
Epic MTB Greece

Riding Areas 2007

Pendeli

Mountain Description - The Pendeli Mountain range is bordered to the North by Marathon Lake, to the East by the Gulf of Evia, to the South by Marathonas Avenue and to the West by the suburbs of Athens. Through the middle winds Dionysos Avenue, which we affectionately call 'The Pendeli Pass'. All our routes in Pendeli start within easy reach of the hotel (a mere 10 minute cycle to the start of the trails).

Genesis

The Route – Distance: 15-30km; Time Taken: 1.5-4 hours; Start Altitude: 0m; Max Altitude: 600m
So we ride the 10 minutes to the start. We use a single track climb for about a kilometre, then onto fire road. The first bits of the fire road out of town are steep and rocky. They even out and become a more gradual sustainable climb. We ride 7km up to the first junction. From here we take stock and decide to explore the mountain further or take the swooping 7km descent on dirt road with built in berms. Go as fast or as slow as you like depending upon experience. We re-group at the bottom of this descent and choose single track or asphalt back to the road to the Hotel. The single track is through fields and down into a gully with a technical climb up and out.

Agriliki

The Route – Distance: 35km; Time Taken: 3-5 hours; Start Altitude: 0m; Max Altitude: 800m
Again, 10 minutes of tarmac to the start and we find ourselves faced with a choice: steep technical climb of 150m or a shorter, more manageable climb followed by a short section of single track ascent leading us to the first main climb. Originally dirt road this trail has now become single track in many places and is rocky and quite technical in places. We come out at a cross roads and we can ride out to the view point for fantastic views across Marathon Bay.
We ride down to the spring where we can re-fill with water if required.
Ride up and round and out to the road at the Panorama Café, option stop here for drinks and cake.
Down the road for 500m and then turn off at the old Technical College. Single track though long grass and a wooded area takes us back up to the road again for 100m before we turn off onto dirt road for some down hill action on the wild side of the mountain range. At the junction we decide if we want a bit more up in return for a bit more down and ride the other side of Agriliki or stay on this side of Agriliki for views of the Rependosa Dam and not so much technical downhill. The final part of off-road is a sweet singletrack which brings us out next to the Marathon Museum. From here we ride back to the hotel via the villages and beach road – a great relaxing ride back after our day in the mountains.

The long One

The Route – Distance: 40km; Time Taken: 4-6 hours; Start Altitude: 0m; Max Altitude: 850m
Similar to the Agriliki ride, but this time finishing on Mt. Scarpa. More climbing and more singletrack, with a VERY difficult rocky descent to finish off.

Tatoi

Area Description – Home to the old Royal palace, at the foot of Mount Parnitha with rolling hills and gullies. Part forest and part scrubby plain, about 35 minutes drive from the hotel.
Routes Usually we start at the lowest possible point down by the railway. We ride up fast sandy single tracks to the top and then choose a route to suit you! A huge choice of rocky, dirt and rooty single tracks are at our disposal all accessed from a network of fire roads. We ride past the Royal palace, the royal farm buildings, Bahounia Spring and the ancient mausoleum. We finish off with the blast back down on the fast sandy tracks. We have named some single track sections:
Tombs trails – network of woody dirt trails around the royal mausoleum and tombs. Mostly swoopy, with the odd rocky section to keep you awake!
Vangelis Trail – Woody swoopy trail, lumpy stuff and some uphill sections.
Road to Bahounia – Wooded trail with the odd steep sharp climb.

The Mexican – 2km of fast rocky swoopy trail

The Kite Trail – steep dirt trail

Better than Sex – Loose rocky single track

Scott's Nemesis – Steep loose downhill into a gully followed by a near impossible climb out.

Royal Walk – no walking involved on this old walking trail the royals used to use around the royal palace.

