







# PSARA

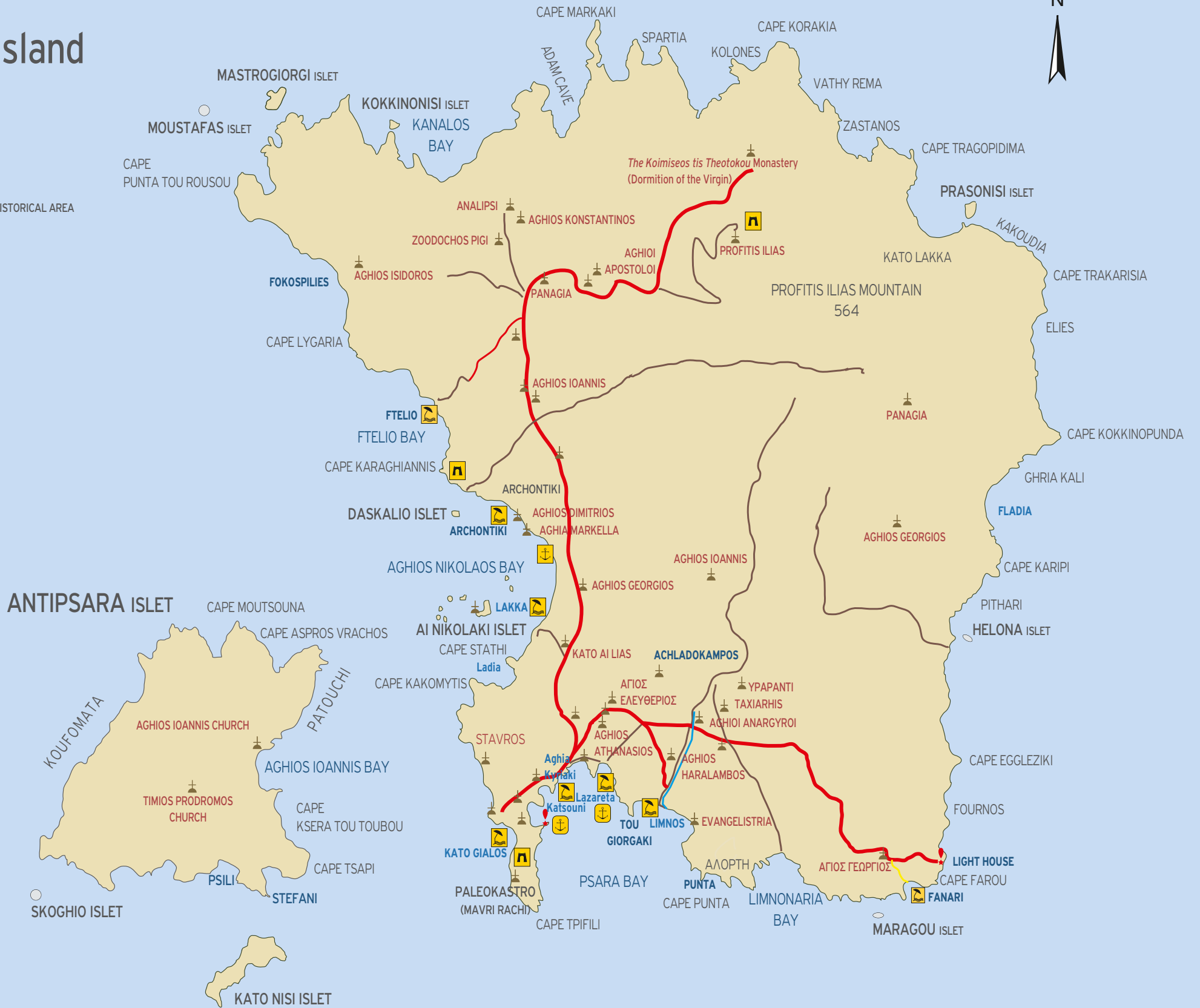
A guide to the Island of Glory



MUNICIPALITY OF THE HEROIC ISLAND OF PSARA

# PSARA Island

-  PORT
-  BEACH
-  ROOMS TO LET
-  ARCHAEOLOGICAL - HISTORICAL AREA







TIMIOS STAVROS

AGHIA KYRIAKI  
MEGALI AMMOS BEACH

AGHIA KYRIAKI BEACH

PLAYGROUND

KONAKI

KATSOUNI BEACH

TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST CHURCH

NAVARHOU APOSTOLI SQUARE

HOUSE OF CONSTANTINE KANARIS

PSARA PORT

CHIOS - PSARA

PIRAEUS - PSARA

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT NIKOLAOS OF PSARA



KATO GIALOS BEACH

BOURTZI

STATUE "THE GLORY OF PSARA"

