

GREECE

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΣ
ΟΡΓΑΝΙΣΜΟΣ
ΤΟΥΡΙΣΜΟΥ

*A place where history meets nature.
In northwestern Ionia, between the fertile plain
and the Ionian Sea, an authentic, welcoming,
and timeless destination awaits you.*



A welcoming note to the traveler

Welcome to the Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini – a land where history is not confined to museums, but lives in the landscape, the people, and the rhythm of everyday life. This guide invites you to explore a destination that blends the timeless with the contemporary: medieval fortresses overlooking the Ionian Sea, ancient sanctuaries that shaped the Olympic spirit, fertile plains that nourish both land and culture, and coastal horizons that promise tranquility and renewal.

As you turn these pages, you will discover a region rich in stories, flavors, and experiences. A place where nature offers balance, where traditions remain vibrant, and where hospitality is not an obligation but a way of life.

Whether you seek cultural exploration, seaside relaxation, wellness, gastronomy, or authentic encounters, Andravida–Kyllini welcomes you with open arms. Let this guide be your companion – and let the journey unfold.

A land of stories, a sea of light, a journey of the heart.



TOURIST GUIDE 2026

Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini



Travel Writing Edition



Introduction

Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini

In northwestern Ilia, where the fertile plain gently touches the Ionian Sea, lies a land shaped by history, blessed by nature, and alive with tradition. The Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini is a destination where serenity meets vitality, where ancient stories coexist with medieval splendor, and where the present draws inspiration from a rich and enduring past.

From antiquity to modern times, this region has continuously narrated the history of the Peloponnese through its landscapes, monuments, and living traditions. Here, authenticity is not an aspiration — it is a way of life.

1. The Destination

The Identity of Andravida–Kyllini

Nestled in northwestern Ilia, the Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini stands as one of the most emblematic historical and geographical centers of the Western Peloponnese. The traces of the ancient Epeians — mentioned by Homer as descendants of Endymion — meet the medieval brilliance of the Principality of Achaea and the vibrant rhythm of contemporary life.

Its strategic location transformed the area into a crossroads of communication, commerce, and culture from antiquity through the Middle Ages. From the ancient port of Kyllini and the Roman era to the medieval flourishing of Andravida as the capital of the Principality, the region has long been a hub of activity and influence. Chlemoutsis Castle and the archaeological site of Glarentza stand as proud witnesses to this historical continuity.



Today, the municipality harmoniously blends its agricultural heritage with the modern role of Kyllini as the gateway to the Ionian Islands. Warm hospitality, deep-rooted traditions, and a commitment to sustainable development shape a destination that honors its past while looking confidently toward the future.

2. Municipal Units

2.1 1 Municipal Unit of Lechaina

Visit Lechaina, set among the fertile plains of northern Ilia and the gentle hills surrounding the artificial Lake Konstantinos Karamanlis. This is a place where historical memory, religious tradition, and peaceful rural landscapes create an authentic portrait of the Greek countryside. With a population of 4,910 residents, Lechaina invites you to explore its charming villages.



Lechaina

*The birthplace
of the writer
Andreas Karkavitsas*

Lechaina, the capital of the Municipality of Andravida-Kyllini, carries a strong historical and cultural identity. From the Frankish period to modern times, the town has been a point of reference for the wider region. In 1835, it was officially designated as the seat of the Municipality of Myrtountia, named after the ancient city of Myrsinos, mentioned by Strabo.





Lechaina is also the birthplace of the distinguished Greek author Andreas Karkavitsas. His preserved childhood home near the market is a cultural landmark, while his grave is also located in the town. Other notable figures from Lechaina include the Macedonian fighter Christos Prantounas and the legal historian Dionysios Alikaniotis.

The municipal community also includes the settlements of Agioi Theodoroi, Agios Panteleimon, and Katarachi, which complement the area's blend of urban and rural character.

A stroll through Lechaina reveals a lively town where history coexists with everyday life. The nearby Kotychi Lagoon and the Lechaina Salt Pans offer moments of tranquility and connection with nature.



Myrsini

Built on the fertile plain of Lechaina, Myrsini stands on the site of ancient Myrsinos, a city that, according to Homeric tradition, participated in the Trojan War. Formerly known as Souleimanaga, the village adopted its current name in 1915, shedding its Ottoman-era designation. Today, Myrsini is a peaceful rural settlement with strong historical symbolism – ideal for visitors interested in the ancient history of Ilia.

Areti

Areti is a lowland village with documented history dating back to the early 19th century. Formerly known as Retouni until 1959, the settlement appears in the first census of 1828, ordered by Ioannis Kapodistrias, recording 29 families. The village's identity is deeply connected to the icon of Panagia Retouniotissa, associated with a long-standing miracle tradition. Each year, on the first Sunday after August 15th, the village hosts a major religious festival that attracts visitors from across the region

Melissa

Melissa, built at an elevation of about 100 meters, is a traditional agricultural village with a long-standing presence in northern Ilia. Once known as Zoga and later as Kastraki, it received its current name in 1957. With panoramic views of the plains and nearby water features, Melissa is an ideal stop for those seeking peace and a glimpse into local rural life.

Borsion

Located near Lake Konstantinos Karamanlis, Borsion is a small settlement surrounded by farmland and natural beauty. The nearby “Gouvos” stream has shaped the area's agricultural activity for generations. The village retains its authentic rural character and offers gentle walks through lush landscapes.

Agios Charalambos

A small, sparsely populated settlement between Melissa and Borsion, Agios Charalambos offers a sense of seclusion and tranquility. Surrounded by fields and natural vegetation, it is ideal for travelers seeking the quiet rhythm of the Greek countryside.



