadays, the historic capital -by right- of Macedonia, the land of Alexander the Great, has evolved into a modern and particularly charming metropolis. A multitude of monuments and cultural assets and the town's traditional ways exist in harmony with the modern aspects and the high standard infrastructure, the carefree mood, the spirit of hospitality, the vitality of the locals – particularly the young – setting the pace of town life, the diversity of artistic events, the long list of choices for entertainment, the exceptional culinary tradition, and the fresh feel in the atmosphere, coming from the seafront, as well as the coolness of the northwest wind called *Vardaris*.

Thessaloniki's location is at the centre of a greater area with incomparable historical monuments and natural assets as it offers the opportunity for a visit to archaeological sites known the world over (Ancient Pella, Vergina, Dion, Petralona Cave), to areas of exquisite nature (river deltas, lakes, Mt Olympus), to the monastic state of *Agion Oros* [the Holy Mountain] as well as to Halkidiki, a famous tourist destination. And there is always an opportunity to practice sports (swimming, skiing, playing golf etc) or to indulge in wellness tourism (hot springs, spas)!

In short, Thessaloniki is a city that can cater for even the most demanding needs, any time of the year.

4

1.
The White Tower area is one of the busiest parts of the city, where the old seafront (Nikis Ave.) meets the new (eastern) waterfront area of Thessaloniki.

5

«...There is a homeland for everyone,
while there is Thessaloniki»

Nikiforos Choumnos,
14th c. Byzantine dignitary and a scholar.

foreign visual artists, it runs educational programmes for adults and children and events such as one-day meetings, workshops etc.

MACEDONIAN MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

The permanent collection includes 1,800 works of art by leading Greek and foreign artists; so far, it has hosted more than 100 selected exhibitions of Greek and foreign visual artists such as Tsarouhis, Hadjikyriakos-Ghika, Tsoklis, Kontoglou, Psychopedis, Akrihakis, Mytaras, Lazogkas, Varotsos, Warhol, R. & S. Delaunay, Viallat, Hecker, Greenaway, and Beckmann among others. The museum library counts over 2,500 titles of specialised issues on painting, sculpture, engraving, architecture and photography and it has been credited a number of prominent publications.

TEOGLION FOUNDATION OF ART AUTH [Aristotle University of Thessaloniki]

It was founded in 1972, following a donation of an art

collection by Nestor and Aliko Teloglou to the A.U.Th.; in the course of time the collection grew larger with donations by artists and collectors. The Teloglou donation is the key collection and includes statuettes of the Hellenistic period, Corinthian, Hellenistic and Roman vessels, Persian miniatures, objects of Arab and Chinese art (vases, banners, plates) Thai woodcarved items as well as works of art by famous Greek and European painters and sculptors of the 19th and 20th c. It also hosts temporary exhibitions, a variety of cultural events and educational programmes.

MUNICIPAL GALLERY

Over 1,000 works of art are on display in the gallery and they are classified in 4 collections as follows: The most important one is titled **Thessalonian Artists** and it includes pieces of art by local visual artists referring to the period from 1898 to 1967 (P. Reggos, N. Fotakis, Chr. Lefakis, N. Gavril Pentzikis, K. Lachas, G. Svoronos among others); the **Modern Greek Art**

collection includes works of art by leading Greek Artists; the **Byzantine and Postbyzantine Icons** collection is related to the school of Thessaloniki and spans 5 centuries (14th - 19th c.); and a collection of 360 pieces of art on **Greek Engraving**. Retrospective exhibitions of Greek and foreign artists are frequently arranged in collaboration with art foundations in Greece and abroad.

GALLERY OF THE SOCIETY FOR MACEDONIAN STUDIES

It is housed on the top floor of the Theatre Building of the S.M.S. and it is the first visual arts museum in the city. It encompasses 300 pieces of art (painting, sculpture and engraving) by famous Greek and foreign artists, mostly from northern Greece, who represent the major art movements of the 20th c.

CULTURAL CENTRE OF THESSALONIKI (NATIONAL BANK OF GREECE CULTURAL FOUNDATION)

It opened to the public in

1989 and has, ever since, been organising major painting, sculpture, photography and architecture exhibitions in collaboration with other local educational and cultural agencies. Events related to the history of the city and the greater area also take place there. The collection includes approx. 250 pieces on painting, sculpture, pottery, mosaics, murals and engraving.

THESSALONIKI CINEMA MUSEUM

It was created in 1997 and the opening coincided with the European Capital of Culture events which were hosted by Thessaloniki that year. It is closely related to the city history, as the Thessaloniki International Film Festival has been taking place in the city since 1960 (see p. 108). Exhibits tell the history of the Greek cinema and are classified in six timelines, namely *Manakia brothers, 1900-1940, 1940-1960, 1960-1970, 1970-1990, and 1990 and beyond*. Among the items on display are rare

88. The Society for Macedonian Studies houses a most interesting Gallery.

89. Casa Bianca houses the Municipal Gallery of Thessaloniki.

90. The Thessaloniki Cinema Museum.



cinema projectors, old films, photographic material on Greek and foreign actors, film advertisement and newsreels dating to 1910. The museum runs educational programmes for children and young people up to the age of 18, as well as remarkable temporary exhibitions.

PHOTOGRAPHY MUSEUM, THESSALONIKI

It was founded in 1997 and it remains the only state-run museum of photography in Greece. Photographic objects exceeding 100,000 refer to the period 1890-1980 and include works of art by top Greek photographers (Sok. Iordanidis, G. Stylianos, D. Letsios, a section of K. Balafas and Nelly's archives, and the Greek part of F. Boissonas' archive. The Museum often runs temporary exhibitions and every other year it organises the PhotoBiennale International Photography Festival (www.photobiennale.gr). Furthermore, a variety of other events are hosted such as discourse events and educational programmes.

OLYMPIC MUSEUM

It was inaugurated in 1998 as the Sports Museum of Thessaloniki and the original collection comprised objects coming from a number of sports events (Balkan, Mediterranean, European, World and Olympic Games), offered by Greek sports federations, athletes, journalists and others, in order to preserve and promote sports material of historical importance. In January 2008, the International Olympic Committee changed the name to *Olympic Museum* and since then collections focus on objects related with the Olympic and Paralympic Games such as costumes, equipment, torches, medals, souvenirs and published items.

'CHRISTOS TSIGGIRIDIS' RADIO MUSEUM

Exhibits include some of the equipment used by Chr. Tsiggiridis (1877 – 1947), the founder of the first radio station in the Balkans, old material from Macedonia Radio Station, apparatus used by the army as well as equipment

from amateur stations in town. Photographic material and voice archives comprising extracts from speeches of major personalities in the Modern Greek history are also on display.

WATER MUSEUM

The museum is housed in three restored buildings and the surrounding grounds, covering a total area of 3,000 m². The **main building (pump room)** contains pumping machinery, motors and power-generating machines, old power distribution panels and a piece of steam-driven machinery, in the **multi-use room (old boiler-room)** there is an impressive array of old steam boilers; in the **management building** there is a library with specialised volumes on water and hydraulic works as well as an archive of rare historical maps, old water-supply plans and photographs. In the **Water Park** there are old pumping machinery and pipelines on display.

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

This multi-theme museum

opened in 1997 and it was housed in a traditional building in Ano Poli quarter (see p. 47), until 2009 when it was destroyed by fire. It is currently housed in the Cultural Centre of the Municipality of Thessaloniki and targets the 4-12 age group, through special programmes on games, entertainment and education; seminars addressed to students and teachers get also organised there.

NOESIS SCIENCE CENTRE AND TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM

The Centre's core part is the Technology Museum and the three special education rooms. The *Technology Museum* houses three exhibitions as follows:

- **Ancient Greek Technology.** Specimens of Ancient Greek technology elements and achievements are exhibited in the form of exact copies of items related to everyday life, construction, shipbuilding, mechanics, metric and so on.
- **Technopark.** It showcases 50 interactive exhibits on electricity, magnetism, optics,

91



91.
The
Thessaloniki
Olympic
Museum.

92.
NOESIS –
Thessaloniki
Science
Centre and
Technology
Museum.

92



79

mechanics and so on, which lay emphasis on the visitor's active participation as well as on learning and having fun at the same time.

• **Car Exhibition.**

Old car models that have been the most popular productions in the history of the automobile industry can be seen here.

The education rooms are the following:

• **Planetarium.** This 160-seat room has a domed screen (the dome is visible on the outside as well). Visitors can watch educational and recreational films such as *The Earth and me*, *Wonders of the Universe* and others.

• **Cosmotheatre.** This film theatre features the largest flat screen in Southeast Europe (23X17 m.). Movies such as *Dinosaurs* and *Beyond the skies* are screened here

• **Virtual Reality Simulator.** The spectator wears 3-D glasses, boards a small wagon and enjoys an on-the-go simulation experience of various types such as flight, deep-sea voyage and tours in imaginary worlds.

Furthermore, Noesis organises *educational programmes* on Renewable Sources of Energy and Science Shows to further explicate the laws of Physics and Chemistry.

GEROVASSILIOU WINE MUSEUM

This outstanding museum has been open since 2008 in the winery's grounds where the vineyards spread in a 56-hectare area, affording a fine view of the greater area and Thermaic Gulf. The museum collections are arranged in seven categories:

• **Introduction.** The wine-making history of the Gerovassiliou family is shown as well as the stages of the museum's creation.

• **The journey of the wine.** (Room A). A depiction is made of the course of wine across the ages and the vessels for carrying it since the ancient times.

• **Wine and food.** (Room A). Combinations of food and wine from the vineyards are on display in three-dimensional depictions.

94



• **Stories with corkscrews.** (Room A). Over 2,500 corkscrews are shown, dating to the 16th – 20th c., coming from the wine-maker's personal collection known to be one of the largest in the world. The collection's main part is divided in mechanical and non-mechanical openers, yet they are also classified according to whether they were used by men or women, following the consumer habits, the fashion and artistic trends of each time. Explanatory texts and photographs complement exhibited items.

• **Words** (Room A). A list of

words chosen from the glossary of viticulture and wine-making appears on touch screens.

• **Wine stories** (Room B). The economic, social and symbolic importance of wine through history is depicted here; tools and vessels connected with the traditional wine-making process are also on display.

• **Moments** (Room B). Scenes from films and photos related to wine production and consumption appear on screen.

For information on museums, see p. –



93. Interior view of Noesis Museum.

94. Entrance to the Gerovassiliou Wine Museum.

95 & 96. The Gerovassiliou Wine Museum: (left) part of the impressive collection of corkscrews; (right) part of the collection of wine-making equipment.



DAY EXCURSIONS

Thessaloniki lies in the centre of a wide area that is extremely interesting from an archaeological, historical and natural point of view; there are countless options for outdoor activities, relaxing and entertainment. For instance, you can combine your stay in town with a day excursion to renowned archaeological sites and places of historical interest, to fascinating towns and great natural reserves or to areas offering recreation or relaxation.

1 ANCIENT PELLA

Inhabited since the Late Helladic period, the area flourished when Archelaos, the Macedon king, moved the capital of the Macedonian state from Aiges (Vergina) to Pella (late 5th – early 4th c. BC). The then seaside town grew larger during the reign of King Philip II (his son, Alexander the Great, was born here) and grew even larger later during the rule of Cassander. By the mid-2nd century BC it had evolved into the greatest political, financial and cultural

centre among the Hellenic City States. In 168 BC when the Macedonians were defeated in the battle of Pydna, Pella was conquered by the Romans. It gradually declined and got eventually deserted in the 1st century BC. Among the finds of the greatest value are the exquisite mosaic floors in the buildings, which manifest the high standard of living enjoyed by the residents.

MUST SEE:

Houses. Most town houses were spacious, with an inner central yard, a peristyle and rich decorations. The **House of Dionysus** (4th c. BC) was named after the mosaic which depicts god Dionysus on a panther, holding a thyrsos [a staff of giant fennel], another mosaic shows a griffin rending a deer. The **House of the Snatching of Helen**, (325-300 BC) contains mosaics picturing Theseus abducting Helen, as well as scenes of an *Amazonomachy* [a battle between the Greeks and the Amazons] and deer hunting.

Agora. This building complex dates to the 4th c. BC; it occupied a 70,000 m² area and used to be the administrative, commercial, cultural and artistic hub of the town. In the centre there was a large court surrounded by arcades and rooms where all kinds of commercial shops and workshops, as well as the Public Archives were to be found.

Temples. Excavations have unearthed the **Temple of the Mother of Gods and of Aphrodite** (4th c. BC), the **Temple of Darron** (2nd c. BC) and the round-shaped **Thesmoforio**, a name given to temples dedicated to goddess Demeter; it is located in the modern town area.

Palace. It lies on the northernmost hill and covers a 60,000 m² area. You will reach it via the modern town. The earlier buildings date to the 2nd half of the 4th c. BC; complementary constructions were added later. In the centre there was a peristyle surrounding the courtyard, a propylaeum, and the royal quarters were on the north side.

Eastern cemetery. It is located east of the town.

Excavations on the site brought to light rock hewn cist graves which date back to the period from the Copper Age to the Classical times; at a short distance from it there is a **chamber tomb** (4th - 2nd c. BC).

Alexander the Great Bathhouse. On the way to Giannitsa town, you will see this bathing facility of the Hellenistic times.

Archaeological Museum. This modern museum is among the most interesting ones in Northern Greece. Exhibits are grouped in 5 principal thematic categories: in the **first** one, exhibits relate to the daily life of the Pella residents (mosaics, wall decorations, objects of everyday use and so on); in the **second** one, the public life is depicted with finds mostly from the Agora area; in the **third** one, objects used in the temples are on display and information is given on the local religious practices; in the **fourth** one, there are finds from the cemeteries and in the **fifth** one, focus is placed on the architectural design and structuring of the palace, as well as on the life of Alexander the Great. An interesting film



97.
The Pella
Archaeological
site: the
restored
peristyle
[colonnaded
courtyard]
in House A.



on the area's history is shown in a special room.

1.1 Military Museum of the Balkan Wars.

It is located in Gefyra village, 25km NW of Thessaloniki, and it is housed in the mansion of J. Modiano (1906, P. Arrigoni). This is where the Greek army headquarters were set up by Constantine, the then heir to the Greek throne, on October 24-27, 1912; the final negotiations with the Turks about surrendering Thessaloniki took place on that spot. Rare relics are on display such as maps, uniforms, arms, medals, documents, items of daily use, and so on, as well as photos and paintings with similar subjects. The mansion grounds are decorated with authentic furniture of that time so as to provide a faithful depiction of the then style.