Trail with a view – woody trail to a fantastic view out over the forest

Ymittos

Mountain Description - Ymittos is only 40 minutes drive from the hotel and is home to the most technical riding we have on offer here. Ymittos, famous for its thyme-scented honey, lies at the southeast border of Athens. This mountain is covered with a beautiful pine forest and has many attractions: historic monasteries, clearly marked paths and unsurfaced forest roads barred to traffic which are ideal for mountain-biking. You will find Churches, Kessariani Monastery (the famous Byzantine monastery, an 11th-century complex - which is protected by a high wall - was built on the ruins of a 6th-century church. It is dedicated to the 'Presentation of the Virgin to the Temple'. A chapel dedicated to St. Anthony was added in the 16th century followed by a bell tower in the 19th century) Anthousas Tower, Asteriou Monastery, Kalopoula Café (with terrapin pool)

The Route – Distance: 22km: Time Taken: 3-4 hours: Start Altitude: 270m: Max Altitude: 630m.

13% Single track Climbing

37% Single track Descending

29% Wide Track Climbing

1% Wide Track Descending

16% Asphalt Climbing

4% Asphalt Descending

We start up a single track climb with some rocky steps and steep rocky sections which comes out to a wide track ascent which becomes very steep and loose. We then exit onto an asphalt road and cycle up the road to the first single track descent which is loose, rocky and fairly steep in places. We exit via a drop-off onto a dirt road almost opposite the next single track descent. The entry is pretty difficult as a narrow rocky gully leads into a short section of loose rocks followed by a rock slab drop-off. This leads to a swooping woody trail with the occasional rocky outcropping. There is a tricky exit out onto the asphalt opposite an ancient tower. From here we take a short blast along the asphalt to another dirt road. A short distance along the dirt road is the entrance to our next single track descent. Swooping through the forest on a dirt trail with the odd rocky section and difficult switchback it brings us out at Kessariani Monastery. Opposite the Monastery is the entrance to 'the playground'. Pure fun! It's a swooping dirt trail, very narrow in places, along a sheer edge through meadows and amongst trees. Can you make the gap between the stone wall and tree without touching either?

We'll usually stop for a break here before tackling the second part of the day's riding.

A steep, rooty single track heads up the hill side to a dirt path, we continue up on the path to the next single track descent which is slate, loose rocks and steep to start with then becomes dirt with the odd rock section. We exit at the top of a meadow. A short ride along a dirt road and we are at the next single track entrance. Winding, narrow and tree-lined, the trail leads us to a stream bed where we can attempt to ride out, but for most of us (if not all, it is off the bike and climbing). Out onto a dirt road and up hill for the longest dirt road climb of the day. At the corner we attempt a single track climb, steep and rocky. At the top we are again on a dirt road and we have another technical single track climb to attempt. This leads us to a smooth single track followed by a short, steep, loose dirt path climb and back out onto the dirt road.

[Here we can choose a bike/hike/climb up to another dirt road and asphalt road to an extra single track descent – add 7km]

We take short single track descent past the terrapin pond to Kalopoula Café and through to another long fast single track descent. This final trail is mostly dirt with the odd loose section and plenty of rocky outcrops and drop-offs. You'll be smiling all the way down.

Marathon Lake

Asphalt climb, off-road descent – usually an extra ride for those chomping at the bit as soon as they arrive!

20km from Nea Makri up the Asphalt on winding road through Marathon town and on through the hills and the village of Kaledzi to Marathon Lake, stop here for a picturesque view of the lake and the option of a drink at the bar. Now for the off-road section (15km): Starting with a steep loose slope into the dry river bed. We ride along the very rough river bed (don't stop pedalling). Then we have a choice of a very steep challenge or a less steep more winding ascent. Along dirt roads skirting the base of Mount Scarpa around fields and the village of Vranas back to Nea Makri.

Sesi Beach

70km - Ride out of Nea Makri along the beach road and up through the villages of Schineas and Kato Souli and hills to the first part of off-road through the orchards and farm land to the outskirts of Agia Marina where we ride along the road to Ramnous Archaeological site. We stop here for a drink and the optional visit to the ancient acropolis site on the promontory overlooking the sea and the island of Evia. From here it is all scenic off-road along the coast line to the village of Sesi and the beautiful beach there. Here we can swim, snorkel and there is the option of taking lunch in the beach Kantina (depending upon time of year), before the return ride.

For those of you who have brought a "reluctant partner", there's the opportunity to ride out with us in the support vehicle, following the same route as the bikes, to enjoy the scenery and the beach without the cycling!

45km Asphalt, 25km Dirt road