2.2 Municipal Unit of Andravida

The Medieval Heart of the Principality of Morea

With a population of 4,309 residents, Andravida is one of the most historically significant medieval centers of Ilia and the Peloponnese.

Andravida

For those drawn to medieval history, Andravida is a destination of exceptional importance. Built near the right bank of the Peneus River, the town was the capital of the Frankish Principality of Morea, flourishing as a political and administrative center.

During the rule of Geoffrey of Villehardouin, Andravida became the seat of feudal assemblies. It was here that the Chronicle of the Morea was composed — a foundational text documenting the division of the Peloponnese into twelve baronies.

In 1433, the town came under the rule of the Palaiologos dynasty, and in 1460 it was conquered by the Ottomans. Today, the surviving sanctuary of the Church of Hagia Sophia stands as a rare example of Frankish architecture in Greece.

In modern times, Andravida is home to the military airbase of the 117 Combat Wing, adding strategic significance to the area.





Agios Georgios

A small rural community built at an elevation of 72 meters, Agios Georgios was once known as Vrachnaika, named after the village of Vrachni in Kalavryta, the homeland of its first settlers. After the Greek Revolution, shepherds from Vrachni wintered their flocks in the plains of Ilia, eventually establishing the settlement. The name Agios Georgios was officially adopted in 1984.

Stafidokampos

A lowland village at 32 meters elevation, Stafidokampos was known as Brati during the Ottoman period. Renamed in 1928, its name reflects the region's long-standing raisin cultivation. In 1933, an archaeological discovery revealed a cemetery from the late Archaic and Classical periods, including a notable cist grave made of large poros stone blocks. The area is now a protected archaeological site.

Strousi

Strousi is a lowland village with 290 residents, known for the church of Saint Kyriaki and the unique folk tradition of the “genitsaristic dance,” linked to the legendary Strouseiko Bridge. According to local lore, the bridge was so high that wagon drivers avoided looking into it, fearing the dragon said to dwell beneath. This myth lives on through song and dance, forming part of the municipality's intangible cultural heritage.



2.3 Municipal Unit of Vouprasia

The Fertile Northern Plain

Vouprasia stretches across the rich northern plains of Ilia — a region shaped by agriculture, history, and vibrant local communities. With 10,617 residents, it remains a dynamic center of life and production.

It consists of the following communities:



Varda

Varda, the historical seat of the municipality, grew significantly after the construction of the railway station in 1888. The name “Varda” is said to derive from the phrase “Varda na peraso” (“Let me pass”), used by travelers waiting for the train. Today, Varda is a lively commercial and administrative hub.

Manolada

With roots dating back to the Frankish or late Byzantine period, Manolada is steeped in history. The Battle of Manolada (1316), fought between Catalans and Byzantines, took place here. The village’s most important monument is the Church of the Dormition of the Virgin (Paleopanagia), dating to around 1300.

Nea Manolada

Founded in 1929, Nea Manolada was shaped by the arrival of refugees from Demouzndere in Asia Minor after 1922. The harmonious coexistence of locals and newcomers defines the village’s identity.

Kapeleto

First mentioned in the early 15th century, Kapeletos evolved from farmland into a permanent settlement by the 18th century. According to local tradition, it was named after an Italian pirate, Kapeleti, who anchored his ships at the port of Kyllini and used the nearby forests as his hideout.

Kourtesi

Established in 1879 and renamed Kourtesion in 1977, this agricultural village includes the settlements of Ano Kourtesi and Koteika. Since 2010, it has been part of the Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini.

Neapoli

Located northeast of Varda, Neapoli is surrounded by streams and fertile land, reflecting the agricultural character of the region.

Nision

Formerly known as Maliki, Nision has a long administrative history and includes the settlements of Karavouleika, Kremmydion, and Agia Marina.

Aetorachi

Built on a hill with panoramic views of Lake Peneus and the villages of Pineia, Aetorachi is a place where myth and history meet. According to legend, this is where Hercules diverted the waters of the Peneus and Alpheios rivers to clean the stables of King Augeas.

Xenies

Formed in 1845 from the Upper and Lower Xenies, the village has undergone several administrative changes before becoming part of the municipality.



2.4 Municipal Unit of Kastro-Kyllini

The gateway of the Municipality to the Ionian Sea

With a population of 3,837 residents, the Municipal Unit of Kastro-Kyllini stretches along the western coastline of the Municipality of Andravida-Kyllini, where history, nature, and modern infrastructure meet. This is the maritime face of the region – a place shaped by centuries of seafaring, trade, and cultural exchange.

It consists of the following communities:

Kyllini

*Gateway of the Peloponnese
and a crossroads of millennia*

Welcome to Kyllini – the western gateway of the Peloponnese to the Ionian Sea, a place with thousands of years of history and an uninterrupted presence on the maritime map of Western Greece. Today, its port is one of



the most important in the region, connecting the mainland with the Ionian Islands.

In antiquity, Kyllini was a major port and an important religious center. Sanctuaries dedicated to Asclepius and Aphrodite flourished here, while the statue of Hermes – protector of the city and of seafarers – held a prominent place. Its strategic location made it the primary maritime link between Ilia and the Ionian world.

During the Middle Ages, after 1204, the Franks founded the city of Glarentza near Kyllini – one of the most significant ports of the Mediterranean. Glarentza became a thriving commercial and economic center, even minting its own currency, the famous tornese. At the same time, Andravida served as the capital of the Principality of Achaea, while the Franks built the imposing Chlemoutsi Castle to protect the region.