1.2 Giannitsa.

This modern town has a population of 35,000 and lies 10 km W of Ancient Pella. The place used to be a sacred town for the Muslims since this is the burial place of Gazi Evrenos [Gazi Evren Bey], one of the major Ottoman army commanders, as well as of Seyh Abdullah al Ilahi, his

teacher and spiritual father. Some of the greatest ottoman monuments in Greece are to be found in Giannitsa. Visit the **mausoleum of Gazi Evrenos** (1417, reconstructed in the 19th c.), a two-storey rectangular elegantly decorated building, which was recently renovated and is currently used as a cultural events venue. Within a short distance (on Strantzis St.) lie the 14th century **hamam of Gazi Evrenos** (a.k.a. Kaiafa bathhouse) which is the oldest ottoman monument in town, the impressive 25-metre-high **clock-tower** (1668) and a bit further to the north (on Strantzis St.) lies the two-storey **mausoleum of Ahmet Bey Evrenosoglou** (the grandson of Evrenos), a construction of the 2nd half of the 15th century. **Iskender Bey mosque** (1511) at the town entrance and **Seyh Ilahi mosque** (15th c.) located in Kapsali army camp are two other very interesting ottoman places of worship. At a short distance from Giannitsa, you will find some lovely green areas with flowing waters, where outdoor activities can be practiced. These are:

Aravissou springs (15 km NW) where you can enjoy a meal at the local tavernas; the **artificial Platanopotamos Lake**, near Agrosykia village, (17 km NE) where you can visit the ruins of Pelit fortress, dating to the times of Alexander the Great, and Profitis Ilias country chapel; and the recreation area in **Dytiko plane-tree forest** (3.5 km NE of Agrosykia village).

How to get there. Ancient Pella is located 40 km W of Thessaloniki. If you go by car, take the national road towards Edessa town and then follow the signs that will lead you to the archaeological site. To reach the military Museum of Balkan Wars, take the 68 bus departing from the station at the horseshoe-shaped point on Aristotelous Street (where Aristotelous and Egnatia Streets meet).

2 VERGINA (AIGES or AIGAI)

As far back as the 10th -8th c. BC Aiges was already a great town and the capital of the Macedon state until the 5th BC when King Archelaos moved the capital to Pella. It was

situated in the centre of the area which was called "Macedonian Land" by Herodotus [an ancient Greek Historian]. The first magnificent palaces of the Macedonian Kings were built here and the foundations of the great Macedon State were laid at that time. It was the sacred town of the Macedonians and remained so after the 5th c. BC as Aiges was the place of origin of the Royal House of Argeades whose members were thought to be descendants of the House of Timenides and Hercules. In 168 BC the town was destroyed by the Romans and finally got deserted in the 1st c. AD. On the grounds of its importance, the archaeological site has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List as a *Multiple Thematic Focus Museum*.

MUST SEE:

Royal Tombs. In 1977, the archaeologist Manolis Andronikos unearthed the royal tombs inside a big earth mound (Megali Toumpa - Great Tumulus). The tombs and the mound interior have been restructured into an amazing museum where the

98 & 99.
The Pella
Archaeological
Museum:
(left) mosaic
floor with
representation
of a lion
hunting scene
[325-200 BC];
(right) marble
head of
Alexander the
Great (325-
300 BC).

100.
Entrance to
the Royal
Tombs of
Vergina.



atmosphere is particularly emotive as the place is dark with selective lighting on the exhibits. Past the entrance there are **funerary steles, finds from tombs** of locals of that time and the ruins of a **3rd c. BC tomb** (tomb IV), consisting of parts of walls and pillars as well as the façade's superstructure. Next is the **Memorial**, a monument dedicated to the memory of distinguished persons and after that there is a **cist tomb** (tomb I of Persephone) that belonged to one of the wives of Philip II. In the next section lie the **tomb of King Philip II** with exquisite murals and friezes on display as well as arms and his suit of armour decorated with gold; the remains of the funeral pyre; the gold lamax that weighs 11 kg and contained the bones and the golden oak wreath of the dead king, decorated with the macedonian star (or Vergina Sun); the gold lamax of the royal wife; the cloth embroidered with gold threads which covered the two *larnakes* (chest-shaped coffins); and the two gold and ivory beds. The last part consists of what is believed to have been the **tomb of Alexander**

IV, son of Alexander the Great and Roxanne, who was assassinated by Cassander in 310 BC; a silver urn containing the bones of the dead person, framed with the ivory relief motifs of the funeral bed. In a separate room, visitors can watch a **video** where M. Andronikos takes them on a tour of the monuments. Other excavations in the wider area of the Aiges necropolis have unearthed **archaic tombs, pit and cist tombs** (6th and 5th c. BC), as well as temple-shaped **macedonian tombs** one of which apparently belonged to Queen Eurydice, the mother of King Philip II

Palace. It covers a 12,500 m² area and it used to be the largest and the most important construction (next to Parthenon, Athens) of the Hellenic Classical Antiquity. This two-storeyed edifice is presumed to be the work of Pytheos who was the architect of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassos [modern-day Bodrum, Turkey], one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. The palace's architectural style is considered avant-garde for that time and it was built of limestone during the 2nd half of the 4th c. BC on a plateau;

this made it visible from any point of the surrounding area. The palace interior included a large peristyle surrounding the courtyard of the palace and a propylaeum (a monumental gateway), a temple dedicated to *Hercules Patroos* [Macedonians believed Hercules was their Ancestor], luxury rooms paved with mosaic floors, and reserved for symposia, as well as auxiliary rooms (stables, warehouses and so on).

Theatre. It was built circa 340 BC, north of the Palace, and is one of the oldest stone theatres of the Hellenic World. It contained nine rows of seats and today the foundations are all that's left of the stage. King Philip II was assassinated here in 336 BC.

Temples. The religious site dedicated to goddess *Euclea* (4th c. BC) is to be found near the theatre. It comprises two temples, an altar, a stoa, a building with a peristyle, and the remaining bases of royal votive offerings, with inscriptions. Closeby, you will see the temple of *Kyveli* [Cybele] (2nd half of the 4th c. BC), the mother of the gods; a building of the Hellenistic period was unearthed at a

short distance, dating to the 2nd c. BC.

Acropolis. Excavations have brought to light five towers that were part of the Acropolis, and at a short distance there are ruins of the 3-metre thick fortification walls; in the vicinity you will see the remains of house foundations dating to the period from the 5th to the 1st c. BC.

2.1 Veroia.

This beautiful and historic town in the North of Greece is located 8 km NW of Vergina. It used to be the second most important town for ancient Macedonians, after Aiges; prosperity times went on during the Roman and the Byzantine period. Veroia was one of the places visited by Apostle Paul and a *Podium* was constructed in 1995 to commemorate this event. In the past the town was also known as *Little Jerusalem* because of the numerous Byzantine and post-byzantine churches out of which more than 50 have survived. There is also a centuries-old Jewish presence in town; *Barbouta* (on the banks of Tripotamos River) is today the only

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103



101, 102 & 103.

The Royal Tombs of Vergina: (left) the golden lamax of Meda, wife of King Philip II; (middle) the King's burial place; (right) the urn bearing the gold wreath of Alexander IV.

Jewish quarter in Europe, which maintains a traditional character in its entirety. It is worth taking a walk and visiting the Roman, Ottoman and Industrial age monuments in the traditional districts of Kyriotissa, Panagia Dexia, and Makariotissa; you can also visit the *Public Central Library* which has earned an international award, or relax in the parks and squares.

How to get there.

Vergina is about 63 km SW of Thessaloniki. If you travel by car, follow the signs to Veroia and after that to Vergina. You can also take the intercity bus or the train to reach Veroia and then take the local bus to Vergina.

3 DION

This most enchanting archaeological site is located under the imposing Olympus mountain range, in a 150-hectare green area amid flowing waters coming from Vafyras River and from other springs; it is the habitat of many species of birds, reptiles and amphibians. This used to be a sacred place to ancient Macedonians who worshipped

Olympian Zeus and the Muses [daughters of Zeus] here. Athletic and theatrical games were established here in the 5th c. BC (called "Olympia Games in Dion"); later on, the town was built next to the sacred grounds, gradually acquiring a monumental status during the Hellenistic times, and managed to keep its splendour until the 5th c. AD when it was finally deserted due to intense seismic activity in the area.

MUST SEE:

Vafyras sacred springs.

This place was selected to become Zeus' worship grounds on account of the area's many springs, as Zeus was originally worshipped as the god of weather and rain. Their waters flowed into Vafyras River which was navigable in antiquity and connected Dion with the Thermaic Gulf.

The temple of Demeter.

It is a complex of buildings constructed from the 6th c. BC until the Roman times.

Sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos [Almighty].

It lies in the north side of a spacious square and the altar is situated in front of it. Copies of the worshipped statue and

bases of sculptures depicting eagles have been placed on their original positions.

Sanctuary of Isis.

This is probably the most fascinating temple in the area as it is half-sunk in water. It was dedicated to the Egyptian goddess whose worship replaced that of Artemis during the Hellenistic times. There is also a small temple dedicated to Aphrodite *Ypolypidia* [worshipped at the foot of Mt Olympus]; copies of statues found here were placed in their original positions.

Sanctuary of Olympian Zeus.

The temple became complete in the Hellenistic period. A large altar and inscriptions containing official documents by Macedon kings were found on the spot. A horseshoe-shaped **Roman theatre** with 24 rows of benches was built in the south edge during the 2nd c. AD, in the place of the older Hellenistic theatre; a small bath house (**Thermae**) was found northeast of the sanctuary.

Hellenistic Theatre.

It was built on the location of an older theatre of the classical

period, in the 3rd c. BC. Part of the *Olympos Festival* artistic events take place here today in the *theatron* [auditorium] where modern tiers have been added to accommodate viewers.

Sanctuary of Asklepios.

It was built in the 4th - 3rd c. BC and remained open for religious services until the 3rd c. AD. The most important finding is a small marble statue of goddess Hygeia [Health].

Cemetery Basilica.

It was built in the 5th c. within the town's Christian cemetery grounds. It was a three-aisled basilica with a semi-circular apse, a narthex and an atrium.

Hellenistic and Roman Walls (fortified precincts).

Originally constructed by Cassander in 306-304 BC, this nearly square-shaped structure's dimensions were 2,625 m. Length by 3 m. Width by 7-10 m. Height. It was reconstructed in 219 BC and later in the 3rd c. AD as it had suffered attacks. In the SW side there are remains of a **cistern**; the best preserved **Macedonian tomb** in the area is to be found outside the west gate.

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104, 105 & 106.

The Dion Archaeological site: (left) the Great Thermae; (middle) view of the sanctuary of Demeter; (right) detail from a house mosaic.

Main street.

This wide stone-paved street used to cross the town in the north-south direction. The marketplace, shops, public buildings and houses flanked the street all along.

Great Thermae.

This complex of public bath houses covers a 4,000 m² area. The facilities were paved with marble and mosaic floors, there were Vespasian urinals, entertainment areas, a courtyard, shops, a hall for the worship of god Asklepios, and a roofed **Odeon** for cultural events.

The Houses of Zosa and Lida.

Located in the SE section of the town, the two houses used to be decorated with mosaic floors and sculpted busts.

Roman Forum.

It dates back to the late 2nd – early 3rd c. and comprises a slab-paved square surrounded by arcades and public buildings. In the West side there were the luxury **houses of Epigenis** and **Evoulos**, decorated with exquisite mosaics; **Sevasteio**, a temple dedicated to the worship of the Roman

emperors was situated in between the houses. In the East side, there is a **roman basilica**, an area for trade and banking transactions, the **Monument of the Shields** (with shield and cuirass depictions) and the **Forum Thermae**.

Polygonal building.

This structure - square on the outside - contained a 12-side courtyard; it covered an area of 1,400 m² and was used as a roofed marketplace. To the north of the building there are relics of the town's **Early Christian Walls** (365 – 380).

Early Christian (episcopal) basilica

The original church was a three-aisled basilica which was destroyed in the 4th c. and was rebuilt in the 5th c. with an added atrium and baptistery.

Praetorium.

The building comprised an inn for state officials (called *praetorium*) and an inn for common travellers (called *tavemas*). Visitors were able to use the **Main Street Thermae** (dating to the imperial Roman period), located south of

Praetorium and the public toilets (called **Vespasians**) which were located to the east.

The Hydraulis sector.

This was a complex of buildings named after the copper hydraulis [a type of pipe organ] found here along with a multitude of other copper items.

Villa of Dionysus.

This urban area house (2nd c. AD) is where an amazing mosaic was found, depicting Dionysus on a chariot coming out of the sea.

Archaeological Museum.

Housed in a brand new building, the Archaeological Museum showcases finds from the Dion area (statues, inscriptions, artefacts etc) classified in thematic groups (public buildings, houses, sanctuaries, ancient technology etc), and also finds from the foot of Mt Olympus and ancient Pydna. The *Ancient Relics House* lies opposite and showcases more recent finds from ongoing excavations.

[3.1] Mt. Olympus.

The highest Greek mountain (2,918 m.) is globally known as the residence of the 12 gods of ancient Greek mythology.

It is the first National Park of Greece (1938); in 1981 it was designated a World Biosphere Reserve area by UNESCO. It includes 4,500 hectares of oak, black pine, beech, Bosnian pine, alpine vegetation, and 1,700 species of flora; recorded fauna includes 32 species of mammals, 108 species of birds, a great variety of reptile and insect species, and an abundance of butterflies. The mountain is very popular with hiking and mountaineering fans, there are six refuges and nine mountain routes (which include part of the E4 European path) all the way to the highest peaks namely *Mytikas* and *Stefani*.

[3.2] Ancient Pydna.

It lies 43 km N of Dion and it was built in the 8th – 7th c. BC. During the 4th c. BC the Macedon king Philip II made Pydna the administrative centre of the district. In 168 BC, Roman troops defeated the Macedonian army near the town, and that meant the beginning of Roman rule in Macedonia. Gradually the town went into decline and was successively occupied by Bulgarians, western Europeans and Turks, and got eventually deserted in the 15th c. Excavations have unearthed

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107.
A climbing route on the Olympus National Park.



