

The frightening Karoulia



Karoulia is the most isolated area located at the southernmost shore of Mount Athos on a rocky and very steep site and belongs to Megisti Lavra monastery.

It is underneath Katounakia on a near vertical cliff. Some huts can be considered either in Katounakia either in Karoulia area. The hermit monks have built their huts inside caves, holes and rock protrusions. The name “karoulia” (pulleys) derives from the fact that in the old days supplies were delivered to the monks with pulleys on which the hermits use to hang the basket where the passing monks, pilgrims or fishermen put some water and a piece of bread. The pulleys exist till today and are used routinely.

In order to move around they need to climb down with chains that are nailed to the cliffs. They have a very simple life and some of them reach to considerable spiritual advancement, however very few data is known about them because the access there is very difficult.

The monks here are principally occupied with prayer and study. They have

diminished their corporal needs to the absolute minimum. They drink rain water which they collect and eat just enough to stay alive; they support themselves by weaving baskets and making prayer ropes, which they sell or exchange for food in Daphne or in Karyes. Also, they help at various feasts in exchange for food or other things which they need for their day by day life.

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— Source: asceticexperience.com