In 1432, Glarentza was destroyed by Constantine Palaiologos as part of a defensive strategy against pirate raids, marking the end of its medieval prosperity. Yet Kyllini rose again. In the 19th century, the export of raisins transformed the port into a major commercial hub, contributing significantly to the region's economic growth.

Construction of the modern port began before 1887. Today, Kyllini is the main maritime gateway of the Peloponnese to the Ionian Islands, with daily ferry routes to Zakynthos, Kefalonia, and Ithaca. It is a vital center for tourism, commerce, and transportation in Western Greece.

Kastro

*A crossroads of history
with panoramic views
of the Ionian Sea*

Perched between the capes of Kyllini and Trypiti, Kastro is a picturesque settlement built on a hilltop at 165–200 meters above sea level. Its strategic position offers sweeping views of the fertile plains of Ilia and the endless Ionian horizon.



The dominant landmark is the majestic medieval Chlemoutsi Castle – one of the most important Frankish fortresses in Greece, from which the settlement takes its name. As the administrative and military center

of the Principality of Achaëa, the castle stands today as a monumental testament to medieval architecture and power.

The settlement was officially recognized on April 20, 1835. Initially part of the Municipality of Kyllinia, it later joined the Municipality of Myrtountia and, from 1912 onward, served as the seat of the Community of Kastro until the administrative reforms of the Kapodistrias Plan.

Neochori

A lowland village between Andravida and Kyllini

Neochori is a lowland settlement of northwestern Ilia, built at an elevation of just 21 meters. Its privileged location — 7.5 km from Andravida and 6.5 km from Kyllini — makes it an ideal base for exploring the wider region.

Under the Kallikratis reform, Neochori and the nearby Vytinaika formed the Local Community of Neochori Myrtountia, part of the Municipal Unit of Kastro–Kyllini. According to the 2021 census, the community has 798 residents.

With strong agricultural character and close proximity to major historical and tourist sites, Neochori offers an authentic glimpse into rural life in Ilia.

Kato Panagia

A place of memory, faith, and tranquility

Kato Panagia is a small, picturesque settlement founded to house refugees from Asia Minor after the 1922 Catastrophe. Nestled in a lush valley of ancient olive trees, just 2.5 km from Kyllini, it offers a serene and contemplative atmosphere.

Its spiritual heart is the historic Monastery of the Nativity of the Theotokos, also known as the Monastery of Panagia Vlacherna — named after the famous monastery of Constantinople. Founded in the late 12th or early 13th century, it is one of the most significant Byzantine religious monuments in the region.

Today, the monastery is not only a place of worship but also hosts a care center for the chronically ill and elderly, continuing its long tradition of spiritual and social service.



3. Cultural Heritage & Monuments

A landscape of historical continuity and living memory

The Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini offers a rich historical journey spanning from prehistoric and Mycenaean times to the present day. Its location – between the fertile plains of Ilia and the Ionian Sea – made it a center of settlement, administration, commerce, and cultural creation throughout the centuries.

Here, the legacy of Ancient Elis coexists with the medieval splendor of the Principality of Achaea and the monumental heritage of the Frankish era. At the same time, modern cultural production, folk traditions, and institutions of memory keep the connection between past and present alive.

All archaeological sites and monuments are protected and showcased according to Greek cultural heritage legislation, offering visitors educational and cultural experiences of great value.

3.1 Ancient Elis and the Land of the Epeians

Political and religious organization in antiquity

The city state of the Epeians corresponds to the wider area of Ancient Elis — one of the most important historical and cultural centers of ancient Greece. Mentioned by Homer, the Epeians inhabited northern Ionia and developed a structured political system, strong social cohesion, and significant spiritual influence.

According to mythology, their founder was Epeios, son of Endymion, who became king after winning a footrace in Olympia — a symbolic link between the region and the Panhellenic Games.

Ancient Elis was not merely a city state. It was the guardian of the Olympic Games and the guarantor of the Olympic Truce. From here, the Hellenodikai departed to oversee the Games, ensuring fairness and sanctity. Elis was a political and religious center of Panhellenic importance, with influence far beyond its borders.

References by Homer, Strabo, and Pausanias confirm its enduring presence in the historical and intellectual landscape of Greece.

3.2 Archaeological Sites and Ancient Monuments

Testimonies of social, religious, and funerary practices

Stafidokampos Cemetery

An organized cemetery of the late Archaic and Classical periods (late 6th–4th century BC) has been uncovered in Stafidokampos. Excavations revealed various burial types — pyres, tile covered graves, burial pithoi, and impressive cist graves.

The monumental 4th century BC cist grave, built of large poros stone blocks, indicates the high social status of the deceased. Rich grave goods — strigils, gilded beads, wreaths — offer insight into aesthetics, customs, and social distinctions of the era.





Roman Baths of Loutra Kyllinis

Near the thermal springs, at the site of “Litzi,” lie the remains of an extensive Roman bath complex. These ruins attest to the long standing use of the area’s thermal waters for healing and wellness since antiquity.

3.3 Medieval Heritage: Andravida, Chlemoutsi & Glarentza

The Principality of Achaea and the Frankish Golden Age

After 1204, the region entered a pivotal historical period. Andravida became the capital of the Principality of Achaea – one of the most powerful feudal states of the Mediterranean.

Andravida – Church of Hagia Sophia

A rare example of Western medieval architecture in Greece, the Gothic church of Hagia Sophia served as the court chapel of the Villehardouin dynasty and the seat of the Latin bishop.