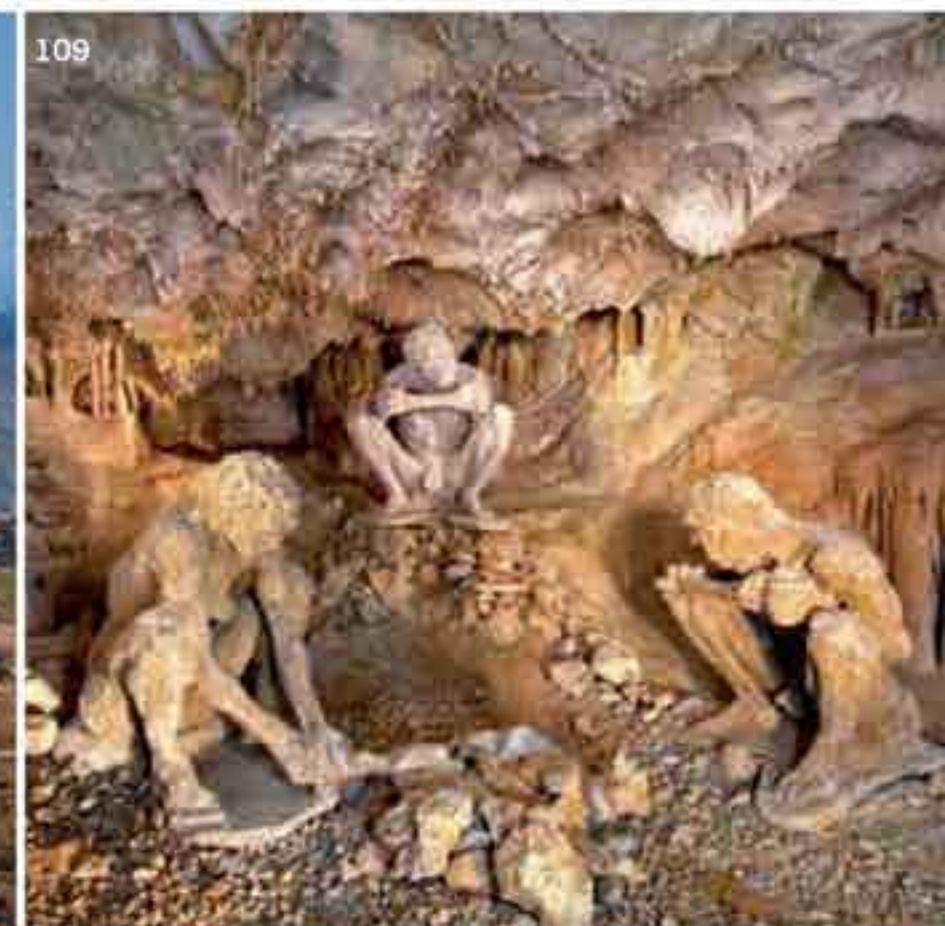
108

108.
A general view of the imposing Olympus mountain range.



109

109.
Petalona Museum: a depiction of prehistoric human activity inside the cave.



a neolithic settlement which is considered to have been the largest in the Hellenic area, a cemetery, two early-Christian basilicas (4th and 6th c.) and a 10th c. basilica with remarkable mosaics and murals.

How to get there.

Dion is situated 87 km SW of Thessaloniki. Follow the national road to Athens and then the signs to Katerini and Dion. Alternatively, take the coach to Katerini (Pieria district) and then the local bus to Dion.

4 PETRALONA CAVE

It was discovered in 1959, by accident, in the western part of Halkidiki. It is 1,500 m. long (a 400 m. section is open to visitors); the chambers, the stalagmite and stalagmite formations within are very interesting. The location became universally known when an array of prehistoric items was found in the interior (fossil tree leaves, bones of rhinos, elephants, equids, hyaenas etc), as well as vestiges of human activity such as traces of fire, stone tools and so on. However, the most important find is the *skull of a*

woman who is approximately 200,000-400,000 years old and is classed as a type in between Homo Erectus and Homo Sapiens, according to palaeoanthropologist A. Poulianos. Such evidence makes this cave one of the oldest archaeological sites in Europe. Findings from the cave (tools, animal bones etc) are on display at the **Museum** and so are a cast of the skull (the original is kept at the Geology-Palaeontology Museum of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, see p. 38) and a reconstruction of the place it was found.

4.1 Halkidiki (also Chalcidice or Chalkidiki) – Agio Oros [Holy Mount].

Homeland of Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher, Halkidiki is one of the best and most popular tourist destinations in Greece with an important history, bustling tourist resorts, traditional villages, enchanting beaches, verdant mountains and an intense night life. Located south of Thessaloniki, Halkidiki ends in the three leg-shaped peninsulas named *Kassandra*, *Sithonia* and *Athos*. Thessalonians swarm in *Kassandra* and *Sithonia* for

a day trip (it's only a short distance from the city) or for a longer one; quite a few own country houses there. In the Athos peninsula amidst a beautiful and pristine natural environment lies the globally known monastic state of **Mount Athos** which encompasses 20 -presently inhabited- monasteries (10th – 14th c.), sketes [small monastic settlements] and cells for monks. UNESCO has included the 'Holy Mount' in its World Heritage Monument List in 1988, on grounds of the outstanding architecture and the priceless cultural treasures of the monastic community.

How to get there.

Petralona Cave is situated 53 km SE of Thessaloniki. Take the coach to Halkidiki, get off at Nea Kallikrateia Village stop and then take a taxi to the cave (approx. a 10-km journey). If you travel by car, go along the Thessaloniki-Halkidiki national road and then follow the signs to *Petralona village* and the cave.

5 LAKES AREA

Northeast of Thessaloniki, in the direction of Strymonas

(also Strymonian) gulf stretches a 200,000 hectare-area around **Lakes Koroneia** and **Volvi**; the place is a National Park. It is a rare group of ecosystems with wet forests and meadows, rivers and shrubland, and the ideal place for outdoor activities (horse-riding, mountain biking, birdwatching, agritourism and so on); the Agency for the Management of Lakes Koroneia and Volvi (www.foreaskv.gr) runs tours in the area. Make sure you try some of the local delicacies, including lake fish dishes.

MUST SEE:

5.1 Lagadas.

This picturesque town is situated 20 km NE of Thessaloniki and has been known for keeping the custom of fire-walking (*anastenaria*) on May 21st. The ultra modern Spa facilities of the area also include two Byzantine bathtubs (10th and 15th c.) and they are located two km E amid lush greenery. The sulphur springs (water temperature: 39.2° C) are recommended for treating neuropathy, rheumatism, arthritis, skin and gynaecological diseases.

110



110.
One of
Halkidiki's
numerous
lovely beaches.

111.
Mount
Athos: Agios
Panteleimonas
Monastery.

111



5.2 Lake Koroneia.

It is also known as Lake Agios Vasileios or Lagada. It used to cover a 4,600-hectare area in the 1970s with a depth measurement of up to 8 m. Today however, the body of water and its depth depend on climate conditions, due to the intensive exploitation of the area's water resources.

5.3 Nea [New] Apollonia.

The small village on the south side of Lake Volvi (56 km NE of Thessaloniki) is a historic area, as an important Macedonian town used to exist here in the 5th c. BC. The area's mineral springs contain hydrogen sulphide, the temperature measures 49°-50°C and waters flow into Lake Volvi. They are recommended for the treatment of many types of neuropathy, rheumatism, arthritis, skin and gynaecological complaints. There are hotels, a modern waterspa facility and a comprehensive health centre. In nearby **Apollonia**, you will find the *Info Centre for the Koroneia-Volvi Wetlands*, housing a small exhibition on the lake habitat and the species living there.

5.4 Lake Volvi.

It is the second – in terms of size – natural lake in Greece (39 km E of Thessaloniki), with a 6,800-hectare area and a depth measurement of up to 20 m.; this wetland is of great importance and a Ramsar site. Near Apollonia there is a location suitable for birdwatching. In the greater area (Apollonia and Nea Madytos) you will find a *water sports club* and you can practice rowing, sailing, canoe-kayaking and water-skiing. Volvi village is a tourist attraction located on the north side of the lake, and comprises the smaller communities of *Megali Volvi*, *Mikri Volvi* and *Rentina*.

5.5 Rentina.

Richios River crosses the area and the riverside forest is a place of particular natural beauty, teeming with flora and fauna. The ruins of a Byzantine community and a castle can be seen on an elevation.

5.6 Asprovalta – Nea Vrasna – Stavros.

These growing tourist areas stretch along the beautiful beaches on the Strymonian

gulf. You will find a marine sports and a beach volleyball facility on Asprovalta beach (10 km long and awarded a Blue Flag) and on Nea Vrasna beach; Stavros is the biggest harbour in the gulf. **Vrasna** and **Ano Stavros** villages are situated at the foot of Mt Kerdylia; their traditional architecture makes them absolutely worth visiting.

How to get there. From Thessaloniki, take the 83, 83M or 83N bus line to reach Lagkadas. For the other areas, travel by coach. If you go by car, head for Panorama, Chortiatis and Agios Vasileios (to reach Lake Koroneia) and from that point go east towards Kavala (to visit Lake Volvi and the Strymonian gulf).

6 PIKROLIMNI

It is located in the neighbouring Kilikis regional unit, to the south. It is a shallow lake (covering a 450-hectare area) and in the lake floor mud there are chemical combinations such as sulphides and nitric salts with healing and cosmetic

properties known across the country – the concentration is three times higher than that in the Dead Sea. In the neighbouring *Xylokeratia* village you can visit the first Mud-therapy (Spa) Centre in the Balkans. There are swimming pools for men and women, 10 personal hydromassage areas where mineral spring water is used, saunas, a gym and areas for mud treatment. In the summer, visitors can enjoy a special mud therapy by the lake shore which gets usually dried up during the warmest season of the year. In the grounds you will find a physiotherapy centre and a medical clinic, a hotel, a restaurant, a bar, basketball and football fields.

How to get there.

Pikrolimni is located 23 km N of Thessaloniki. If you travel by car, follow the signs to Kilikis and after that, from Galliko village head for Xylokeratia (Pikrolimni). Alternatively there is a bus from Dimokratias square (Vardari) leaving daily at 9 am, which will take you to the Mud Therapy Centre for free.

112

112.
Stavros beach.

113.
View of Lake
Volvi from
Nea Apollonia
Thermal
Springs (Spa).

114.
Picturesque
country chapel
in green Stena
Redinas.



113



114



THE HISTORY OF THESSALONIKI

▶ 315 BC:

26 adjoining townlets merge to form Thessaloniki. The town is founded by Cassander, King of Macedonia, and named after his wife Thessaloniki – half sister to Alexander the Great.

▶ 168 BC:

The Romans take the city over.

▶ 148 BC:

It becomes the capital town of the roman province of Macedonia.

▶ 130 BC:

Construction of *Via Egnatia* which connected the town with the then known world.

▶ circa 50 BC:

Cicero, the Roman orator becomes a resident.

▶ 42 BC:

Thessaloniki is declared a "free town" (*civitas libera*).

▶ 50 BC:

Apostle Paul's first visit to the town. He came back seven years later.

▶ Late 3rd – early 4th c. AD:

Becomes the seat of the eastern section of the Roman Empire [according to the system of *Tetrarchia* – (meaning "leadership of four men")] under ceasar Galerius Maximianus.

▶ 323 BC:

Constantine, the first emperor of Byzantium settles in town in order to wage war on Licinius.

▶ Late 4th AD:

The town becomes the administrative centre of Macedonia; Byzantine emperor Theodosius builds the fortifications of Thessaloniki.

▶ 5th - 12th c.:

Raids by Goths, Persians, Arabs, Turks and Bulgarians. The town is spared destruction thanks to its massive walls.

▶ 1185:

The Norsemen occupy Thessaloniki.

▶ 1224:

After the 20-year Frankish domination of Thessaloniki, the town is taken by Theodore Komnenos Doukas and is declared the capital of the Despotate of Epirus.

▶ 1300-1430:

The golden age of the town involves great financial, social and intellectual growth. Some of the most significant monuments, built at that time, still stand today.

▶ 1342-1349:

The Zealot Movement prevails as a reaction to medieval hegemonism and the reign "by the grace of God".

▶ 1423:

The town surrenders to the Venetians.

▶ 1430:

The Ottoman Turks seize Thessaloniki.

▶ 15th c.:

A large Jewish population

settles in town, chased out of European countries – mostly of the Iberian prinsula. Their role in Thessaloniki's history will be a significant one until the mid-20th century.

▶ 16th-18th c.:

Thessaloniki grows, and the various ethnic and religious communities live in harmony. In the 18th c. the town acquires the features of a large trade centre.

▶ Late 19th c.:

A railway connection is established with Europe and Constantinople. Infrastructure gets streamlined and Thessaloniki acquires the feel of a cosmopolitan European city. The Greeks become at this point in time the largest part of the population.

▶ 1890:

Fire incinerates a considerable part of the town's seafront zone.

▶ 1912:

During the 1st Balkan War, the Greek army seizes the town on October 26th; after five centuries of ottoman occupation, Thessaloniki becomes part of Greece.

▶ 1916:

Following a clash with King Constantine, Eleftherios Venizelos forms the temporary "National Defence Government" in Thessaloniki, which remained there for several months.

▶ 1917:

The biggest part of the town is destroyed by a fire that breaks out on August 18th and lasts for 32 hours. Rebuilding begins following the designs of a special international architectural committee led by Ernest Hébrard, French architect and urban planner.

▶ 1922-1923:

As a result of the Asia Minor Catastrophe (the last stage of the Greco-Turkish War) and the agreement on population exchange between Greece and Turkey, Thessaloniki receives large numbers of Greek refugees from Asia Minor, though an incoming flow of refugees (from east Thrace, Pontus etc) had already begun in 1913.

▶ 1943:

The German occupation forces wipe out the biggest part of the city's Jewish population by sending them to concentration camps.

▶ 1978:

A mighty earthquake occurs on June 20th reaching 6.5 on the Richter scale. Severe damages are inflicted on the town, resulting in the death of 49 people.

▶ 1997:

Thessaloniki becomes the "European Capital of Culture".

▶ 2014:

The city is named the "European Youth Capital".

BUYS IN THESSALONIKI

Since Thessaloniki's founding days and on account of its location, the town was always seen as a stopover place on the route used for East to West trading and vice versa. Today, the Thessaloniki town centre is the ideal destination for those who wish to add shopping to their travelling experience. The **traditional roofed and open-air marketplaces** are well known (see p. 21). You will find foodstuffs, spices, clothes, furniture and small objects in reasonable prices. Make a note of visiting **Bit-Pazar** (see p. 36) the place where second-hand and antique dealers' shops are to be found.