TO MEMORIAL OF BLACK RIDGE MAVRI RACHI (PALAIOKASTRO)

OLD MILL

-  PORT
-  BEACH
-  CHURCH

- 1 Municipality of the Heroic Island of Psara**  
T. 22743 50100, [www.dimospsaron.gr](http://www.dimospsaron.gr)
- 2 Psara Police station**, T. 22740 61222
- 3 Psara Port authority**, T. 22740 61336
- 4 Polydynamo Regional Clinic of Psara**, T. 22740 61277
- 5 Psara Post Office**, T. 22740 61097
- 6 Archontiki archaeological site**, T. 22740 61335
- 7 Constantine Kanaris Educational and Beautification**  
T. 6949 19 68 57
- 8 Psara Travel tourist office**, T. 22740 61351  
<https://www.facebook.com/psaratravel>

**Hotels – Rented Rooms:**

- 9 Lalari Psara Apartments\*\*\*\***  
T. 22740 61352 & 6944 310 932  
[www.lalariapartments.com](http://www.lalariapartments.com)
- 10 Psara Studio\*** T. 22740 61180, [www.psarastudios.gr](http://www.psarastudios.gr)
- 11 Psara Hotel 1801\*\*\***  
T. 22740 61297 & 6934 569 669, [www.psarahotel.gr](http://www.psarahotel.gr)
- 12 Enalion P&P** T. 22740 61344  
[www.facebook.com/enalionrooms](http://www.facebook.com/enalionrooms)
- 13 Kato Gialos\*\***, T. 22740 61178 & 6945 755 321  
[www.katoyialos.gr](http://www.katoyialos.gr)
- 14 Laloudes** T. 22740 61066 & 6978 150 404

**Airbnb:**

- 15 Ntaiana studios\*\*\*\***  
T. 6932 528 489, [www.airbnb.gr](http://www.airbnb.gr)
- 16 Kotrozena Home\*\*\*\*\***  
T. 6974 116 930, [www.airbnb.gr](http://www.airbnb.gr)

**Restaurants:**

- 17 Aldebaran**, T. 22740 61200
- 18 O Flaros**, T. 22740 61054
- 19 Psara pizzeria-cafe**, T. 22740 61297
- 20 Resalto**, T. 22740 61161
- 21 Spitalia**, T. 6944 310 932

**Cafes - Bars:**

- 22 Mouragio**, T. 22740 61314
- 23 Sirokos**, T. 22740 61068
- 24 Tsarsi**, T. 22740 61139
- 25 Psara 1801**, T. 22740 61297
- 26 Petrino**, T. 22740 61218

**Shops:**

- 27 Gas station ECO PSARA**, T. 2274061001
- 28 Bakery Ta Psara**, T. 2274061231
- 29 Super Market Galini**, T. 2274061157
- 30 Mini Market Ta Psara**, T. 2274061166
- 31 Mini Market Petrali Angeliki**, T. 2274061107

# PSARA

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## A guide to the Island of Glory

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MUNICIPALITY  
OF THE HEROIC ISLAND  
OF PSARA





Our island, Psara, may appear on the geographical map of Greece as a speck in the middle of the Aegean Sea, but on the map of the hearts and minds of ordinary people, of artists and poets it is the "Heroic Island of Psara", a symbol of resistance and self-sacrifice.

Here, time and place transform from measurable magnitudes of extent and duration into stable measures of quality, morality and freedom.

Here, all the senses are present. From sight to taste, they challenge the visitor to take joy in the peace and simplicity of daily life as well as the colourful beauty of nature.

Here, secret dialogues of emotions and undistracted monologues of reflection are formed. The route from the Mavri Rachi (Black Ridge) of the Holocaust to the Monastery of the Panagia is as long as that from pride to faith in the value of life.