Chlemoutsi Castle

The princely fortress and administrative center of the Principality, Chlemoutsi dominates the hill of Chelonata. Its well preserved architecture offers a vivid picture of Frankish military design and highlights the strategic importance of the region.





Glarentza

One of the most important medieval ports of the Mediterranean, Glarentza was a commercial, economic, and administrative hub with its own mint and advanced urban organization.

Bridge of Strousi

A single arched stone bridge that once connected the port of Glarentza (modern Kyllini) with Andravida, the capital of the Principality of Morea. It is also linked to local legends and folk traditions.





3.4 Museums, Folklore Collections & Cultural Spaces

Organized memory and living cultural identity

Chlemoutsi Castle Museum

Housed within the fortress, the museum is a major interpretive center for the Frankish

period in Iliia. Exhibits include sculptures, inscriptions, coins, ceramics, and everyday objects from Andravida, Glarentza, and other medieval settlements.

Folklore Museum of Lechaina

Showcasing rural life in northern Iliia, the museum presents tools, household items, clothing, and photographs that depict daily life from the 19th to mid 20th century.

Folklore Museum of Andravida

Focusing on the town's more recent history and its medieval legacy, the museum highlights agricultural life, traditional customs, and the cultural influences shaped by centuries of history.





Municipal Libraries

The Demisianeios Library of Lechaina and the Municipal Library of Andravida serve as cultural and educational hubs, hosting archives, events, lectures, and exhibitions.





Cultural Venues

Spaces such as the open air cinema “Cine Rodon” in Stafidokampos and the “Astron” Theater in Lechaina host festivals, performances, concerts, and film screenings, enriching the region’s contemporary cultural life.





4. Nature & Landscapes

The natural world of the western Peloponnese

The Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini is a land where nature shapes not only the landscape, but also the rhythm of life and the essence of the visitor’s experience. Here, simplicity becomes beauty: endless sandy beaches, fertile plains scented with citrus, gentle wetlands alive with birdsong, and a countryside that invites you to slow down and breathe.

Let yourself wander barefoot along the soft Ionian sands... Inhale the sweet fragrance of orange blossoms drifting across the plain... Feel the earth beneath your feet – the same earth that nourishes the region’s abundant harvests.

This is not a land of dramatic cliffs or extreme contrasts. Instead, it captivates with harmony, balance, and the peaceful coexistence of sea, wetlands, and cultivated fields. The natural environment is protected under national and European conservation frameworks, ensuring the preservation of biodiversity and supporting sustainable forms of tourism.



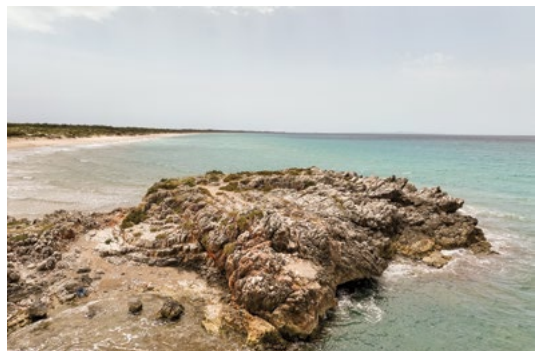
4.1 Beaches of the Ionian Sea

A long coastline of golden sand and crystal clear waters

The western edge of the municipality is embraced entirely by the Ionian Sea, offering a long, continuous coastline of golden beaches that cater to every type of traveler. Easy access, gentle terrain, and a wide range of accommodation — from campsites and guesthouses to fully organized resorts — make the area ideal for families, couples, and nature lovers alike.

Common features of the beaches include:

- fine, golden sand
- shallow, clear waters perfect for children
- impressive natural sand dunes
- the rare sea daffodil (*Pancratium maritimum*), a delicate flower that adorns the coastline.



Visitors will find:

- **organized beaches** with sunbeds, cafés, and amenities
- **quiet, secluded shores** ideal for those seeking tranquility
- **beaches suitable for water sports**, including kitesurfing

Among the most notable beaches are:

- **Chrysi Akti (Golden Coast)**
- **Kyllini Beach**
- **Kafkalida**
- **Myrsini Beach**
- **Areti Beach**
- **Agios Panteleimonas**
- **Kounoupeli and Kounoupelaki**

Myrsini and Areti are especially popular among kitesurfers thanks to the steady winds that often sweep across the area.

Environmental protection practices are applied in selected coastal zones, ensuring the preservation of dunes, flora, and sensitive ecosystems.

4.2 Wetlands, Lakes & Protected Areas

A mosaic of water, wildlife, and ecological significance

Beyond the sea, the municipality is home to a rich network of wetlands and aquatic ecosystems — most notably the **Kotychi Lagoon**, part of the **Kotychi–Strofyliya Wetlands National Park**. Protected under the **Ramsar Convention** and the **Natura 2000 network**, the lagoon is one of the most important ecological sites in Greece.

Kotychi Lagoon

The largest lagoon in the Peloponnese, covering approximately 7,500 acres, Kotychi is a sanctuary for biodiversity. Visitors can observe:

- rare and protected species of waterbirds
- migratory birds that arrive mainly in winter to overwinter
- amphibians and reptiles

rich fish populations, including eels that migrate to the sea to reproduce

The lagoon plays a vital ecological and productive role, serving as a habitat, feeding ground, and migration corridor for countless species.

The area is monitored and managed by environmental authorities in accordance with national and European legislation, ensuring the long term protection of its ecosystems.



4.3 Rural Landscapes & Nature Trails

A gentle countryside shaped by centuries of cultivation

The interior of the municipality is defined by one of the most fertile plains in the Peloponnese. Agriculture is not merely an economic activity – it is the backbone of local identity and a defining feature of the landscape.