The city's **modern commercial centre** (see p. 27) is in the area encompassed by Aristotelous Street (see p. 15), the White Tower (see p. 24) and Tsimiski Street. You will find stylish clothing boutiques, department stores as well as decoration and fur shops.

Visit also the Hirsch Building Mall (see p. 20) and Plateia [Square] Mall (see p. 20). Other interesting shopping areas, for lower budgets, include **Venizelou St.** (see p. 20), **Egnatia St.** (see p. 34) and **Agiou Dimitriou St.** (see p. 39).

Two particularly popular shopping centres are:

a) the **Mediterranean Cosmos** Mall (Pylaia area) where visitors will find over 200 shops as well as cafés, restaurants, a multiplex, a bowling room, a playground area, a 400-seat amphitheatre and the representation of a traditional greek village.

b) The **Apollonia Politeia** Mall, by the A.S. IKEA bus station.

Modern shopping areas with a large variety of products are to be found in **Kalamaria** and in most of the city **suburbs**.

NIGHTLIFE

Thessaloniki is well known for the intense nightlife and the diverse options offered to visitors. Some say that this is the greek 'capital' of entertainment as many trends and new fashions spread out from this town in the last decades and were later adopted across the country. Ranking high in the list of options are the numerous bars (most of them with an avant-garde design), tavernas, ouzo restaurants (called *ouzeri*), modern cuisine restaurants, clubs with live greek music, particularly those playing *rebetiko* - a typical genre of greek popular music which grew to new heights in this town - seaside bars and music stages.

In the city centre, **Ladadika** (see p. 18) has been a favourite nightlife area since the early 1990s; the neighbouring **Kalapothonaki Street** (see p. 17), the cafés and bars by the **old beachfront** (see p. 16) and the modern restaurants and bars housed in the historic city **arcades** all add to the picture. Worthy of notice are also the tavernas in

the **traditional town market places** (see p. 21), the bars and the cosy, elegant restaurants lining the bustling **city streets** (see p. 27), as well as the area between **Zefxidos and Iktinou Streets** (see p. 28). The numerous students living in town prefer to hang out in the area about **Navarinou square** (see p. 28), **Rotonta** [Rotunda] (see p. 37) and **Angelaki Street** (see p. 32) as well as in **Bit-Pazar** area and the streets around it (see p. 36). Tavernas, ouzo-restaurants, and small café-bars, located in **Ano Poli** (see p. 42), are some of the alternative places where Thessalonians love to hang out. In recent years, the area around Valaoritou Street (see p. 23) has become a nightlife hotspot; in the evening - particularly during the summer months - people swarm the area, the restaurants, and music venues!

West of the harbour (**Slaughterhouse area**, see p. 60), there are huge venues for live Greek music (also known as *bouzoukia*) and the biggest clubs in town, as well as multi-purpose cultural

115.
Plateia Mall in
Tsimiski Street.

116.
You will find an
open air flower
marketplace
called
Louloudadika
in the vicinity of
Pazar (Yahoudi)
Hamami.

117.
Most arcades
in the city
house quite
a few popular
restaurants
and bars.





118.
Ladadika is among the top areas for entertainment in Thessaloniki.

119 & 120.
Two typical traditional products of Thessaloniki: koulouri and trigona Panoramatos.

facilities. During the summer months though, most of those clubs and venues move to open-air grounds in the **airport** area (see p. 106). Another favourite area to Thessalonians is **Kalamaria** (see p. 64) and, a bit further off, **Peraia** (see p. 67).

Apart from the entertainment options, a host of artistic events get organised in the city throughout the entire year: choose among the **Thessaloniki Concert Hall** [Megaro] (see p. 52), the **Vasiliko** [Royal] **Theatre** (see p. 25), the Theatre of the **Society for Macedonian Studies** (see p. 25 & 109), **Moni Lazariston** (see p. 61), the **Forest Theatre** [Theatro

Dasous] and the **Theatre of the Earth** [Theatro Gis] (see p. 48); or you can opt for a visit to **museums** (see p. 70-81) and smaller cultural venues. Last but not least, you can visit the **International Film Festival**, the **Thessaloniki Book Fair**, the **Demetria Festival** (see p. 108-109), and other venues housing events on a smaller scale by private companies or city agencies.

Finally, the **Thessaloniki Regency Casino** is located at the 12th km on the Thessaloniki – Airport Road and is open around the clock. Entrance is allowed to people aged 25 and older; an identity or passport is required. (tel. 2310.491.234, website: www.regencycasinos.gr).

GASTRONOMY AND WINES

Thessaloniki has a great culinary tradition which has become an intrinsic part of the character and mentality of the locals. The city's multi-cultural character across the ages has added an indelible stamp on its traditional cuisine which includes Byzantine, Christian, Ottoman influences and elements contributed by the large numbers of Minor Asia refugees who flowed in the town during the 1920s, and also Jewish and western European influences, thus creating unique culinary combinations. Downtown (see p. 15-41), in Ano Poli (see p. 42 - 49) and in the seaside suburbs and city outskirts (see p. 63 - 69), the traditional tavernas, ouzo restaurants and luxury restaurants highlight the local traditional gastronomy often creatively mixing it with gourmet tastes.

Thessaloniki's gastronomy can boast some pretty impressive delicacies [mezedes] such as *gyro* [slices of meat roasted on a spit] and

souvlaki, *patsa*, a variety of soup, pies, Anatolian dishes (*tzigerosarmades*, *giaprakia*, *gardoumpes*, *kebab* etc), lake and sea fish, seafood delicacies (mussel pilaf, *saganaki* with shrimps, stuffed calamari etc). Confectionery is also an important part of local gastronomy and it features the renowned syrupy cakes and pastry originating from Istanbul (*ekmek kadayifi*, *kazandibi*, *tulumba* etc) the well-known *bougatsa* [filled either with cheese or with cream], *galaktompourekio* [a type of pastry filled with custard], and last but not least *trigona Panoramatos* [a cone-shaped syrupy cream-filled puff pastry] (see p. 65). *Koulouri Thessalonikis* is also worthy of mention. It is a sesame-covered piece of bread and an everyday snack for locals, which you can find in the morning hours sold by street vendors or at the baker's. During the winter months, you can try *salep*, an interesting hot beverage.



Thessaloniki Wines. Macedonia has a long tradition on wine-making, as the district can boast some of the most renowned Greek vineyards. In the area surrounding the town, a wide range of varieties are grown such as Roditis, Asyrtiko, Malagouzia, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Voignier, Syrah, Merlot, Grenache Rouge, Limnio, Mavroudi, Mavrotragano, Xinomavro, Cabernet Sauvignon, Athiri and Malvasia. The *Wine Producers Association of Northern Greece Vineyards*, under the trade name *Wines of Northern Greece*, realises a programme

titled "Wine Roads of North Greece" (www.wineroads.gr). It is about an excursion taken to the most interesting parts of the viticultural zone; this is combined with a visit to the archaeological and historical assets of those areas, with countryside activities, as well as a visit to wineries and degustation. Make sure you visit the impressive *Gerovassiliou Wine Museum* in Epanomi (see p. 68 & 80).

For more information, contact the *Wine Roads of North Greece*: tel: 2310 281.617 and 2310 281.632, www.winesofnorthgreece.gr

and sports facilities.

Tour the **suburban forests** of Seich Sou (see p. 47) and Chortiatis (see p. 66) where you can follow the hiking trails or go mountain biking, find the spots designated for sports activities or just relax by the **Deltas of Gallikos river** and **Axios-Loudias-Aliakmonas** rivers (see p. 63) or by the **lakes Koroneia** and **Volvi** (see p. 93-94).

There are some quite interesting educational programmes for children, running in most **museums** (see p. 70 - 81), particularly in the **Children's Museum** (see p. 79) which is the only one of its kind.

Have fun and at the same time get familiar with science and technology at the **Noesis - Science Centre and Technology Museum** (see p. 67) or at the **Nouvelle multi-purpose venue** (7th km on the Thessaloniki - Oraikastro Road) where you can visit the *Environmental Dinosaur Theme Park* and see the natural size reconstructions of animals,

the *Mammoth Museum* where fossils of the hairy mammoth are on display, the Cave where there are depictions of creation and prehistoric life in caves as well as the *Interactive Museum of Greek Traditional Toys and Games* (www.parkodeinosauron.gr).

Another option for you is to go swimming in the beautiful **beaches** by the seaside suburbs and city outskirts (see p. 63-69), in places within the regional unit of Thessaloniki (see p. 91-95), and in Halkidiki (see p. 92). You can also visit the **Magic Park** (12th km on the Thessaloniki - Airport Road), the biggest amusement park in Greece, which attracts children, teenagers, grown-ups and families alike (www.magicpark.gr); the **WaterLand** is another fun option as there are waterpools, waterslides of various sizes, with different levels of difficulty, restaurants and mini markets. It is located in Tagarades, Thermi area, (see p. 66).

TOURING THESSALONIKI WITH CHILDREN

Thessaloniki's relatively small size - for a city - makes it a particularly friendly place for children and offers a host of activities for them.

Go on a **bicycle ride** along the town's bike lanes, especially by the waterfront,

starting from the harbour (see p. 17), past the White Tower area (see p. 24) and up to the Concert Hall (see p. 52) or visit the **Theme Parks** of the new (east) seafront [Nea Anatoliki Paralia] (see p. 50) where there are playgrounds



121, 122 & 123.

Thessaloniki offers its little visitors a host of fun activities and games to choose from.

INFORMATION

GENERAL FACTS

Greece is on Europe's southeast end with a population of 10,788,000. It is a parliamentary republic and a member of the European Union since 1981.

Thessaloniki is located 510 km N of Athens. It is the second biggest city in the country and the biggest in Northern Greece; it is also the capital of the Thessaloniki Regional Unit as well as of the Region of Central Macedonia. It is situated within the inlet of the Thermaic Gulf and the city population is over 1 million.

Currency. Since January 1st 2001 the euro is the Greek national currency. You can change money at the airport, in private exchange offices, or in banks.

Calling code. The international calling code for Greece is +30.

Time. Greece is seven hours ahead of the Eastern Standard Time, two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time and one hour ahead of the Central European Time.

Climate. Thessaloniki has a temperate mediterranean climate with continental features and quite a few sunshiny days throughout the year. The average monthly temperature is as follows:

Month	Temperature (in °C)
January	5
February	6
March	9
April	12,5
May	17,5
June	22
July	23,5
August	24
September	20,5
October	16
November	10

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS AND BANK HOLIDAYS

- **New Year's Day:** January 1st
- **Epiphany:** January 6th. Waters are sanctified: the Cross is thrown into the sea and young men dive to catch it.
- **Shrove Monday:** 41 days before Easter. This is the day when fasting begins. On that day the Greeks fly kites, eat Lenten meals and enjoy the celebrations (called *koulouma*).

- **Independence Day and Religious Feast of the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary:** March 25th.

• **Easter Celebrations:** From Good Friday to Easter Monday. On Good Friday afternoon every church prepares the *Epitaphios* which is an embroidered cloth icon of Christ prepared for burial, lying on a low table adorned with flowers. Later in the evening, Epitaphios is placed at the head of a procession and it is followed by the church congregation; people hold lit candles and chant as they walk the streets of their town or village – this happens throughout the country on Good Friday.

• **Resurrection of Christ:** Mass is celebrated at midnight before Easter Sunday with fireworks and burning candles.

• **Easter Sunday:** It is customary for Greeks to have a meal of lamb roasted on the spit, that day. Celebrations include singing and dancing throughout the entire day.

• **May 1st (Labour Day):** Flower festivals take place in Thessaloniki.

• **Dormition of Theotokos [Mother of God]:** August 15th.

• **October 26th – 28th:** A three-day celebration commemorating the liberation of the city from the Turkish rule, and a religious feast in honour of Saint Demetrius [Agios Dimitrios], the patron saint of the city, on October 26th. A military parade takes place on October 28th to commemorate the beginning of Greek participation in World War II.

• **Christmas:** December 25th – 26th.

OTHER TRADITIONAL FESTIVALS

- **Carnival:** Carnival events last for 3 weeks and end on Shrove Monday. Celebrations are organised in many areas of the region.
- **Pentecost:** A feast celebrated 50 days after Easter.

EMBASSIES-CONSULATES

For information on the Consulates of foreign countries in Thessaloniki, contact

the GNT0 [Greek National Tourism Organisation] office in Thessaloniki or:

• **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
1, Vasilissis Sofias Av. (Athens),
tel: 210 36.81.000
fax: 210 36.81.717
website: www.mfa.gr

ACRONYMS

Here is a list of Greek acronyms you may see while visiting Thessaloniki:

E.O.T. (G.N.T.O.): Greek National Tourism Organisation
E.L.P.A.: Roadside Assistance
EL.TA.: Greek Post Office
K.T.E.L.: Intercity Bus Service
O.A.S.TH.: Urban Bus Service
O.S.E.: Greek Railway Services Organisation
O.T.E.: Greek Telecommunication Services

ELECTRIC CURRENT

The 220V (50Hz) alternating current is in use in Greece.

INTERNET

Use the free wireless internet connection spots offered in the town centre (in Kamara, Aristotelous square and elsewhere), in public places (museums, bookshops, cafés, bars, restaurants and so on) and in suburban areas (for instance Kalamaria and Evosmos). You will also find internet cafés in most districts and suburbs.

POST OFFICE

The Post Office logo is blue and yellow-coloured and the mailboxes are yellow. Post offices are open Monday to Friday from 7.30 am to 2 p.m. The main Post Offices are located at 9^a, *Ethnikis Amynis St.* (until 2.30 pm); 6-8, *Fragkon St.* (until 4.30 pm); and 38, *Vas. Irakleiou St.* (until 8.30 pm). Other post offices in the town centre are at 98, *Agίου Dimitriou St.* (University campus); and at the *Railway Station* (until 2.30 pm).
Information:
tel: 800 11 82.000
website: www.elta.gr

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Police (Hellenic Police):
Thessaloniki Police
Headquarters – Foreigners
Department:
326, Monastiriou St.,
call centre: 2310 388.000
Flying Squad [Amesi Drasi]:
tel.: 100

Traffic Police:
26, Margaropoulou St.
tel.: 2310 557.541

Highway Police:
Malgara toll station
tel.: 23910 21.450-1

ELPA Roadside Assistance:
tel.: 10400

Fire Brigade:
tel.: 199

Medical care:
Instant Aid Centre:
tel.: 166

Emergency hospitals, pharmacies, doctors:
tel.: 14944 (in Greek)

Medical Information in English and Greek:

tel.: 210 89.83.146

SOS Doctors: tel.: 1016

National Centre for Blood Donation:
tel.: 210 24.10.000

Social and psychological help:
tel.: 197 (24-hour service)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Greek National Tourism Organisation (G.N.T.O.)