Each place is space and time, memory and vision. And what can be seen is for those passing through. What it really is, however, it keeps for those who will love it. They will touch it, examine every detail of it and discover its truth.

The visitor comes to Psara as a pilgrim, tours the island with astonishment at the human kindness and natural beauty of the wonderful beaches and unusual coasts, and departs full of peace and optimism. And, certainly, he keeps within him the figures of Kanaris, Papanikolis, Varvakis, Apostolis, Nikodemos, the scattered historical and religious monuments and, of course, the image of the Black Ridge, the Sacred Rock and the "Glory" of the unenslaved Greek soul.

The Mayor of the Heroic Island of Psara,  
Konstantinos Vratsanos





## The first impression

The journey begins with the ferry that serves the Piraeus-Psara-Oinousses-Chios-Mytilene line.

After approximately six and a half hours, you approach your destination, Psara, and from the deck you see the island's most characteristic landmarks.

To the left is Mavri Rachi, which resembles a big neighbourhood that keeps little secrets and a heavy history.

When you arrive at the port, you abandon yourself to the allure of simplicity and of a time, which does not cease to count in days and months, but certainly constantly marks the hour of immortality.

All around the port lies the village with an island architecture.

The houses are two-storey, white with a tiled roof, hospitable to the visitor and open to memories of travels.

Boats and caiques converse with each other in the language of water.



## The identity of the island

In 1985, the Community of Psara was given an honorary upgrade to the status of Municipality and in 2018 the Greek Parliament, in recognition of the island's great contribution to Greek history, awarded it the title of "Heroic Island of Psara".

Psara, with an area of 42 sq. km and a coastline of 45 km, is the largest of the complex of uninhabited islets, which, aside from Antipsara (4.5 sq. km), includes Ai-Nikolaki, Daskalio, Kato Nisi, Prasonisi, and others.

There is a daily ferry connection with Chios town (46 nautical miles) and during the summer months there is an extra connection three times a week with Volissos.

There is also a weekly ferry connection with Piraeus, which for six months from 15 April is increased to twice a week.



## The Psara of the new era

The island's population today does not exceed 420 permanent inhabitants, of whom many are sailors, while others work in fishing, livestock farming and beekeeping.

The island has a nursery, elementary school, middle and high school, public library, events venue, rural clinic, a heliport for emergencies, a police and port station, sports grounds with football pitches and basketball courts, a shipping agency, an archaeological park in Archontiki, and other services.

By utilising European Union programmes in recent years, there has been significant investment in infrastructure projects, such as water supply and sewerage, the renovation of public spaces, energy improvements in municipal and school buildings, agricultural roads and upgrading of the port facilities.



Wherever you look, you will encounter sea,  
memory of travellers and a tender innocence.







## Port – village

At the port you are welcomed by the bust of the Psarian national benefactor, Ioannis Varvakis (1745-1825). Brave, patriot and magnanimous, he was able to amass a huge fortune and donated a large part of his wealth to charitable projects in Russia and Greece. In Psara, he funded, among other works, the construction of the internal breakwater.

At the foot of the Vrachos, in Bourtzi, you will encounter the bust of the fearless sea fighter Dimitrios Papanikolis (1790-1855). He was a courageous burloftier, a fireship fighter, involved in many nautical exploits. The most famous was when he blew up a Turkish ship at Eressos, Lesvos in May 1821. He also participated in the naval battle of Gerontas in August 1824. In 1846 he was appointed to the Naval Court, where he served until his death.







In Heroes of Psara Holocaust Square, in the vicinity of the port, stands the Memorial to the Fallen and, in front of it, the bust of the legendary firefighter, admiral and prime minister, Constantine Kanaris (1793-1877). In the area where his house was located, very close to the church of Agios Nikolaos, stands his bust, where each year a trisagion prayer is held during the commemorations of the Holocaust (p. 30). His exploits were many, causing terrible damage to the Turkish fleet. On 6 June 1822, with his fireship, he set fire to the flagship of Kara Ali, in the straits of Chios. He later set fire to the flagship of Kaktlaman Mehmet Pasha in the straits of Troad-Tenedos.

In 1824, after the Destruction of Psara, he set fire to a Turkish frigate in Samos and a corvette in Mytilene.