Vast cultivated fields stretch toward the horizon, producing high quality agricultural products destined for both local consumption and wider markets. This serene rural environment is ideal for:

- gentle nature walks
- countryside exploration
- discovering the daily life of local farmers
- cycling routes through fields and waterways

Trails through the plain and around wetlands reveal the deep connection between people and nature – a relationship built on respect, tradition, and the rhythm of the seasons.

Nature as an experience of authenticity

In Andravida–Kyllini, nature is not simply the backdrop to your holiday – it is an essential part of the experience. The Ionian beaches, the wetlands, and the fertile plain create a destination perfect for travelers seeking peace, relaxation, and genuine connection with the environment.

Here, the natural world offers balance, serenity, and a sense of timeless harmony.





5. Experiences & Special Forms of Tourism

A destination of year round experiences

The Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini is far more than a summer escape. It is a destination rich in culture, nature, wellness, gastronomy, and spirituality – a mosaic of experiences that unfold throughout the year. Each form of tourism emerges naturally from the region’s character, inviting visitors to discover the area in depth and through all seasons.

5.1 Cultural Tourism

Ancient ports, medieval legacies, living traditions

Ancient Port of Kyllini – Maritime Gateway of Ancient Elis

Since antiquity, the port of Kyllini has been one of the most important harbors of Elis – a vital link between the Peloponnese, the Ionian Sea, and the western Mediterranean. It served as the main maritime gateway to Olympia, facilitating trade, travel, and the arrival of visitors and pilgrims to the Olympic Games.



Archaeological and underwater findings confirm the port’s continuous use through Roman times. Today, the ancient port represents a significant cultural tourism asset with strong potential for sustainable development.

As part of the “BLUE COULTOUR” project under the Interreg VI A Greece–Italy 2021–2027

program, the Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini is participating in the creation of an organized Underwater Archaeological Park, highlighting the region’s submerged cultural heritage in collaboration with international academic and institutional partners.

Tradition, Festivals & Living Cultural Experiences

Cultural tourism is a cornerstone of the region’s identity. Beyond monuments and museums, culture here is alive — expressed through customs, celebrations, and community traditions Σημαντική θέση κατέχουν:

Key cultural expressions include:

- traditional festivals linked to the agricultural cycle and religious calendar
- vibrant Carnival events, highlighted by the **Genitsaristic Dance**, a unique folk ritual with deep historical roots
- the annual **Carnival Parade**, which brings color and creativity to the streets



Major cultural institutions and events:

- the **Equestrian Exhibition**, celebrating the region’s long equine tradition
- the **International Festival of the Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini**
- the beloved **open air cinema “Cine Rodon”** in Stafidokampos
- the **Astron Theater** in Lechaina, hosting performances and cultural events



Here, visitors are not passive observers — they become part of the cultural heartbeat of the community

5.2 Gastronomy & Agritourism

Flavors of the land and the Ionian Sea

Gastronomy in Andravida–Kyllini is deeply rooted in the region’s agricultural heritage. The fertile plain of Ilia produces exceptional ingredients that form the foundation of local cuisine.

The area is known for:

- raisin cultivation



- high quality olive oil
- fresh fruits and vegetables
- fishing traditions and seafood from the Ionian Sea
- Visitors can explore:
 - local farms and agricultural production
 - traditional cooking methods
 - authentic dishes in tavernas, farmhouses, and agritourism estates

Agritourism offers a genuine connection with rural life – meeting farmers, learning about cultivation, and experiencing the rhythms of the countryside. All activities are developed with respect for the environment and local production, supporting sustainable tourism..

5.3 Thermal Tourism & Wellness

Healing and relaxation with centuries of history

Thermal tourism is one of the region’s oldest traditions. The thermal springs of Loutra Kyllinis and Loutra Yrminis have been known since antiquity for their therapeutic qualities.

The presence of Roman baths, still visible today, confirms the long standing use of these waters for healing and rejuvenation.

Visitors seeking wellness can enjoy:

- relaxation and stress relief
- hydrotherapy treatments
- natural thermal baths
- soothing experiences for musculoskeletal discomfort

Modern spa facilities blend harmoniously with the natural surroundings, creating an ideal environment for high quality wellness tourism.



5.4 Ecotourism & Nature Observation

Gentle experiences in landscapes of high environmental value

For nature lovers and ecotourism enthusiasts, the municipality offers a unique environment shaped by wetlands, lagoons, and lakes. The region hosts significant biodiversity, especially during winter, when migratory waterbirds arrive to overwinter.

Visitors can enjoy:

birdwatching

photography of rare species

guided nature walks

environmental interpretation activities

All ecotourism experiences are designed with respect for the ecosystems and aim to raise environmental awareness among visitor.



5.5 Religious & Pilgrimage Tourism

Faith, history, and spiritual reflection

Religious and pilgrimage tourism is an important dimension of the visitor experience in Andravida–Kyllini. The region is home to historic churches and monasteries that reflect





centuries of spiritual life.

Notable sites include:

- the **Monastery of Vlacherna** in Kato Panagia
- the **Paleopanagia Church** in Manolada.

These sacred places are not only sites of worship but also bearers of historical memory and cultural continuity. They are often linked to local festivals and religious celebrations, offering visitors an authentic experience of devotion and tradition.



A year round destination of experiences

Special forms of tourism in Andravida–Kyllini support sustainable development, extend the tourist season, and allow visitors to experience the region with all their senses.