Regional Tourism Service of Central Macedonia:
136, Tsimiski St.
(Y.M.C.A.-new building)
tel.: 2310 252.170 (call centre),
2310 221.100
(information desk)

mail: tour-the@otenet.gr

Information desk at Makedonia airport:
Domestic arrivals
tel: 2310 985.215

Head offices – Athens:
7, Tsoha St.
tel.: 210 87.07.000,
210 87.07.088, 1572

email: info@gnto.gr

website: www.gnto.gov.gr and
www.visitgreece.gr

GNT0 offices abroad:
For any information on the GNT0 offices abroad, contact the Organisation's Head offices or visit the webpages

www.gnto.gov.gr and
www.visitgreece.gr
Municipality of Thessaloniki
Info Point:

Aristotelous square,
opening hours:
Mon-Fri 9 am – 5 pm
tel.: 2310 229.070

Thessaloniki Tourism
Organisation:
154, Egnatia St., (T.I.F.-
HELEXPO), 54636
tel.: 2310 279.282
email: welcome@thessaloniki.travel
website: www.thessaloniki.travel

Tourist Police:
This department of the Hellenic Police is staffed with men and women with special skills, who also speak foreign languages, in order to provide any information and help to tourists, whenever required. They are also responsible for settling any minor disputes between tourists and tourism businesses. For tourist information, call **1571** any day and time, from anywhere in Greece.

Thessaloniki Tourist Police
Department:
4, Dodekanisou St.
tel.: 2310 554.874

HOTEL INFRASTRUCTURE

There are over 130 establishments of all categories with an approximate overall capacity of 13,000 beds, with a modern, high standard infrastructure. For information on room and camping reservations, contact the G.N.T.O. (E.O.T.) or the competent bureaux such as:

The Thessaloniki Hotels
Association: 81A, Egnatia St.
tel.: 2310 273.993
website: www.tha.gr

The Hellenic Chamber of Hotels:
24, Stadiou St. – 105 64 Athens
tel.: 213 216.99.00,
213 216.99.25

email: info@grhotels.gr
website: www.grhotels.gr

The Hellenic Hoteliers
Federation:
24, Stadiou St. – 105 64 Athens
tel.: 210 33.12.535-6
fax: 210 32.30.636

email: info@hhf.gr
website: www.pox.gr

The Panhellenic Camping
Association:
24, Stadiou St. – 105 64 Athens
tel.: 210 36.21.560

fax: 210 36.21. 918
email: gr-camp@otenet.gr
website: www.greececamping.org

TOURISM-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Conferences

There are very well-equipped areas for holding conferences and professional meetings of any kind, in Thessaloniki and other places within the region. For more info, please contact:

Thessaloniki Convention
Bureau:
154, Egnatia St. (T.I.F.-
HELEXPO), 54636
tel.: 2313 053.355
e-mail: welcome@
thessalonikiconventionbureau.gr
website: www.
thessalonikiconventionbureau.gr

Guided tours

If you wish to go on an organised excursion in areas outside the city limits, contact the GNTO or the following offices

Macedonia & Thrace Travel
Agencies Association:
26, Vas. Irakleiou St.
tel.: 2310 242.695
website: www.etgmth.gr

Macedonia & Thrace Tour
Operators Association:
6, Tertseti St. (Vardari)
tel.: 2310 533.069
website: www.thessaloniki-tours.gr

Union of Tourist Guides,
Thessaloniki:
tel.: 2310 546.037
e-mail: info@touristguides-ngreece.gr
website: www.touristguides-ngreece.gr

Car Rental

There are quite a few car rental agencies in Thessaloniki. For information, please contact:

Car Rental Agencies
Association: 31, Viltanioti St.,
Kato Kifisia, 145 64 Athens
tel.: 210 62.64. 281
fax: 210 62.64. 289
email: steea@steea.gr
website: www.steea.gr

Yacht agents

If you plan to charter a yacht for your holidays, please contact:

Hellenic Yacht Brokers
Association:
Office A1 in Marina Zeas,
185 36 – Piraeus
tel.: 210 45.33.134
fax: 210 45.99.563
email: hyba@ath.forthnet.gr
website: www.hyba.gr

Hellenic Professional Yacht
Owners Association:
Marina Zeas
(Administration Building),
185 36 – Piraeus
tel.: 210 45.26.335
fax: 210 42.80.465
website: www.hpyoa.gr

MARINA

The **Thessaloniki Marina** is located in Aretsou Kalamaria,
tel.: 2310 444.598,
2310 444.541
(Port Authority)
fax: 2310 444.585
VHF: Channel 9 (24-hour service)
website:
www.thessaloniki-marina.gr

BEACHES

Go for a swim in Aretsou beach (Kalamaria, see p. 64) and the nearby beaches of Peraia, Neoi Epivates, Agia Triada (see p. 67) or in Nea Michaniona, Angelochori (see p. 68) and the beaches in Epanomi (see p. 68). A bit farther away, you can try the beaches in Asprovalta area, Nea Vrasna and Stavros (see p. 94). At a 60 – 90 min. distance from the city you will reach the very popular and absolutely beautiful beaches of Halkidiki (see p. 92).

MINERAL SPRINGS – SPAS

Lagkadas Spa:
Location: Lagkadas, Thessaloniki
tel.: 23940 22.221
website: www.loutralagada.gr
Nea Apollonia Spa:
tel.: 23930 41.207 (Town Hall),
23930 41.510, 23930 42.151
(Spa facility)

Souroti Spring (where natural
mineral water is bottled):
Location: Souroti, Thessaloniki
tel.: 23960 41.182 (name of
bottling company: Souroti A.E.),
website: www.souroti.gr

Mud Therapy Spa Centre
(Pikrolimni):
Xylokeratia, Kilkis
tel.: 23410 29.971-3
website: www.pikrolimnispas.gr

TRANSPORT

Buses.

The urban bus service network covers all city areas. The main bus termini are at the Railway Station (see p. 58), in Venizelou Street (Eleftherias square, see p.

17), and Aristotelous square (see p. 15); also at the interchange stations in Stavroupoli (see p. 61), at K.T.E.L. (intercity bus station), IKEA (Pylaia area) and Lagkadas (see p. 93). Buses run from 5 am until midnight, yet there are certain lines running after midnight connecting major junctions. You can purchase a bus pass (one-month, three-months or an annual one) or use a ticket: the one-way basic type, the ticket valid for two trips for a 70-min. period, the ticket valid for three trips for a 90-min. period and the ticket valid for four trips for a 120-min. period, towards any direction on any bus route. You will find ticket boxes in central locations, at the interchange stations and there are also ticket machines inside the buses. Tickets must be validated on the first trip (bus routes info in Greek:

tel.: 11085
website: www.oasth.gr.

Cultural route:

The *50 bus service* runs by the city's major historical and cultural monuments starting from the White Tower and following a circular 50 min. route. On the way, passengers can get information on the monuments using the audiovisual material and pamphlets supplied (in Greek and in English). *Bus no. 22* follows a circular route in Ano Poli and *Mouschounti square* is the terminus. Sightseeing tours can also be taken in open top tourist buses, starting from the White Tower. It is a 70-min. tour in 8 languages.

Makedonia International Airport of Thessaloniki.

It is situated in Mikra area, 15 km SE of the city centre (tel. 2310 985.000). There is a bus service (no. 78 by day and no. 78N by night) connecting the airport with the Railway Station and the Intercity bus station (K.T.E.L.); the 79 bus runs from A.S. IKEA station to the airport.

Olympic Air:
information – bookings
tel.: 8018010101

website: www.olympicair.com

Aegean Airlines:
information – bookings

tel.: 8011120.000
(from a fixed line)
210 62.61.000
(from a cell phone)

website: www.aegeanair.com

Passenger Railway Station.

28, Monastiriou St, information on domestic and international timetables:
tel.: 14511
website: www.ose.gr

Thessaloniki Central Port Authority (at the harbour).

For info on passenger ship timetables,
tel.: 2313 325.821-4

Stavros Port Station:

tel.: 23970 61.280

Intercity bus service (K.T.E.L.).

There is a coach service to regional areas beyond the city limits, and to most areas of continental Greece as well as the islands of Corfu, Zante and Crete; buses leave from the *Macedonia Intercity Bus Station*, at 244, Giannitson St. (5 km W of the centre)
tel.: 2310 595.400
website: www.ktelmacedonia.gr

Taxi Service.

Taxis carry taximeters which calculate the fare that must be paid and the driver must turn the meter on as soon as the passenger is picked up. Fare 1 is on from 05.00-24.00; it is changed to Fare 2 from 24.00 to 05.00. Every taxi driver must have the updated charge rates on display as well as any additional charges.

Radio Taxi:

«Taxiway» (tel.: 18300),
«Mercedes» (tel.: 18180),
«Macedonia» (tel.: 18288)

MUSEUMS – ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

A large number of museums and archaeological sites are open to visitors in the suburbs and city outskirts. A number of them are listed below. For more info visit <http://odysseus.culture.gr>

Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki:

6, Manoli Andronikou St.
tel.: 2313 310.201
website: www.amth.gr

Museum of the Roman Forum:

Olympou and Filippou Sts.
tel.: 2313 310.400
2310 221.266

Museum of Byzantine Culture:

2, Stratou Ave
tel.: 2313 306.400
website: www.mbp.gr

White Tower Museum:

tel.: 2310 267.832
website: www.lpth.gr

Saint Demetrius [Agios Dimitrios] Crypt:

83, Agiou Dimitriou St.
tel.: 2310 270.591
website: www.inad.gr

Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki:

13, Agiou Mina St.
tel.: 2310 250.406
website: www.jmth.gr

Museum for the Macedonian Struggle:

23, Proxenou Koromila St.
tel.: 2310 229.778
website: www.imma.edu.gr

War Museum:

4, Grigoriou Lampraki St.
tel.: 2310 249.803-05

Ataturk Museum:

75, Apostolou Pavlou St.
tel.: 2310 248.452

Folklife & Ethnological Museum of Macedonia – Thrace:

68, Vasilissis Olgas St.
tel.: 2310 830.591, 2310 889.840
website: www.lemmth.gr

State Museum

of Contemporary Art:
21, Kolokotroni St., (Moni Lazariston)
tel.: 2310 589.140-1

website:

www.greekstatemuseum.com

Thessaloniki Centre of Contemporary Art:

Warehouse B1 (port)
tel.: 2310 593.270, 2310 546.683
website: www.cact.gr

Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art:

154, Egnatias St., (within the TIF – HELEXPO grounds)
tel.: 2310 240.002, 2310 240.403
website: www.mmca.org.gr

A.U.Th. Teloglion Foundation of Art:

159A, Agiou Dimitriou St.
tel.: 2310 991.610
website: www.teloglion.gr

Municipal Art Gallery (Mordoch Villa):

162, Vasilissis Olgas St.
tel.: 2310 427.555

Society for Macedonian Studies – Art Gallery:

4, Ethnikis Amynis St.
tel.: 2310 271.195
website: www.ems.gr

Thessaloniki Cultural Centre of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation [M.I.E.T.] (Mehmet Kapanci Villa):

108, Vasilissis Olgas st.
tel.: 2310 295.170
website: www.miet.gr

Thessaloniki Cinema Museum:

Warehouse A (harbour)
tel.: 2310 508.398
website: www.cinemuseum.gr

Museum of Photography of Thessaloniki:

Warehouse A (harbour)
tel.: 2310 566.716
website: www.thmphoto.gr

Olympic Museum:

Agiou Dimitriou & 3rd Septemvriou Sts.

tel.: 2310 968.531-2

website: www.olympicmuseum-thessaloniki.org

Radio Museum:

Within the T.I.F. grounds (south gate Y.M.C.A. of Thessaloniki)
tel.: 2310.299.445
website: www.radiomuseum.gr

Water Museum:

19, 26th Oktovriou St.
tel.: 2310 2310 514.029, 2310 966.600

website: www.eyath.gr

Children's Museum:

Cultural Centre of the Municipality of Thessaloniki, 57, Gr. Lampraki & Kleanthous Sts.
tel.: 2310 913.047

website: www.paidikomouseio.gr

Yeni Mosque:

30, Archaologikou Mouseiou St.
tel.: 2310 857.978

Cast Museum A.U.Th.:

tel.: 2310 997.301
website: www.auth.gr

A.U.Th. Geology & Paleontology Museum:

tel.: 2310 998.540
website: www.auth.gr

Centre for the History of Thessaloniki (K.I.Th.):

Billi Mansion, Ippodromiou square
tel.: 2310 264.668

Ecclesiastical Museum of the Metropolitan Church of Thessaloniki:

7, Vogatsikou St.
tel.: 2310 261.216

Vafopouleio Cultural Centre (Library):

3, G.Vafopoulou St.
tel.: 2310 424.132-3

Centre of Culture of the Municipality of Thessaloniki:

Gr. Lampraki & Kleanthous Sts - Toumpa

tel.: 2310 425.531

Central Municipal Library:

27, Ethn. Amynis St.
tel.: 2313 318.593
email: library@thessaloniki.gr

House of Mount Athos:

109, Egnatias St.
tel.: 2310 263.308
website: www.agioritikiestia.gr –
Mount Athos Pilgrims Office:
2310 252.575

Noesis –Science Centre and Technology Museum:

6th km on the Thessaloniki – Themi Rd. (Themi)
tel.: 2310 483.000
website: www.noesis.edu.gr

Gerovassiliou Wine Museum:

Domaine Gerovassiliou (Epanomi)
tel.: 23920 44.567
website: www.gerovassiliou.gr

Stavroupoli Botanical Garden:

tel.: 2310 600.717

Thessaloniki Zoo:

tel.: 2310 219.980

Military Museum of the Balkan Wars:

tel.: 2310 716.000

Ancient Pella:

tel.: 23820 31.160
23820 32.730
(archaeological site)
23820 33 094 (museum)

Dion:

tel.: 23510 53.484
(archaeological site),
23510 45.057 (museum)

website: www.ancientdion.org

Aiges (Vergina):

tel.: 23310 92.347
(archaeological site – museum of the royal tombs)

website: www.aigai.gr

Petralona Cave:

tel.: 23730 73.365
website: www.petralona-cave.gr

Collaboration of 5 Museums in Thessaloniki.