In August 1825, he unsuccessfully attempted to set fire to the Egyptian fleet in Alexandria. He continued the struggle against the Turks, taking part

in all the operations of the Greek fleet. Kanaris became a symbol of bravery and was praised by great artists and poets, Greek and foreign.

Continuing from the port into the village, you will find scattered around and in close proximity to each other many interesting monuments and buildings, historic and contemporary.



The Cathedral Church of the Transfiguration, built in 1770, stands out. Northeast of the port are the mansions at "Kavos", evidence of the architecture of the day.

The area is dominated by the bust of Admiral Nikolaos Apostolis (1770-1827), who was one of the first to be initiated into the Friendly Society and who, with the flagship "Leonidas", prevented supplies from reaching the Turkish army.

He took part in many naval battles, such as those of Kos, Halicarnassus, Gerontas, Mytilene, Crete and elsewhere. With his financial support, in 1810 the building of the Chamber of Shipping (Sailboats House) was built nearby. In 1824 the Turks began to use it as the Administration Office (Konaki). From 1912 until 1928 it housed the Elementary School of Psara.







Special mention should be made of the splendid Konstantis Kotrozos Municipal Library and the Municipal Cultural Events Venue. The Constantine Kanaris Educational and Beautification Association, founded in 2004, has the aim of preserving the island's cultural heritage. Along with the Association of Psarians outside of the island, the Psarian Brotherhood, it works to revive customs and document record historical and folklore elements, so that young people can keep the traditions alive.



East of the village is Spitalia, an old quarantine station where sailors returning to the island stayed for a short period to avoid the transmission of infectious diseases. In 1976, stone-built Spitalia was taken over by the Greek National Tourism Organisation and architect Aris Konstantinidis transformed it into a modern restaurant, echoing with maritime adventures.

In "Kavos", in addition to the renovated buildings you will also find the ruined captains' houses, reminders of the seamanship of the Psarians during their glorious past.



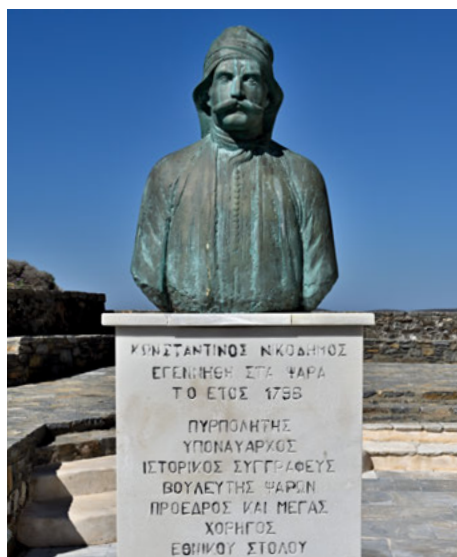


## Agios Nikolaos

At the western edge of the village is the imposing church of Agios Nikolaos, patron saint of sailors. Construction of the church began in 1785, at a time when the shipping sector of Psara was growing, and it was completed in 1793. It has three altars, in the domed basilica style, containing vessels and votives of great value, many of which were donated by Ioannis Varvakis. It was destroyed in 1824 and all that survives to this day is the Holy Gospel. It was, however, renovated in 1863. Here, having climbed the 60 steps, Kanaris prayed before embarking upon the great struggle.

Next to the church is the building of the Parliament of Psara, which today houses a hotel.

In the vicinity is the bust of Constantine Nikodemos (1796-1879), who was commissioned by the Parliament of Psara to build the fireships, the burlotta. He donated all his property to the National Fleet Fund and was honoured with the rank of vice admiral. He left a rich body of writing, which historians of the Greek War of Independence consult. In 1826 he published his "Memoir of the Island of Psara", the personal testimony of a fireship captain and a key source for the history of Psara.