Here, tourism is not just accommodation – **it is a way of life, a journey of discovery, and an invitation to connect deeply with place and people.**



6. Local Life & Events

Living tradition and everyday authenticity

The Municipality of Andravida-Kyllini offers far more than historical monuments and natural landscapes. Its true heartbeat lies in the daily life of its people – in the customs, celebrations, and traditions that connect past and present. Festivals, rituals, and community gatherings animate the region throughout the year, offering visitors a rare opportunity to experience local culture not as spectators, but as participants.



Here, tradition is not preserved behind glass. It lives in the village squares, in the music of

the violin, in the aroma of freshly baked bread, and in the laughter shared across generations. You don't simply watch — you join in.

6.1 Customs, Traditions & Living Heritage

Collective memory in motion

The customs and traditions of Andravida–Kyllini are living expressions of collective memory — practices passed down through generations, shaped by the cycles of nature, religious celebrations, and the social fabric of the community:

Festivals & Local Celebrations

Throughout the year, the villages come alive with music, dance, and celebration. These festivals, often linked to religious feasts or agricultural milestones, are among the most authentic ways to experience the region.

Dance to traditional rhythms, taste homemade delicacies, and let the festive atmosphere draw you in — every celebration is a story that continues to unfold.

- ▶ **Season:** Year round (peak: Spring–Summer)
- ▶ **Experience duration:** 1–3 hours
- ▶ **Character:** Tradition | Music | Gastronomy

Carnival Rituals – The «Genitsaroi Gathering»

During Carnival, history and ritual blend in the unique folk tradition known as the “**Antamoma ton Genitsaron**” — the Gathering of the Genitsaroi. With symbolic costumes, rhythmic movements, and strong community participation, this event becomes a living bridge between past and present.

Follow the procession, feel the pulse of the crowd, and witness how memory transforms into experience.

Religious Rituals & Spiritual Practices

Religious celebrations in the municipality are moments of deep communal connection. Processions, feast days, and local rituals preserve the spiritual identity of each village and offer visitors a rare opportunity to experience authentic expressions of faith.

6.2 Cultural Events & Festivals

Culture in motion

Cultural events in Andravida–Kyllini blend tradition with contemporary creativity, forming a vibrant meeting point for residents and visitors. Annual festivals, concerts, exhibitions, and summer activities create a rich cultural landscape.

Key events include:



International Festival of the Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini

Since 2011, this festival has become a major cultural institution, highlighting the region’s medieval heritage with Chlemoutsis Castle as its central stage. It features music, gastronomy, exhibitions, and international collaborations with ensembles from Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Germany, Turkey, and beyond.

Open Air Cinema “Cine Rodon”

Operating in Stafidokampos since 1990, this beloved venue hosts film screenings, concerts, theater performances, and cultural tributes throughout the summer.



Andravida Horse Exhibition

Held every September at the Andravida Equestrian Center, this event showcases the region’s rich equestrian tradition through horse shows, parades, and demonstrations.

Local Festivals & Cultural Activities

Music, dance, and traditional gastronomy come together in events that offer visitors an immersive connection with the community.

A holistic cultural experience

Local life and events in Andravida–Kyllini offer a complete cultural journey – one that blends tradition, creativity, and everyday life. Every festival, every gathering, every celebration becomes an opportunity for meaningful cultural discovery and lasting memories.



7. Suggested Routes

Nature & Wellness Experiences

Below is a fully developed travel writing adaptation of your proposed route.

► Route 1: Nature & Wellness

A journey of calm, balance, and natural beauty

Leave the pace of everyday life behind and follow a route that blends water, greenery, and tranquility. From internationally protected wetlands to peaceful lakes and gentle rural paths, nature here becomes a sanctuary for rejuvenation.

Route Stops:

- **Kotychi–Strofyliya National Park (Natura 2000)** A mosaic of wetlands, dunes, and forests — ideal for birdwatching, photography, and quiet contemplation.



- **Lake Peneus (Karamanlis)** A serene landscape of water and rolling hills, perfect for gentle walks and scenic views.
- **Rural paths in Melissa, Borsion & Aetorachi** Explore the agricultural heart of the region, where olive groves, fields, and traditional villages reveal the deep connection between people and land
 - ▶ **Estimated duration:** Half day – Full day
 - ▶ **Difficulty:** Easy – Moderate
 - ▶ **Best seasons:** Spring & Autumn
 - ▶ **Ideal for:** Hiking | Nature photography | Slow travel | Τύπος διαδρομής: Πεζοπορία | Φωτογράφιση φύσης

▶ **Wellness & Rejuvenation**

At the Thermal Springs of Kyllini, body and mind find harmony. Surrounded by pine forests and the scent of the sea, the experience of wellness becomes complete – perfect for relaxation, gentle exercise, yoga, and moments of inner balance.

► Flavors Along the Route

Every journey in Andravida–Kyllini is accompanied by flavors that tell the story of the land. Enjoy traditional pies, local cheeses, olive oil, and wines from regional varieties. Gastronomy becomes a sensory extension of the landscape.

► For Families

Safe, shallow beaches (Lechaina, Kastro, Kyllini, Kounoupele, Myrsini)
Educational visits to Chlemoutsi Castle, Hagia Sophia of Andravida, Kyllini Port, Kotychi Lagoon, and local museums
Nature walks and easy distances.
Ideal for: family holidays, relaxation, combining sea & culture.

► For Couples

Romantic sunsets at Chlemoutsi Castle
Thermal baths & spa experiences
Seaside dinners
Walks through historic landscapes
Ideal for: romantic getaways, weekend escapes, slow tourism.