The Archaeological Museum, the Museum of Byzantine Culture, the State Museum of Contemporary Art, the Macedonian Museum of Modern Art and the Teloglion Foundation of Art are collaborating for the mutual support and promotion of cultural activities, the organisation of thematic exhibitions, and other events and the participation in educational and research programmes.

For more info visit:
www.5museums.gr

CHURCHES OF VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS

Orthodox Metropolitan Church of Agios Grigorios Palamas:
3, Agias Sofias St.
tel.: 2310 271.520

Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary:
19, Fragkon St.
tel.: 2310 539.550

Armenian Orthodox Church:
4, Dialetti St.
tel.: 2310 275.352

Greek Evangelical Church:
37, Palaion Patron Germanou St.
tel.: 2310 273.380

Yad Lezicaron Synagogue (Centre of Jewish History in Thessaloniki):
24, Vas. Irakleiou St.
tel.: 2310 223.231

Monastirioton Synagogue:
35, Syngrou St.
tel.: 2310 524.968

CULTURAL EVENTS – EXHIBITIONS

Demetria.

It is the city's oldest cultural institution, linked inextricably with its cultural identity. It takes place every autumn (September – November) and includes theatrical, dance and music shows, exhibitions, scientific congresses, day conferences and special tributes to Greek and foreign destinations.

For **information** contact the *Vice-Mayor's Office responsible for Cultural, Educational and Tourist Affairs of the City*, at 25, Theofilou St., (Ano Poli),
tel.: 2310 228.243
Department of Event & Festival Organization
tel.: 2313 318.214,
website: www.dimitria.thessaloniki.gr

Thessaloniki International Film Festival. It takes place every November and there is no match for it in southeastern Europe. It was inaugurated in 1960 as the Greek Film Week and it has become an international festival since 1992, with the following

sections: The *Competition Section* where directors present their first or second film, The *Non-Competitive* section, The *Special Screenings* Section, the special section showing a selection of films from the Balkan region under the name *Balkan Survey*, The *Greek Section* where domestic films are shown, The *Open Horizons* Section involving independent film makers from around the world and special *Tributes* to the work of leading Greek and foreign directors. Other events include retrospectives, masterclasses, discussions with the audience and professionals and the annual *Documentary Festival*. Screenings take place in *Olympion* (see p. 15) and in four movie theatres housed in warehouses in the harbour (see p. 18).

Information:
10, Aristotelous square
tel.: 2310 378.400
website: www.filmfestival.gr

Thessaloniki International Fair (T.I.F.) – HELEXPO.

Since 1926 this has been the top trade fair in the Balkans and an institution as such in the city. It takes place every September and it is a major trading and commercial event as the achievements of the Greek industry and entrepreneurship are presented to the world. The first radio station in southeast Europe broadcasted from these grounds for the first time in 1926, followed by the Greek television in the mid sixties. Since the 1960s T.I.F. established the Greek Film Festival (1960, see p. 108) and the Thessaloniki Song Festival in 1962. In 1999 it was replaced by two companies: T.I.F. A.E. and HELEXPO A.E. responsible for organising over 20 theme exhibitions held throughout the year on clothing, furniture, environment, transport, tourism, technology, food industry, services etc. Numerous Greek and foreign companies and agencies participate in the fair and over 2 million people visit it every year.

Information: 154, Egnatia St.
tel.: 2310 291.530,
2310 291.111

website: www.helexpo.gr

International Book Fair.

Held every spring in the HELEXPO-TIF exhibition centre, it is well known as the annual rendezvous place for professionals and book lovers alike. Greek and foreign publishers present their new work and special tributes to writers and types of literature are included in the happenings where new books are presented and open discussions take place with writers; other events include the *honoured country*, *professional meetings*, the *Children's corner*, the *Teenagers' corner* and the *Book lover's corner*.

Information: National Book Centre, 4, Athan. Diakou St, Athens
tel.: 210 92.00.300,
website:
www.thessalonikibookfair.com
and www.ekebi.gr

Society for Macedonian Studies (S.M.S.).

It is a major cultural institution in Thessaloniki aimed at collecting, preserving, studying and promoting the linguistic, historical, traditional and archaeological archives connected with the history of Macedonia. It has a large library and an Art Gallery (see p. 76). A variety of events, scientific congresses and specialised publications are part of the activities organised.

Information:
4, Ethnikis Amynis St.,
tel.: 2310 271.195,
website: www.ems.gr

Thessaloniki Concert Hall.

It is located on 25th Martiou St. (nea paralia), **For information – ticket reservations call:** 2310 895.938-9, **website:** www.tch.gr

Town Centre Ticket Office:
Aristotelous square, **open on** Mon., Wed., Sat. 10am – 3.30 pm and Tue., Thu., Fri. 10 am – 2 pm & 5.30 pm – 8pm.

National Theatre of Northern Greece (N.T.N.G.).

Established in 1961, it is the biggest cultural organisation

of northern Greece and one of the largest in Europe. Its stages comprise the *Children's Theatre*, the *Aenaon dance theatre* (founded in 1982) and the *Dramatic School* (founded in 1973); the *Opera of Thessaloniki* has been running as a self-supporting section of the N.T.N.G. since 1997. It is housed in the theatre of the Society for Macedonian Studies (see p. 25); performances are also held in the Royal [Vasiliko] Theatre (see p. 25), in the *Sokratis Karantinos* Stage, and in the Small Theatre of Moni Lazariston (see p. 61), as well as in the open-air Forest Theatre and Theatre of the Earth (see p. 48).

Information:
2, Ethnikis Amynis St.
tel.: 2315 200.000,
2315 200.200 (ticket boxes)
website: www.ntng.gr

THEATRES

There is a wide variety of indoor and open air theatre stages open during the winter or summer months in Thessaloniki.

Theatre of the Society for Macedonian Studies:

2, Ethnikis Amynis St.
tel.: 2315 200.000

Royal [Vasiliko] Theatre:

White Tower Park
tel.: 2315 200.000

Garden Theatre [Theatro Kipou]:

White Tower Park
tel.: 2310.256.775

Forest Theatre [Theatro Dasous]:

Seich Sou Forest
tel.: 2315 200.200,

Theatre of the Earth [Theatro Gis]:

Triandria Area
tel.: 2310 206.730

Avlaia Theatre:

Thessaloniki Y.M.C.A. building
tel.: 2310 237.700

Aneton Theatre:

42, Paraskevopoulou & Delfon Sts.
tel.: 2310 869.869

Moni Lazariston Building:

21, Kolokotroni St, (Stavroupoli)
tel.: 2310 589.237
2310 589.200

Thessaloniki State Symphony Orchestra (T.S.S.O.).

It was established in 1959 as the Symphony Orchestra of Northern Greece; in 1969 it acquired its present name and was brought under state control. It is considered as one of the best of its kind in Greece and its musicians (approx. 100) have performed in some of the best known Festivals and music stages in Greece and abroad. Concerts take place in the Thessaloniki Concert Hall.

Information: 73, Nikis Ave.

tel.: 2310 257.900

website: www.tsso.gr

Summer (open-air) cinemas.

This is yet another attraction for visitors. Screenings take place in gardens, and you can watch a film while sipping your drink or having a snack, against a backdrop of trees and flowers. Films are not dubbed; Greek subtitles are used instead.

SPORTS

Thessaloniki has a long tradition in sports. In recent decades, major sports events have taken place in the city (finals of European football and basketball games, international track and field events, a marathon race, the 2004 Olympic Games, international beach volleyball tournaments etc). A variety of modern and well equipped facilities are open to those who wish to practice their favourite sport or relax during their stay in town. Here is a list of sports facilities:

Kaftanzogleio National Stadium:

Agiou Dimitriou St. extension
tel.: 2310 205.534

website: www.kaftanzoglio.gr

Poseidonio Sports Centre

(there are two swimming pools, basketball, tennis, volleyball and handball fields):

N. Paralia & 25th Martiou St.
tel.: 2310 428.456

Thessaloniki National Swimming Pool:

Telloglou St. (Agiou Dimitriou

St. extension)

tel.: 2310 203.129

Thessaloniki YMCA Sports Facilities:

1, N. Germanou St., (YMCA square)

tel.: 2310 241.007

website: www.ymca.gr

Municipal Swimming Pool.

Alana Toumpas

tel.: 2310 907.711

Friends of the Sea Club:

10, Megalou Alexandrou Ave. (nea paralia)

tel.: 2310 831.333

website: www.ofth.gr

Nautical Club of Thessaloniki:

112, Them. Sofouli St.

tel.: 2310 414.521

website: www.ncth.gr

Sailing Club of Kalamaria:

Mikro Emvolo, Kalamaria

tel.: 2310 454.111

website: www.naokth.gr

Theme Park Fields (see p. --)

Megas Alexandros International Marathon race.

It takes place every spring; the starting point is in Ancient Pella and the finish is in Thessaloniki town. 5 and 10 km races get also organised. For more information:

tel.: 2310 200.360,

2310 725.775

website: www.atgm.gr

Department of Municipal Gyms, Swimming Pools and Sport Grounds of the Municipality of Thessaloniki

Gr. Lampraki & 57, Kleanthous Sts.

tel.: 2310 317.636

Department of Sporting Events & Programms of the Municipality of Thessaloniki

Gr. Lampraki & 57, Kleanthous Sts.

tel.: 2310 317.636

You can get information on municipal gyms, the municipal

swimming pool and other Town sports grounds as well as on sporting events held in Thessaloniki.

GOLF

You will find an 18-hole golf course in the facilities of the Porto Carras Grand Resort, 120 km SE of Thessaloniki. It is one of the best in the country and meets international standards. In the hotel grounds you can follow private or group courses for beginners or experienced players.

Information:

tel.: 23750 77.000

website: www.portocarras.com

SKI CENTRES

Thessaloniki is relatively close to some of the best known ski centres in Northern Greece, and offers the opportunity for a day trip to any of them. Here is a list:

Seli Ski Centre.

It is located at a 1,500-2,000 m. elevation, there are 16 runs (total length: 15 km), 11 lifts and two chalets. *Chryso Elafi* (meaning *Golden Deer*) is a private ski centre situated 95 km NW of Thessaloniki (24 km NW of Veroia town).

Information:

tel.: 23310 26.237

website: www.seli-ski.gr

Elatochori Ski Centre.

It lies 8 km W of Elatochori village at a 1,400-1,900 m. elevation. There are 8 runs (total length: 9 km), 5 lifts, shops renting or selling equipment and a chalet. It lies 105 km SW of Thessaloniki (36 km W of Katerini town).

Information:

tel.: 23510 82.994,

website: www.elatochori-ski.gr.

3-5 Pigadia [3-5 Wells] Ski Centre.

It is situated at a 1,425-2,005 m. elevation, there are 10 runs for different levels of experience (total length: 10 km), 7 lifts, a chalet and snowmaking machines. It lies 108 km W of Thessaloniki (17 km W of Naoussa town).

Information:

tel.: 23320 44.300 (Naoussa)
2310 488.600-2 (Thessaloniki)

website: www.3-5pigadia.gr.

Lailias (Vrontous) Ski Centre.

It is located at a 1,847 m. elevation, there is one run, three surface lifts, a chalet and a mountain hut (50 persons capacity). It lies 116 km NE of Thessaloniki (25 km NE of Serres town).

Information:

tel.: 23210 58.783 (Ski Centre),
23210 62.400 (mountain hut)

website: www.katafigiolailias.gr

Vora Ski Centre (Kaimaktsalan).

This is the highest location for a ski centre in Greece (elevation: 2,480 m.). There are 6 lifts, 13 runs (total length: 15 km), 4 ski trails and snowmaking machines. It lies 118 km NW of Thessaloniki (33 km NW of Edessa town).

Information:

tel.: 23810 32.000

website: www.kaimaktsalan.gr.

Falakro Ski Centre.

There are 9 lifts and 20 runs (total length exceeds 20 km). It lies 190 km NE of Thessaloniki (43 km N of Drama town).

Information:

tel.: 25220 41.822

website: www.falakro.gr

WEBSITES

* **Municipality of Thessaloniki:**
www.thessaloniki.gr

* **Information on archaeological sites, historical monuments and museums:**
http://odysseus.culture.gr

* **Virtual tourist guide for Thessaloniki-Halkidiki:**
www.thessaloniki360.com

* **Hellenic National Meteorological Service (weather forecast):**
www.hnms.gr

* **Athenian-Macedonian News Agency:** www.amna.gr

MAP OF THESSALONIKI



PUBLIC AGENCIES – SERVICES

1. G.N.T.O. Information Office
2. Ministry of Macedonia – Thrace
3. Region of Central Macedonia (Villa Allatini)
4. New Town Hall
5. Police Department – Aliens Office
6. Tourist Police Station
7. Central Post Office
8. Customs (harbour)
9. Law Court
10. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – Campus
11. Marina

ROMAN MONUMENTS

12. Roman Forum
13. Rotunda (Agios Georgios)
14. Arch of Galerius (Kamara)
15. Palace of Galerius
16. Hippodrome

BYZANTINE MONUMENTS

17. Holy Twelve Apostles Church
18. Panagia [Our Lady] Chalkeon Church
19. Achelopoitis Church
20. Agia Sofia Church
21. Metamorfofi Sotiros Church
22. Agios Panteleimonas Church
23. Agios Dimitrios Church
24. Agia Alkaterini Church
25. Profitis Ilias Church
26. Byzantine Bath-house (Kule Kafe)
27. Oslos David Church (Latomou Monastery)
28. Vlatodon Monastery (Patriarchal Foundation for Theological Studies)
29. Agios Nikolaos Orfanos
30. City Walls