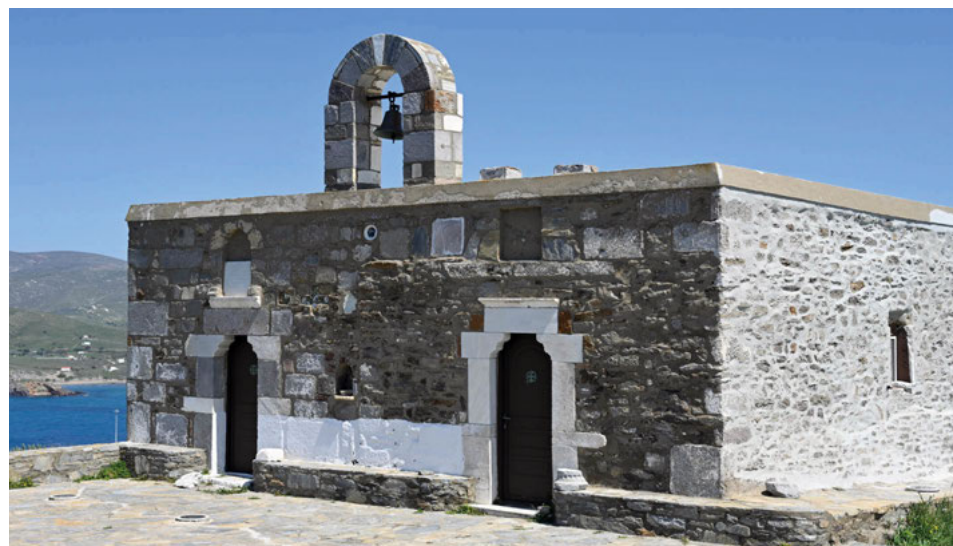






Στων Ψαρών την ολόμαυρη εράχη  
περπατώντας η Δόξα μονάχη  
μελετά τα λαμπρά παλλημάρια  
και στην κόμη στεφάνι φορεί  
γεναμένο από λίγα χορτάρια  
που είχαν μείνει στην έρημη γη.

Διονύσιος Σολωμός  
(Η Δόξα, 1825)



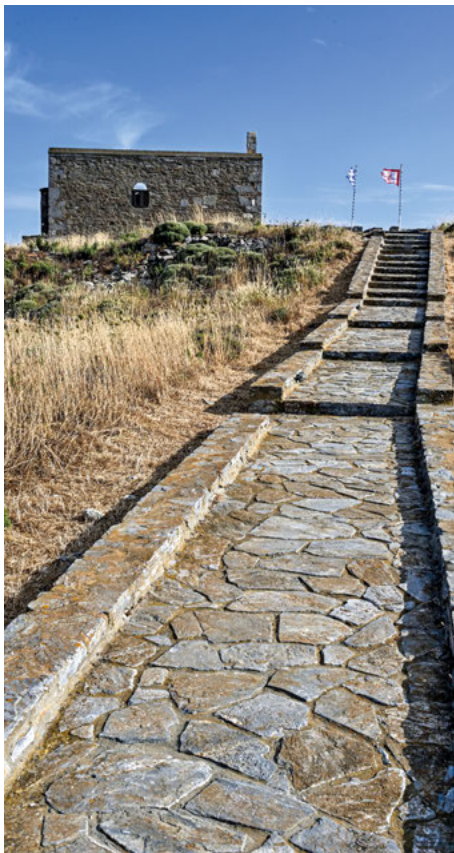
**Mavri Rachi** At the southernmost point of the island rises the Ieros Vrachos (Sacred Rock), the “crown” of Psara, the Mavri Rachi (Palaiokastro), symbol of the unenslaved Greek soul. Ascending the path, you see the statue of Doxa, donated by the shipowner Thanasis Martinos. The work (inspired by the painting “The Glory of Psara” by Nikolaos Gyzis) was created by sculptor Nikos Georgiou and the surrounding area was landscaped by architect Manolis Vournous. The statue was unveiled on 5 August 2021.

*On Psara on the jet black ridge while Glory walks alone  
she contemplates the brilliant, brave young men and on her head she wears a crown  
made from the few leaves of grass that had remained on the desolate land.*

Dionysios Solomos (*The Glory*, 1825)







As you climb Mavri Rachi, you feel a shiver of admiration and pride knowing that the soil upon which you step is drenched in the blood of brave warriors, who believed in the struggle, who remained free without bending until the end, tutored in the storms in the Aegean Sea and History. The self-sacrifice of the Psarians on Mavri Rachi will remain an unextinguished beacon of the values and faith in the ideals of national dignity and the spirit of personal freedom. The Holocaust of the Psarians has been praised in the works of artists and poets, Greek and foreign. Our two great poets, Dionysios Solomos and Andreas Kalvos, stand out here.