► For Nature Lovers & Alternative Travelers

Wetlands & birdwatching
Hiking and photography
Rural landscapes & authentic villages
Deep connection with nature
Ideal for: ecotourism, peaceful retreats, meaningful travel

A destination you don't just visit — you live it

Andravida–Kyllini is a multifaceted destination that brings together:

- thousands of years of history
- unique natural landscapes
- sea and thermal waters
- authentic hospitality

A place where every step, every flavor, every story becomes part of your journey.

Recommended Routes

MUNICIPALITY OF ANDRAVIDA - KYLLINI

Experiences in Nature and Wellness

Nature Experiences

- Kotychi–Strofylia National Park



- Pineios River (Karamali)



- Rural landscapes in Melissa, Borsion, Aetorrachí

Wellness & Relaxation

- Thermal Baths of Kyllini



- The ideal place for relaxation, yoga & gentle exercise



- Connection with nature & the sea



Ideal for:



Hiking



Birdwatching



Spa & Relaxation

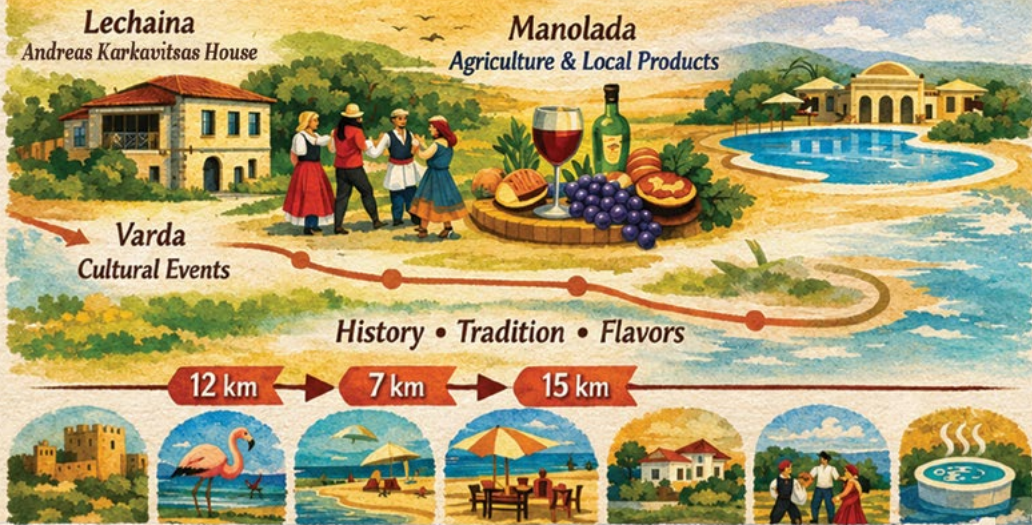
Routes in Municipality of Andravida-Kyllini



Route 1: North Coast & Nature



Route 2: Culture & Gastronomy



Follow the Myth of Ippotis in the Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini



1. Andravida

A historic stronghold of the Franks!
Discover the medieval atmosphere of the region, its fascinating heritage and historical mysteries!

1.



2.

Nea Strousio

A medieval settlement by the river.
Walk through the steps of the Knights!



3. Chlemoutsi Castle and Glarentza

A "knightly" Frankish castle and a harbor – city of the era!
Magnificent view, historical exploration and a seaside park!

3.



Heritage
Route

18 km





8. Nearby Destinations

A perfect starting point for exploring Ilia and the western Peloponnese

The Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini is an ideal base for discovering some of the most important cultural and natural landmarks of Ilia and the wider Peloponnese. Within short distances, you can explore UNESCO listed archaeological sites, mountain sanctuaries, picturesque ports, and pristine beaches – blending culture, nature, and seaside experiences into a single journey.

8.1 Ancient Olympia

The cradle of the Olympic Games

Just 50 km from Andravida–Kyllini lies **Ancient Olympia**, one of the world’s most significant archaeological sites and a UNESCO World Heritage Monument.

Olympia was the most sacred religious center of ancient Greece and the birthplace of the Olympic Games, held from 776 BC to AD 393. The archaeological site preserves:

- the **Temple of Zeus**
- the **Heraion**
- the **ancient Stadium**
- the **Gymnasium and Palaestra**
- the **Workshop of Pheidias**

The Archaeological Museum of Olympia houses masterpieces such as **Praxiteles' Hermes** and the sculptural decoration of the Temple of Zeus.

A visit to Olympia pairs beautifully with a stroll through the modern village and a meal in local tavernas – a complete cultural experience.

8.2 Ancient Elis

*The city that organized
the Olympic Games*

Only 30 km away, **Ancient Elis** was the capital of the Eleans and the administrative center responsible for organizing the Olympic Games.

Elis was a major political and urban center with advanced civic structures. Visitors can explore:

- the **Agora**
- the **Gymnasium**
- the **Theatre**
- public buildings and sanctuaries

With its peaceful atmosphere and authentic character, Elis is ideal for travelers seeking a lesser known yet historically significant destination.



8.3 Temple of Apollo Epicurius – Bassae of Figaleia

The “Parthenon of the Peloponnese”

About 118 km from the municipality, at an altitude of 1,130 meters in the remote Arcadian mountains, stands the magnificent Temple of Apollo Epicurius at Bassae – one of the best preserved temples of the Classical period.

Designed by Iktinos, the architect of the Parthenon, the temple combines conservative and pioneering architectural features, making it a landmark in the history of ancient Greek architecture.

Its mountain setting adds to its mystical aura – a journey worth every kilometer.



8.4 Katakolo

The cosmopolitan port of Ilia

Located 40 km from Kyllini, Katakolo is the region’s main port and one of Greece’s most important cruise destinations.