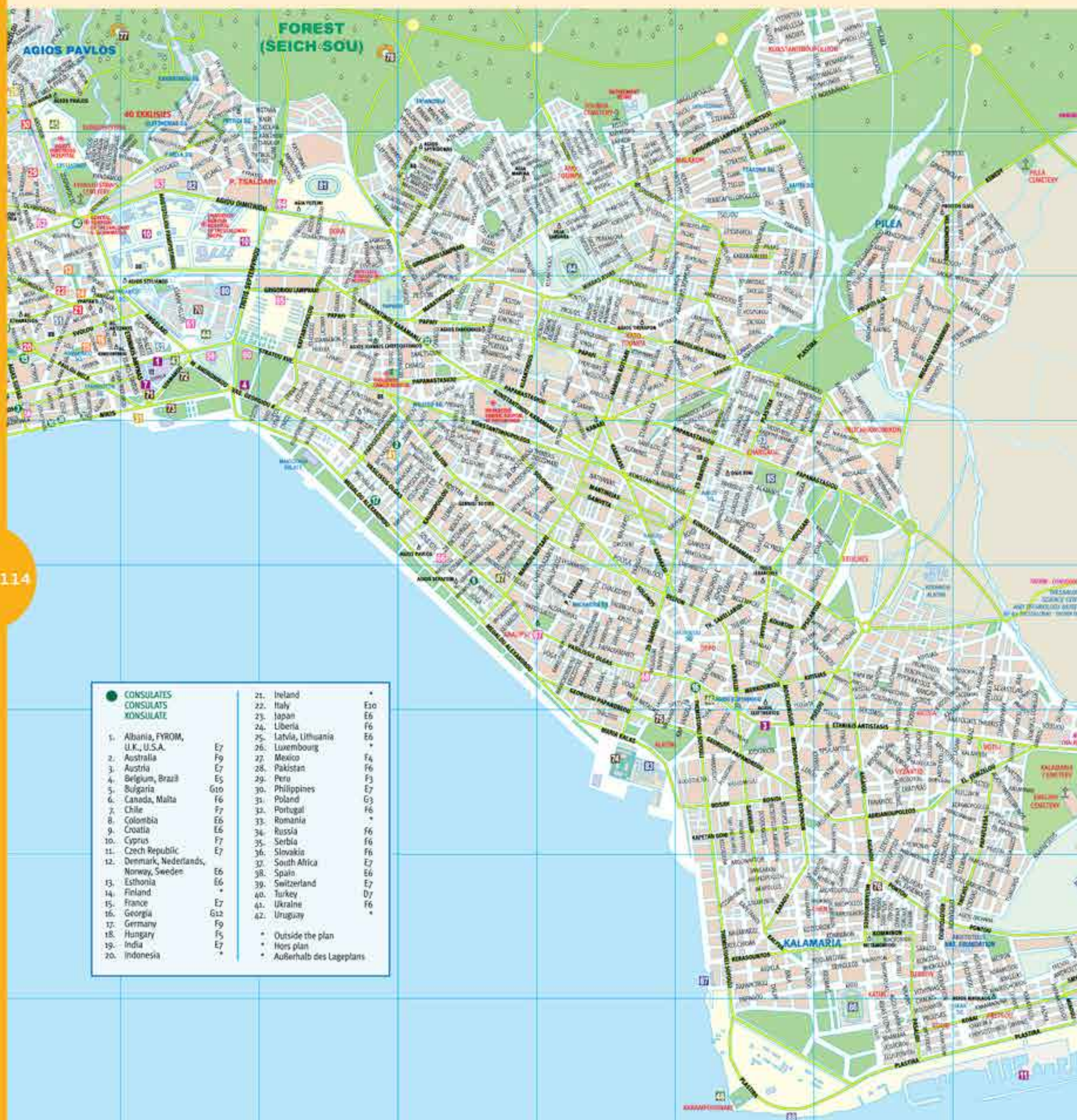
OTTOMAN MONUMENTS

31. White Tower
32. Vardarliou Tower (Top Hane)
33. Pasha Hamam ("Phoenix")
34. Hamza Bey Mosque ("Alkazar")
35. Pazar Hamam (Flower Shops)
36. Bey Hamam ("Paradise")
37. Yeni Hamam ("Algli")
38. Alatzia Imaret
39. Trigonliou Tower
40. Eptapyrgio (Yedi Kule)
41. Yeni Mosque (exhibition area)

19th – 20th c. MONUMENTS

42. Aristotelous Square
43. YMCA of Thessaloniki (Sports Centre – Library)
44. Greek Telecommunications [OTE] Tower
45. Pasha Gardens
46. Villa Blanca
47. Villa Ahmet Kapantzi
48. Governor's House (Little Palace)

MAP OF THESSALONIKI



CHURCH DENOMINATIONS

49. Orthodox Metropolitan Church
50. Catholic Church
51. Greek Evangelical Church
52. Armenian Orthodox Church
53. Russian Church
54. Yad Lezikaron Synagogue
55. Monastiriotes' Synagogue

MUSEUMS

56. Cinema Museum – Photography Museum
57. Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki
58. Museum of the Macedonian Struggle
59. Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki
60. Museum of Byzantine Culture
61. Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art
62. Kemal Atatürk Museum
63. Telloglelon Foundation of Art
64. Olympic Museum
65. War Museum
66. Folklore & Ethnological Museum of Macedonia – Thrace
67. The Cultural Centre of M.I.E.T. [the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation] in Thessaloniki (Villa Mehmet Kapantzi)
68. Municipal Gallery (Villa Mordoch)
69. State Museum of Contemporary Art

CULTURE – EXHIBITIONS

70. Thessaloniki International Trade Fair (HELEXPO)
71. Society for Macedonian Studies – National Theatre of Northern Greece
72. Garden Theatre
73. Royal Theatre
74. Thessaloniki Concert Hall
75. Vafopoulelo Cultural Centre – Library
76. Kalamaria Municipal Theatre
77. Forest Theatre
78. Theatre of the Earth

SPORTS FACILITIES

79. Indoor Sports Hall (Byzantine Sports Club)
80. Alexandro Sports Arena (Palais des Sports)
81. Kaftarzoglelo stadium
82. The National Swimming Pool
83. Poseldonio Sports Centre
84. Toumpa Football ground
85. "Kleanthis Vikelidis" Football ground
86. Kalamaria Football ground
87. Nautical Club of Thessaloniki
88. Water Sports Club of Kalamaria

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

89. Long Distance Bus Station
90. New Railway Station
91. Main Port

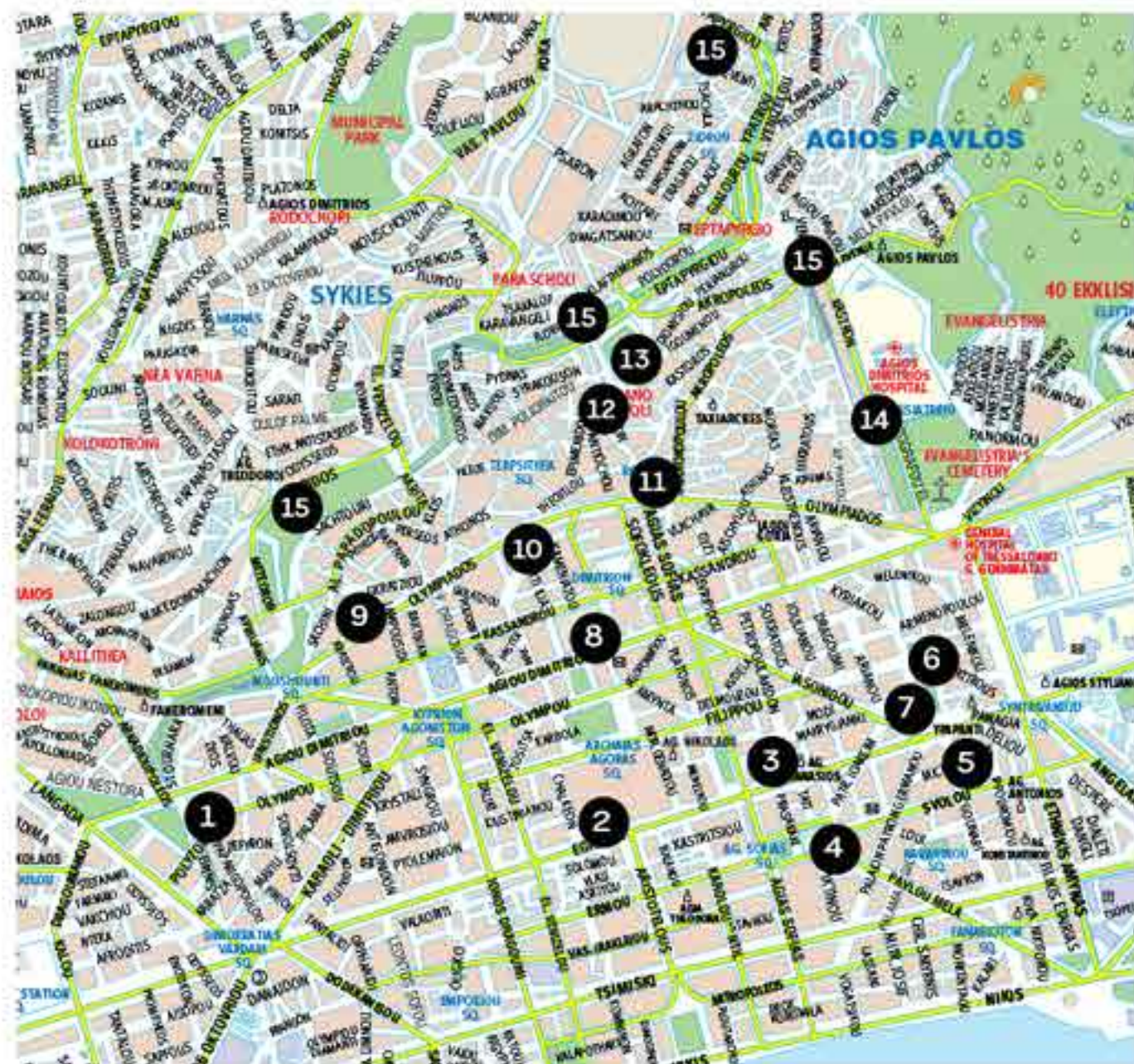
TRADITIONAL MARKETS

92. Kapani (Mall Marketplace)
93. Modiano Marketplace
94. Bezesteni

CONSULATES CONSULATS KONSULATE

- | | | | |
|--|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| 1. Albania, FYROM, U.K., U.S.A. | E7 | 21. Ireland | E10 |
| 2. Australia | F9 | 22. Italy | E6 |
| 3. Austria | E7 | 23. Japan | F6 |
| 4. Belgium, Brazil | E5 | 24. Liberia | E6 |
| 5. Bulgaria | G10 | 25. Latvia, Lithuania | E6 |
| 6. Canada, Malta | F6 | 26. Luxembourg | F4 |
| 7. Chile | F7 | 27. Mexico | F3 |
| 8. Colombia | E6 | 28. Pakistan | F6 |
| 9. Croatia | E6 | 29. Peru | E7 |
| 10. Cyprus | F7 | 30. Philippines | G3 |
| 11. Czech Republic | E7 | 31. Poland | F6 |
| 12. Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden | E6 | 32. Portugal | F6 |
| 13. Estonia | E6 | 33. Romania | F6 |
| 14. Finland | E6 | 34. Russia | F6 |
| 15. France | E7 | 35. Serbia | F6 |
| 16. Georgia | G12 | 36. Slovakia | E7 |
| 17. Germany | F9 | 37. South Africa | E6 |
| 18. Hungary | F5 | 38. Spain | E7 |
| 19. India | E7 | 39. Switzerland | D7 |
| 20. Indonesia | * | 40. Turkey | F6 |
| | | 41. Ukraine | * |
| | | 42. Uruguay | * |

- * Outside the plan
- * Hors plan
- * Außerhalb des Lageplans



1st walk:

UNESCO BYZANTINE MONUMENTS

Thessaloniki has been one of the first towns to know the Christian religion by the Apostle Paul; during the Byzantine period it used to be the second most important city of the empire (*co-reigning city*) after Constantinople. At that time (4th – 15th c.), Christian monuments and churches were constructed in the town, and these make up a diachronic typology with a decisive influence on the entire Byzantine world. The following early-Christian and Byzantine monuments of the town are considered to be excellent specimens of the Byzantine church-building and art, and for this reason UNESCO declared them to be World Heritage Monuments, in 1988.

2.
Southern view
of Panagia
Chalkeon
Church.

3.
Agia Sofia
Church
surrounded
by a small
garden.

A tour across this unique open-air Byzantine museum is truly a special experience.

1 HOLY TWELVE APOSTLES CHURCH

One of the town's oldest churches was built in 1310 – 1314 under the sponsorship of Patriarch Nephon I. It used to be a *katholicon* [main church] of a monastery dedicated to *Theotokos* [Mother of God] as shown by the mural depicting *Theotokos* and the Founder, as well as by the iconography on the aisle with images of the Holy Virgin's life. Out of the original monastery complex, - apart from the *katholicon* – there remain the

portal to the southwest and the *cistern* to the northwest. It is a complex tetrastyle cross-in-square church with a narthex and a peristyle on the three sides and extremely symmetrical proportions. When it was converted into a mosque, during the Turkish rule, the murals and mosaics – outstanding specimens of Palaeologan art dating to the 14th c. – were covered by plaster and a minaret was added to the southwestern side.

2 PANAGIA CHALKEON CHURCH

It is located on the SW side of Dikastirion Sq. [Law Courts Sq.]. It was built in 1128 on the site of an ancient temple of *Hephaestus* or *Kaveiros*. It is a representative specimen of the architecture of the "School of Constantinople" and was thus named because of the area it was built on, known as the district of coppersmiths (masters of copper – *chalkos*). The most prominent feature is the level above the narthex. In 1430 it was converted into a mosque and was named *Kazancilar Camii*.

3 ACHEIROPOIITOS CHURCH

It was founded in the second half of the 5th c. on the site of the roman public baths and it was dedicated to *Panagia* (Virgin Mary). It is a three-aisled, timber-roofed basilica with a narthex and a gallery. The nave is separated by the side aisles with colonnades of Theodosian-style pillars and impost capitals made of marble as is made the floor of the nave. The preserved mosaic decorations date to the 5th c. whereas the murals on the south aisle date to the 13th c. After the city was captured by the Turks, this was the first church to be turned into a mosque. In 1922-1923 it housed refugees from Asia Minor and in 1939 Christian worship was once again practiced in it.