Reaching the peak of the Vrachos, you find yourself opposite the double church, dedicated to the birthday of St John the Baptist and to Agia Anna. In the same area is the monument to the Sacrifice, with the commemorative column to the unequal and fierce battle.



### History of Psara

The large settlement and cemetery at Archontiki, on the east of the island, dates to the Mycenaean period, although Psara did not have a particularly significant presence in antiquity. In the Byzantine period, the island was deserted: its inhabitants had settled in Chios and its coasts were a base for pirates until the mid-17th century. After this, families began to settle on the island, mainly from Evia, Thessaly and Epirus, resulting in Psara's pre-revolutionary population reaching 25,000 inhabitants, initially farmers and livestock breeders. They then turned to the sea to solve their food problem and were able within a short period of time to achieve an economic miracle, bringing wealth and prosperity to the island.

After the proclamation of the War of Independence on the island, on 10 April 1821, Easter Day, the Psara navy was now powerful, with impressive equipment and battle-hardened men, due to their forced conscription into the Turkish fleet in the final period of Turkish rule. It took part in all the campaigns of the "three-island fleet" (Hydra, Spetses and Psara) in the Aegean, led by Admiral Nikolis Apostolis. The flag of the Psarians was white, with a red edge, a cross in the centre, an anchor on the left with a snake wrapped over it, a bird above pecking the snake's tongue, a sword on the right with an inverted crescent and a red inscription framing the cross: FREEDOM OR DEATH (p. 2). The achievements of Kanaris, Papanikolis and others in the naval battles and ship firings largely determined the outcome of the naval struggle during the first three years of the Revolution and for this reason the Turks made Psara one of their main targets.



### The bourlottiers (ship firers)

The burlotta (brulotti), known since antiquity, were fireships loaded with explosives (gunpowder, etc.). The burlotto would approach the enemy ship with the aim of blowing it up. The captain and crew would then jump into the boat (skambavia) they were dragging with them. Ioannis Dimoulitsas (Patatoukos) of Parga settled in Psara and taught the first bourlottiers – Konstantinos Nikodemos, Georgios Koutsodontis and Ioannis Filinis – how to make burlotta. The most famous bourlottiers were Constantine Kanaris, Dimitrios Papanikolis, Nikolaos Apostolis, Constantine Nikodemos, Dimitrios Vratsanos, Georgios Kalafatis, Andreas Stamataras, and, of course, Patatoukos. With courage and self-sacrifice, they contributed decisively to the homeland's struggle for freedom.

### The destruction of Psara

Psara, with its central geographical location right in the middle of the Aegean Sea, its battle-worthy fleet, and the firing of ships by Kanaris and Papanikolis, had enraged the Sultan, who hatched a scheme to destroy the island. On 8 June 1824 a general assembly of the Psarian Parliament was held in the church of Agios Nikolaos and it was decided that the battle with the Turks would take place only on land, according to the demand of the mercenaries.

From 16 June 1824, the Sultan gathered his forces at Sigri on Lesbos. On 20 June, with 235 ships and 10,000 soldiers, his trusted admiral Koca Hüsrev approached from the north of Psara, at Kanalo bay, believing that he would not encounter great resistance. After numerous Turkish offensives were repelled, the heroic resistance of the Psarians started to flag as the Turks discovered the distant area of cape Markaki, which was not well defended, encircled the defenders at Kanalo and advanced towards the heights of Fteli. Three times the Greeks repelled the attacks of the Turks, inflicting great losses upon them, but they could not withstand the pressure and, with no hope of salvation, blew up the gunpowder store. Ftelio fell.

There you will read the commemorative plaque dedicated to the tough battle and understand the courage that comes from a sense of duty.

After Ftelio, the Turks descended to Agios Dimitrios and Archontiki and continued their advance south to the city.