The picturesque harbor welcomes thousands of visitors each year and offers:

- seaside cafés and restaurants
- shops with local products
- easy access to Ancient Olympia
- scenic walks to the lighthouse and beach

Katakolo blends cosmopolitan flair with authentic Greek charm – perfect for a day trip.





8.5 Beaches of Ilia

Endless Ionian shores

Ilia is renowned for its long coastline, golden sands, clear waters, and natural beauty. Within a short distance from Andravida–Kyllini, you'll find:

- Kourouta – an organized, lively beach
- Arkoudi – family friendly with shallow waters
- Thines of Vartholomio – impressive natural scenery
- Kato Samiko – ideal for quiet escapes
- Skafidia & Leventochori – a blend of sea and natural charm

These beaches offer both relaxation and water sports, while many retain their unspoiled character.

A gateway to Ilia

Thanks to its strategic location, Andravida–Kyllini is the perfect starting point for exploring:

- the global heritage of **Olympia**
- the administrative legacy of **Ancient Elis**
- the cosmopolitan atmosphere of **Katakolo**
- the natural beauty of the **Ionian coastline**

A region where history, nature, and sea come together in perfect harmony.





9. Useful Information for Visitors

The Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini offers modern infrastructure, easy access, and a variety of transportation options. Its location — combined with the port of Kyllini and proximity to major road networks — makes it ideal for every type of traveler.

9.1 Access & Transportation

■ By Road

The municipality is directly connected to the national and regional road network.

- From **Patras**: ~40 km
- From **Pyrgos**: ~30 km
- From **Athens**: ~270 km via Olympia Odos and Patras

Access to the coastal areas, the port of Kyllini, and the villages is easy through modern roads.



■ By Rail

The region is served by a railway line that historically connected Patras–Pyrgos–Kalamata. It is currently undergoing upgrades and is expected to significantly improve accessibility in the future.

■ By Air

Araxos Airport, 33 km away, serves charter flights and seasonal routes during summer, facilitating international arrivals.



9.2 Port of Kyllini & Connections to the Ionian Islands

The **Port of Kyllini** is one of Western Greece's most important maritime hubs and the main gateway from the Peloponnese to the Ionian Islands.

■ Ferry Connections

Daily routes operate to::

- **Zakynthos**
- **Kefalonia** (Poros & Sami)
- **Ithaca**

Travel times range from 1 to 2 hours, making Kyllini an ideal base for island hopping.

Port Facilities

The port offers::

- modern infrastructure
- parking areas
- passenger waiting zones
- shops and services
- easy road access

It is one of the most organized transport hubs in the Peloponnese.



10. Epilogue

A destination revealed through moments

The Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini is not discovered at a glance — it reveals itself gradually, through experiences, landscapes, people, and the rhythm of everyday life. It is a place where timeless history meets the vibrancy of the present and the promise of the future.

Those who choose to explore it will find a destination of authenticity, strong identity, natural beauty, and cultural depth. A place of contrasts: the serenity of the coast, the power of the Ionian Sea, the memory of great historical events, and the simplicity of local life.

Andravida–Kyllini does not seek to impress superficially. It wins you over with sincerity, with the quality of its experiences, with the warmth of its people, and with the sense of familiarity it leaves behind.

This guide ends here — but your journey in Andravida–Kyllini is just beginning. A journey that continues in every path, every flavor, every sunset, every human encounter.

■ *A place to live, not just to see*

Here, travel is not measured in kilometers, but in moments:

- in the sound of the waves
- in the shadow of Chlemoutsi Castle
- in the warm greeting of a local
- in the taste of a traditional dish

These are the details that turn a destination into a memory..

■ *Continue your journey digitally*

O Through the municipality's digital platform, you can:

follow interactive thematic routes

explore maps and digital guides

discover events, gastronomy, and local stories

- ▶ **Scan the QR code** and let Andravida–Kyllini guide you step by step..

■ *We look forward to welcoming you*

Andravida–Kyllini does not promise fleeting impressions. It promises real experiences, meaningful encounters, and a place that stays with you long after you leave.

■ *A destination revealed through moments*

Where the fertile plains of Ilia meet the endless blue of the Ionian Sea, the Municipality of Andravida–Kyllini unfolds as a land shaped by history, nature, and authentic human warmth. Here, medieval castles rise above olive dotted hills, ancient ports whisper stories of travelers and gods, and golden beaches stretch as far as the eye can see.

This is a place you don't simply visit — you live it. In every sunset from Chlemoutsi Castle. In every walk through wetlands alive with birdsong. In every shared smile in a village square. In every flavor born from the rich soil of the Peloponnese.

Andravida–Kyllini invites you to slow down, breathe deeply, and discover a destination where tradition and modern life coexist in harmony. A place of serenity and vitality, of memory and discovery, of sea, land, and sky.

Here, every moment becomes a memory — and every memory brings you back.

ANDRAVIDA-KYLLINI MUNICIPALITY

A place where history, nature and culture meet and come alive in every journey.

From medieval **Andravidia**, historical capital of the Franks, to the imposing **Chlemoutsis Castle** and the fertile plain of **Gargaliani**.

From the protected ecosystems and the endless beaches of **Ioniou**, to vibrant life, hospitality and **authentic local flavors**.

The Municipality of Andravidia-Kyllini offers unique **authentic experiences, historical routes, local delicacies** and a landscape that combines the past, the present and the future.

This Tourist Guide invites you to discover the place, experience it, walk through it, and live it.



A place with history. A place with experiences.