4 AGIA SOFIA CHURCH [or HAGIA SOPHIA]

It was built in the mid-7th c. on the ruins of a 5th c. basilica, as a copy of *Hagia Sophia* [Holy Wisdom of God] in Constantinople, and is one of the most important early-



THESSALONIKI AND NEIGHBOURING AREAS





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Publication Supervision:

ANGELA VARELA
Director, Directorate of Market
Research and Advertising

Publication Coordination:

ELENI MITRAKI
Head, Department of Publications
& Audiovisual Media

Greek Text:

YANNIS RAGOS
Journalist - Author, Department of Publications
& Audiovisual Media

Collaborator:

PERSEPHONE TRIHA
Acting Director, Regional Tourism Office
of Central Macedonia

Translation:

ANGELIKI CHRISTOPOULOU
Translator, Department of Publications
& Audiovisual Media

Design & English Layout Adaptation:

ZOE TZOMENTZIDOU
Art Director, Department of Publications
& Audiovisual Media

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Christian monuments in the Orthodox world. It is a cross-domed basilica and used to be the Metropolitan Church (Cathedral) until 1523 when it was converted into a mosque; it was restored to Christian worship after 1912. The capitals date to the 5th – 6th c. (they were part of the older church); the wonderful mosaics are an absolute must-see, particularly the ones on the dome with the image of the Ascension of Christ, as are the murals crafted in different stages from the 8th to the 11th c. In the church's south side, amid green surroundings you will find the church of **Agios Ioannis Prodromos** [St. John the Forerunner] (1940); from this point you will enter the early-Christian baptistery (catacomb) of Agia Sofia, built on the ruins of roman baths.

5 TRANSFIGURATION OF THE SAVIOUR CHURCH [METAMORFOSI SOTIROS]

It is located on Egnatia Street (see p. 34) almost between Kamara (see p. 37) and the Palace of Galerius (see p. 29). Construction took place possibly around 1340 and it is a typical

example of the transitional type in Byzantine church-building, found particularly in Macedonia. Fine depictions of the Ascension of Christ, the Prophets and the Divine Liturgy decorate the dome.

6 ROTUNDA [ROTONTA]

This impressive round building lies on the route connecting the triumphal arch of Galerius (Kamara, see p. 37) and the Palace of Galerius (see p. 29). It has a diameter of 24.5 m. and its gigantic dome is 30 m. high. It was built in 306 AD by Galerius, probably as a temple of Zeus or Kaveiros or as a mausoleum; in the 5th c. it was converted into a church dedicated to the Holy Bodiless Powers. The 5th c. outstanding preserved mosaics impress with their variety of themes, their naturalistic rendering, the colour diversity and the brilliance of the gold and silver tesserae. In 1591 it was turned into a mosque when a towering minaret was added, which survives today. In the square, next to Rotunda, lies the small church of **Agios Georgios** [St. George] whence the monument took its

other name; there are also many cafés and bars. In the adjoining *Melenikou* st. you will see segments of the town's eastern walls.

7 AGIOS PANTELEIMONAS CHURCH

It is on *Iasonidou* st., pretty close to Rotunda. According to certain scholars, this was the main church of the Monastery of Kyr Isaac or Theotokos Perivleptos, founded by Jacob, the Metropolitan Bishop of Thessaloniki (1295-1314). It is a tetrastyle cross-in-square domed church with a surrounding portico ending to the east in two chapels. During the Turkish Occupation it was changed into a mosque under the name *Ishakiye Camii* (the mosque of Isaac). Remaining murals date to the 13th – 14th c. and depict saints and prelates as well the Virgin Mary.

8 AGIOS DIMITRIOS CHURCH

It is the best known Byzantine church of the town as Agios Dimitrios [St. Demetrius] is

Thessaloniki's patron saint. It was built during the 7th c. on the ruins of a 5th c. Basilica and in 1493 it was converted into a mosque. It was destroyed in 1917 by the fire but it was restored and reopened in 1948. It is a five-aisle transept basilica with a women's gallery and a narthex. The sculpted decorative motifs originate from the 5th c. basilica and other buildings and this explains their variety; equally interesting are the capitals (5th and 6th c.). The mosaics found on the west side date to the 5th c. while those on the piers around the sanctuary [bema] are later additions. Those depicting the saint among children, flanked by the bishop and the prefect are of great value. In the basement lies the **Krypt** on the site where Roman public baths used to be. This is the place of martyrdom for Saint Demetrius in 303 or 305. When the 5th c. Church was built, the baths became a place of special worship and the water flowing was believed to be holy. Since 1988 it is an exhibition area for sculptures, capitals, panels, vessels etc, where cultural events also take place.



4. The church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour.

5. The impressive Rotunda monument (Agios Georgios).



6. The byzantine church of Agios Dimitrios, patron saint of Thessaloniki.

9 AGIA AIKATERINI [St. CATHERINE's] CHURCH

This 14th c. Byzantine church is situated in the centre of Agia Aikaterini town quarter in Ano Poli [Upper City] area (see p. 42). It is a complex tetrastyle inscribed cross-in-square five-domed church with an ambulatory. It bears an elaborate brick-work on the external surfaces and outstanding murals, contemporary to the construction of the edifice, which depict figures of saints, scenes from the Gospel, miracles of Christ etc. During the Ottoman Rule the church was converted into a mosque (Yakup Pasha Camii) and the murals were covered in plaster, to be exposed once again during the restoration works that took place in 1947 – 1951.

10 PROFITIS ILIAS [PROPHET ELIJAH] CHURCH

This imposing church (late 13th – mid 14th c.) towering over Olympiados st. in the outskirts of Ano Poli (see p. 42) is thought to have been the main church of Nea Moni [New

Monastery] or Moni Akapniou [Akapniou Monastery]. It was situated in the area of the Byzantine palaces and this is why the Turks had named the area *Balat* (Palace) and the church *Eski Saray Camii* (Old Palace mosque). It is a tetrastyle cross-in-square domed church with features related to the monasterial architecture of Mount Athos. The central dome is supported by granite columns in the shape of a cross, the building's central part was enlarged by the addition of two conchs [semi-domes] whereas in the west section there is a rectangular cupolaed narthex. The murals (14th c.) depict images of saints and scenes from the life and miracles of Christ. Also, at the junction of Olympiados and Amfilochias Sts. there is a surviving *ottoman fountain*.

11 BYZANTINE BATHS (KULE KAFE)

It is located on Romfeï Sq. (see p. 43) in Ano Poli and it is the only surviving Byzantine bath house, a domed 13th c. building made of brick, which was open to the public until 1940.

During the Ottoman period it was named Kule Hamam and was divided in two (male and female section).

12 HOSIOS DAVID (MONI LATOMOU)

Moni Latomou [Latomou Monastery] has a huge archaeological and historical value, since it is an early type of a cross-in-square domed church. Its construction dates back to the 5th or 6th c. and it is believed to have been built by Theodora, daughter of the Byzantine emperor Maximilianus, who had been baptised a Christian. The monastery was dedicated to Hosios David [Saint David] in 1921. Especially noteworthy are the mosaic depictions on the ceiling which show the Vision of Ezekiel and are contemporary to the construction of the monastery; the later ones of the 12th, 13th and 14th c. are also great art specimens of the Komnenian period. There is a surviving minaret entrance built in the 16th c. when the church was converted into a mosque. The small picturesque yard offers

an unobstructed view of the city and the Thermaic gulf.

13 MONI VLATADON

It is the only Byzantine monastery in the city with an active community. It was founded in the 14th c. by the monks Vlati (or Vlateus) brothers and was dedicated to Pantocrator Christos [Almighty Christ]. Celebrations take place on the Transfiguration of Christ feast day. Its main church [*katholikon*] is of the inscribed cross-in-square type but the dome rests on the walls and on two piers instead of columns. It is surrounded by a portico and there are two chapels. Murals were painted during 1360 – 1380 and the 17th c. iconostasis is particularly noteworthy. It is surrounded by a large garden offering a wonderful view of the city and there is also a small peacock farm; in the grounds you will also find the newer buildings of *Misirogleios Library, the Patriarchal Foundation for Theological Studies* (1968), a space provided for the study of pictorial manuscripts from Mount Athos, a bookstore and a shop.



7.
Profitis Ilias
Church.

8.
Moni Vlatadon
is right in the
heart of Upper
(Old) City.



14 AGIOS NIKOLAOS [SAINT NICHOLAS] ORPHANOS CHURCH

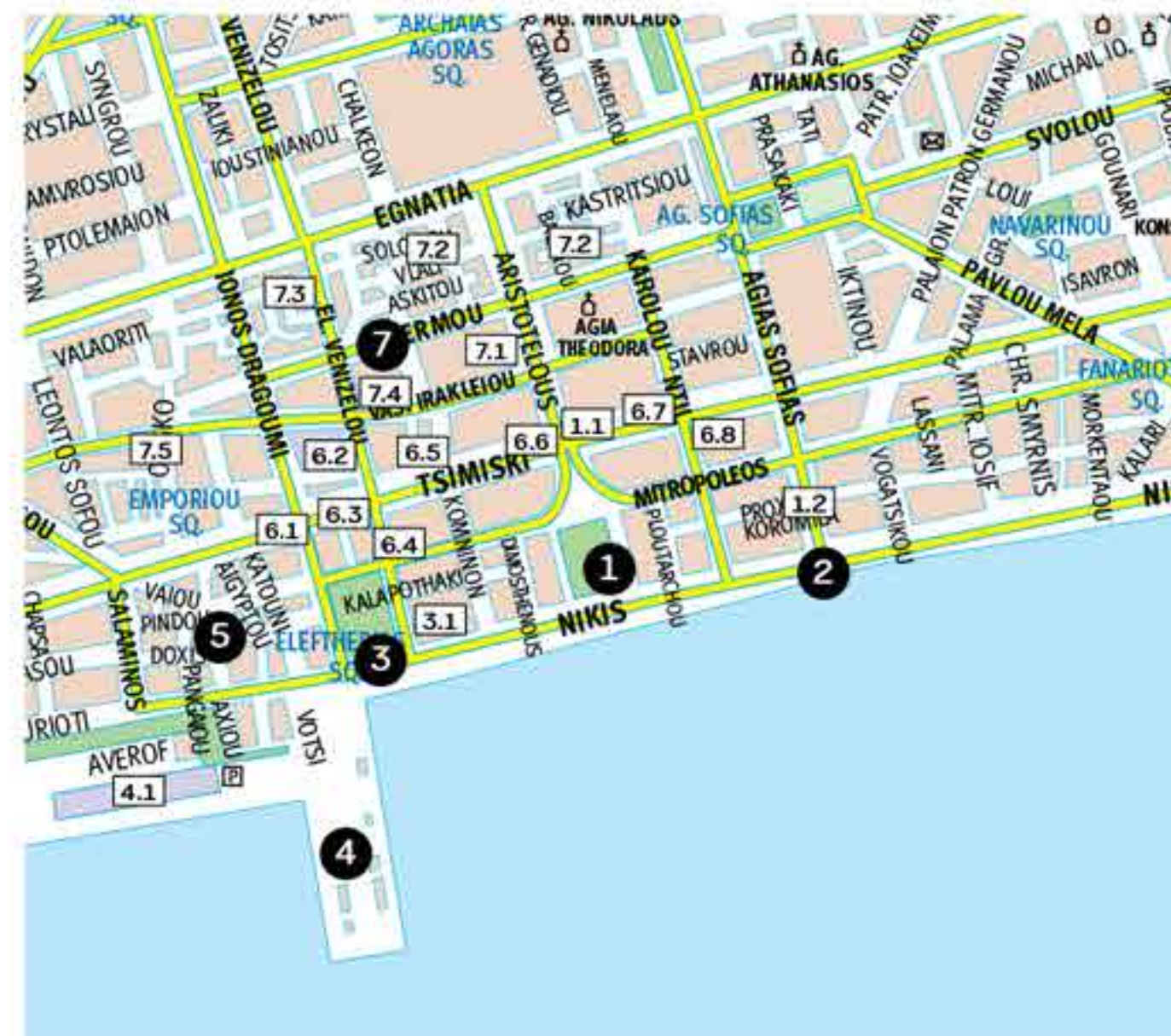
It was built in the 1310s, as a dependency of Vlatadon Monastery and it served as a monastery main church. Within the same grounds there used to be an orphanage at earlier times – hence the name “Orphanos” [meaning Orphan]. It is an aisleless timber-roofed church sided by an ambulatory forming the shape “Π”. The 14th c. murals inside are true masterpieces depicting scenes of *Dodekaorto* [the Twelve major religious feasts of the year], of the Passion of Christ, the Resurrection and the Liturgical Cycle as well as figures of saints; the monument is considered as one of the best preserved in Thessaloniki. It is surrounded by lush and serene gardens.

15 CITY WALLS

Thessaloniki was walled immediately after it was founded by Cassander; in 390 AD a series of large-scale changes took place by Theodosius I. In the Byzantine times a harbour was constructed (in the SW part) and the Acropolis wall was raised (see

p. 44). During the Venetian Rule (1st half of the 15th c.) there were efforts to boost it in the light of the Turkish threat; this is why certain scholars support that the Trigoniu Tower (see p. 45) and the White Tower (see p. 24) were built during that period. In the following centuries, the Turks completed reinforcement works in various places. The wall inscriptions describe the interventions and restorations that took place over time. The walls followed the shape of an irregular trapezium and ended to the west in Vardariou Tower (see p. 59) and to the east in the White Tower (see p. 24), reaching a total length of 7 km. After 1870, demolition of the seafront walls as well as of parts of the western and eastern walls began, in order to sanitise the plains and also to expand the city. Today there are 3 remaining km of city walls (mainly on Ano Poli, see p. 42); their height ranges from 8.30 to 10.50 m. and their width may measure up to 4.50 m, making them an impressive monument and one of great archaeological and cultural value.

Note: To get a complete picture of the town's Byzantine art monuments make sure you visit the Museum of Byzantine Culture (see p. 26 and p. 71).



2nd walk:

HISTORIC CENTRE (1) TRADITIONAL COMMERCIAL CENTRE

1 ARISTOTELOUS SQUARE

Thessaloniki's central square is one of the largest and most impressive in Greece, and a bustling place twenty four hours a day. It is one of the few sections of the Hébrard Committee urban plan, which came to be realised after the 1917 fire, although it became fully shaped in as late as the early 1960s. It is a square on the seafront, with a 100 m. opening, that affords an amazing view of the Thermaic Gulf and the Olympus massif. The monumental style of architecture is shown in the buildings' facades, colonnades, arcades and porticos, which combine elements from the

city's Byzantine tradition with European interwar period motifs. The square is landmarked by two identical concave buildings: *Electra Palace* hotel (late sixties) - built by GNTA architects - on the west side, and *Olympion* on the east side, which was progressively erected and completed by the late fifties (designed by J. Moshé) and is now the seat of the Thessaloniki Film Festival (see p. 108).

MUST SEE:

1.1 Aristotelous Street.

Pedestrianised historic boulevard, that ends in Egnatia Street (see p. 34). According to the Hébrard plans, it would



9.
View of the
eastern walls
of Thessaloniki.