The Turks occupied the town and scenes of horror and destruction followed. Some Psarians managed to escape the slaughter and escape by boat, while the rest climbed up to Palaiokastro and closed themselves up in the small fortress. The Turks fired cannonballs at it from land and sea, while the town, deserted by its inhabitants, surrendered to the flames. Faced with the fateful end that awaited the defenders, the notables and chieftains along with the President of the Parliament of Psara, Dimitrios Vratsanos, met in the church of Agios Ioannis and decided, after waging the final battle, that Antonios Vratsanos, son of the President of the Parliament, should blow up the gunpowder store. On Sunday 22 June 1824, the 110 fighters of Palaiokastro sacrificed themselves in a holocaust on the altar of freedom, taking with them to their deaths many Turks.

On Monday 23 June 1824, the Turks continued their attacks on the islets of Ai-Nikolaki and Daskalio in the bay of Archontiki. The fortress of Ai-Nikolaki withstood until Thursday 26 June, when it could hold out no longer and surrendered. At Daskalio, paying their debt to the homeland, they set fire to the gunpowder store and its explosion marked the end of the tragedy of the heroic island of Psara.

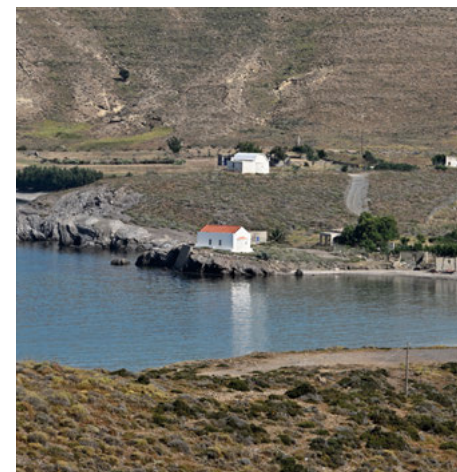
The Psarians who had been saved from the disaster continued their struggle for freedom with whatever forces and ships they had left. Later, the government of free Greece granted the scattered Psarians land in Eretria on Evia, where they settled and named their settlement Nea Psara. They even had a dynamic presence in the political and economic life of the modern Greek state. Many, however, returned to their island, expecting union with Greece. And this expectation became a reality. On 21 October 1912, during the First Balkan War, the heroic island of Psara was liberated from the Turkish yoke with the aid of the destroyer Ierax, whose commander was Antonios Vratsanos, a descendant of Antonios Vratsanos (son of the last president of the Psarian Parliament, Dimitrios Vratsanos), who had blown up the powder keg at Mavri Rachi.





### The Monastery

The *Koimiseos tis Theotokou* Monastery (Dormition of the Virgin), or Monastery of the *Panagia* (Virgin Mary), today without monks, is located in the north of the island, about 9 kilometres from the town. From here you can view the whole Aegean Sea, even Mount Athos. The monastery was built in 1780 and its church has influences from Mount Athos. Rare manuscripts and priestly books printed in Venice and Moscow survive in its library. During the destruction of Psara, the icon of the Panagia, painted by Domenikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco), was salvaged and smuggled to Syros, where it remains today.



### The chapels

The religious feeling of the Psarians is immediately obvious from its many chapels, which invite you to make a pilgrimage and stop for a rest from strolling over the bare Psarian landscape. The *Metochia* (dependencies) of the Monastery, located in the village and the wider area, are Agios Efthymios, Zoodochos Pigi, Agia Triada and Panagia Vatousena. With a variety of architectural styles, they date from the late 18th and early 19th centuries.





### Nature of Psara

The terrain of Psara gives you the opportunity to follow excellent routes and walk along paths, enjoying nature, always with the background of the Aegean Sea.

You will encounter sheep, goats and beehives and sense the beauty of the colours and the fragrance of the shrubs, thymes and wildflowers. Although the island has low vegetation, apart from the sarcopoterium plants, various species of sage and thyme thrive, providing excellent food for the sheep and goats.

The few fig trees with delicious figs and small vines providing fragrant wine will, however, compensate you. The local cheese made from sheep milk remains unadulterated. The honey of Psara, made from the thyme and heather of the island, is famous.

Of course, the wealth and variety of the fish and seafood is a highlight of Psara. Indeed, the island is recognised as a lobster ground.





### The lighthouse

The Kokkinopoulos lighthouse is located on the southeastern tip of the island and illuminates the busy sea passage between Psara and Chios. Built in 1909 by a French company, it joined the Greek Lighthouse Network with the liberation of Psara. It is located about five kilometres from the village, next to the beautiful beach of the same name.



