



The trip begins at Kratio of Akrata and there is only one thing you should bear in mind: that you keep your eyes open, to see nature's fairytale which, at times, becomes too enchanting to resist...

The people who will welcome you to tell you all about their land's secrets, justify why everyone feels the need to escape. Reset the distance meter, make sure your camera is loaded and start your trip. Go under the bridge of the New National Road, turn right and rest assured that the road is good and your car will not complain at all. You go through Akrata and, although the road

is winding at first, the magnificent view more than makes up for it.

At 2.8km on the right side, you will find the school that is made of stone with the big yards. Take a good look...its architecture is quite interesting. At 3.1 km to the right, there is a road that takes you to the town's indoor Gymnasium. At 3.2km, a sign shows you that the road to your left takes you to Ambelos. Don't even think about it, as the real challenge is straight ahead, on the road that leads you to Zarouhla. This is the route you should follow.

At 3.5km you will see a sign on an electricity post. Don't be confused; turn left and at 3.7km you will find another sign that tells you how to get to the Centre of Environmental Education and the Manos Hatzidakis – Nikos Gatsos Institution. Don't turn right, go straight ahead.

As you drive, you get a panoramic view of Akrata, you see vineyards and wild flowers, as well as the coastline of the Corinthian bay in the distance.



Nature has performed a great work here. Unfortunately, so did the arsons in the summer of 2000, a sight that bears witness to that at the 4th kilometre: the burned down forests. Don't get melancholic. The scenic route that follows will soon change your feelings. At 6.4km, there is a fork and a sign showing that the road to the right takes us to Voutsimo and Agia Paraskevi. Go straight on, on the road to Zarouhla.

Looking down at the ravine, you see river Krathi and villages Voutsimo and Kalamia resting on the slope surrounded by the trees that were burned in the great fires.



The stillness and quiet you prepare you for what you are about to see if you follow the detour at the 7th km that leads to the Monastery of Agia Triada. Make a 180° turn to the left and take the road to the Monastery which you will find at 300 metres. Ring the bell and the only three remaining nuns will welcome you there. They found the Monastery deserted 50 years ago and they set their minds on reshaping it. Back on the main road and the original route, through the bare forests and rocks. The wildfires of 2000 reached the 12th km, but, fortunately, they stopped there. From this point on, nature gets its own back and replaces brown-grey with green. A sign at the 13th km shows the way (to the right) to the Tower of Akrata. You go straight ahead to Zarouhla, on a decent, easy-to-drive-on road. At 17.3km you enter the Community of Valimi. You are at an altitude of 910 metres. 100 metres later you come to a fork. On the right, the road goes to the Church of Virgin Mary and the village Kato Vrissi. The road on the left leads to Zarouhla.



In front of you is mountain Kafkaris, while in the distance, to the right of the 22nd km, you can see snow-capped Helmos. Canyons and conifers attract the visitor's attention and admiration. At the 23.5th km in winter, there is danger of landslide, so you had better be careful. Look down to your right (everyone but the driver!) to admire nature's games.

Through the forest, you can already see the Tsivlos Lake. The water of the spring you see at the 25th km is drinkable in case you are thirsty. On seeing the lake, you are instantly tempted to turn and visit it, so be observant enough to see the relatively small sign. Turn right and drive on the 26.2 km bumpy country road. Tsivlou lake is an Oscar-winner of natural beauty, with

blue-green waters with tree skeletons remnants of an equally glorious past. For some people the lake is ideal for a picnic. Those that are less romantic may enjoy a meal at the restaurant that is right next to it. In the summer, you may even swim in it. But the ideal time to find yourself at the lake is at dawn. Sun-setting at the lake is enchanting. Back on the main street, because what follows is equally interesting providing there's enough light to enjoy it. Off to Zarouhla through thick vegetation. At 29.5 km you reach picturesque Agridi with the stone spring and on your way out, at 30.4km you can have a rest stop in Saltadona. A wonderful view within a radius of 45 metres of maple trees and running waters.



At 30.6km, there is yet another fork, the road on the left goes to Halkianika, Vounaki, Agia Barbara and a basketball court, and the one on your right to Zarouhla.

You take the left road to Agia Barbara. At 31.6km you enter Halkianika and drive through the village. It's a winding road all the way to the 33rd km, where you find villages Solos, Peristera and Messorugi. At 35km you enter Agia Barbara where they have named literally everything after their benefactor: Christos Arfanis. At the entrance of the village there is a basketball court with dressing rooms and seats for the spectators, a charity of their benefactor. The village's square bears his name as well as the street adjacent to it.

There is a community pension made of stone (that used to be a primary school), a stone building with a traditional greek cafe and a tavern, the monument in honour of those who died in 1912 and the church of the Virgin Mary. The largest religious fair in the area is held here on August 15th. The village is at an altitude of 1,000 metres and 99% of its inhabitants are famous builders, known as 'petrades' (from the greek word 'petra' which means stone. Don't miss the great stone towers of the fighters of the Greek Revolution, build according to the architectural standards of Greece at the time of the Turkish occupation. Here, you can also find the exquisite mountain tea that comes from the top of Helmos. Say 'goodbye' to Agia Barbara and head for Zarouhla. At 36.7km the road goes to Peristera. You should go straight ahead through a beautiful forest of conifers and at 37.7km,

you are very close to Zarouhla. The stone chapel of Agios Dimitrios is to your right, at 38,2km. Its architecture as well as its icons is marvellous.

Zarouhla is located at an altitude of 1,080 metres and has 150 inhabitants. You have to make a stop here. The visitors from Athens have turned the place into the cosmopolitan town of the mountains, which is full with people all year round. Make sure you book well in advance if you wish to spend a weekend in Zarouhla. One of the places you can stay is the Tower of Zarouhla, a historic building, 800 metres far from the village centre. Greek fighter Fotilas of the Greek Revolution lived in this tower. There is also a very nice hotel since demand is so high.



There are many taverns in the village and many chapels around: Agioi Taxiarches, Agia Paraskevi, Agia Triada, and others. On the maple tree at the main square, the people of Zarouhla have hung those who fought and died in the war of 1912-1913. At a distance of 3km from the village, you will find spring Krioneri which took its name by its very cold water. The fact that the flow and quantity of the water are the same all year round seems so strange to locals that they are full of legends and speculations about it. On leaving Zarouhla, reset your distance meter. After 1.7 km on your way back, you will see another fork. The left road goes to Peristera. Take the narrow, descending road to your left. The left road goes to **Solo, Messorougi, Peristera**, the **Ski Resort**

,
Kastraki

,
Golfo's Spring,
Hydata Stigos

. 200 metres after the detour, you turn left and at Lykianika the left road of the new fork goes to **Peristera**

(6km),

Messorougi

(5km) and

Solo

(3km), and the right one to

Kalavryta

(25km),

Messorougi

(4km) and
Peristera
(3km).