### Beaches

Psara has forty wonderful beaches, small and large, with sand or fine pebbles. The best known and easily accessible are Kato Gialos, Katsouni, Agia Kyriaki, Lazaretta, Limnos, Lakka, Archontiki and Ftelio.

The famous beach of Psili Ammos is on Antipsara, part of the NATURA 2000 network of protected areas and a popular destination for tourist boats.







### Summer events

**Commemoration of the Holocaust:** The events in honour and remembrance of the Holocaust of Psara culminate on the last weekend of June, with a trisagion prayer at the house of Constantine Kanaris (photo) and on Mavri Rachi, a reconstruction of the explosion, a torch relay, historical exhibitions, concerts, and more.

**Varvakeia:** In the second half of July a series of events are held in memory of the great Psarian national benefactor Ioannis Varvakis, under the auspices of the Constantine Kanaris Cultural Association, including a book exhibition, theatrical performances, traditional dances, exhibitions of local products, etc.

**Festival of the Panagia:** On the first day of August, young men carry the icon of the Panagia by foot from the Holy Monastery of the Koimesis tis Theotokou to the village. There is a service and a procession to all the houses of the village. On 6 August, the icon is taken in the same way to the Monastery, where the preparations



begin for the great feast. On 14 August, at the festive vespers, the Monastery is visited by all the island's inhabitants and visitors. The church wardens then serve everyone chickpea soup while the Psarian Brotherhood offers other Lenten dishes. On the eve of the Feast of the Panagia, the Municipality holds a party for everyone in the central square.

**Fisherman's Festival:** The Fisherman's Festival takes place on the islet of Ai-Nikolaki in late July. After the church service and doxology, in the little church of the same name, the Fisherman's Association offers ouzo and fresh seafood meze to all those present.

**August Full Moon:** At the archaeological site of Archontiki, under the moonlight, the Municipality offers a guided tour for visitors and a concert of Greek art songs.

**Summer events of the Psarian Brotherhood:** Beach volleyball and football matches, an annual dance and more.





## Gastronomy

Highlights of Psarian cuisine include astakomakaronada (lobster pasta) and, for dessert, the “white sweet”. You can sample more culinary delights in the picturesque tavernas of the port and discover many recipes in the cookbook “Recipes of the Psarian tradition” published by the island’s Constantine Kanaris Educational and Beautification Association.



Here are two great recipes:

### **Koufota pasta** (6 portions)

Ingredients: 6 handfuls of flour | 1 egg | a little water | 2 soupspoons of olive oil | salt

Preparation: Measure out a handful of flour for each person. Sift the flour, dilute the eggs with cold water and add the flour. Pour in a little warm water and knead a tender dough. When the kneading is almost complete, add the olive oil.

Divide the dough into small balls, shape each one into thin sticks and sprinkle with flour. Slice them into small squares the size of a thimble. Join the three fingers of one hand together - index, middle and ring finger - take each piece of dough between the fingers and roll it across a wooden surface, applying pressure, thus shaping the koufota pasta.

Heat a pan of water with a pinch of salt. When it comes to the boil, add the pasta and leave for about 30 minutes. When the cooking is done, strain and serve with salty cheese and minced meat sauce.

### **Stuffed lamb or goat**

Ingredients: 1 whole lamb with its liver and intestines  
2 kilos onions, finely chopped | 2 cups rice | 1 cup butter  
1 kilo lemons | Salt, pepper | Allspice

Preparation: Clean the lamb thoroughly and make incisions into its shoulders. Season the lamb all over – inside, outside and in the incisions – with salt and pepper and add the lemon juice. Prepare the filling. Cook the liver and intestines and finely chop them. Heat the butter and sauté the onions thoroughly. Add the chopped livers and intestines and sauté them well too. Add the rice, salt, pepper and ground allspice and remove from the heat. Fill the lamb with the mixture and stitch it up. Bake at 200C for at least 4 hours.





From the deck of the ship  
you see the Sacred Rock  
and around it the blue of the sea and the sky.  
It is not a symphony of colours and seasons,  
it is a composition of heroism and stubbornness for life.  
The whole island breathes barren soil with fertile dreams.