

# 20 Top Things to Do in Pelion

<https://travelgreeceetraveleurope.com/2017/01/31/top-things-to-do-in-pelion/>

## 1) Damouhari Port: Mama Mia Filmed Here

The traffic-free coast of Damouhari has a more recent claim to fame as the location of the “Dancing Queen” scene in the Hollywood movie **Mama Mia** (2008) starring Meryl Streep. After our hike through Tsagarada we walked through the scenic port. I loved taking in the stunning rocky landscape, which seemed to be both wild and stunning at the same time.



Damouhari Port, Pelion, to the right. Meryl Streep was here!

## 2) The Pelion Train

The **Pelion Train**, also known as the **Little Train of Pelion**, is a narrow gauge (60 cm) train that seemed to me like a toy train with its maintained vintage look. It's even parked in a colorful little train station.



The train began operating more than a century ago between Volos and Lehonía in 1895 and between Lehonía and Milies in 1903. It covers 29 kilometers, on tracks that run through verdant forests and across 12 bridges.

Tip: Return tickets are 18€ for adults and 10€ for kids. Further information for tickets, timetables, contact the Travel Office of Volos TRAINOSE +30 24210 39723.

### 3) Taksiarchon Church / Church of the Archangels

I rate a visit to this church as one of the top things to do in Pelion because the stunning interior frescoes took me off guard.

Located in the main square of Millies, the actual construction date of the church is unknown. However, it was renovated in 1741.



Today, visitors come to admire those impressive frescoes. A local guide explained the frescoes were smothered by the black of grit, so the interior of the church was quite grey and black. After careful restoration, the frescoes were revealed.



The church is also known for being built with excellent acoustics, including the use of upside jars, four on each dome, to strengthen treble sounds.

**Tip:** This is a stop on the Pelion Train.

## 4) Hiking in Pelion

Hiking is one of the top things to do in Pelion, and it was a highlight during my first full day there. Led by Trekking Hellas local guides, our group completed a hike from a trail that weaves itself between Tsagarada to Damouhari.

It wasn't the easiest path, and I'd say a good challenge. There were a good number of stone steps and uneven paths. The walking sticks we were given certainly helped.

I loved the contrast of mountains and sea, the olive groves we passed, scenic views of surrounding villages and the aroma of mountainous nature. The light snowfall from the day before made it all much more beautiful. At one point, our guide Nicholas led us to this peak where we had to stop and take turns for photos.



## 5) Walk the Pelion Paths

For hikers and walkers, Pelion is a dream. One of the top things to do in Pelion is explore the incredibly dense network of cobblestone trails and paths that interconnect its scenic villages.





Discover what it is like to walk through these centuries' old stone lanes that are flanked by the beauty of the region. Some include: Milies-Tsangarada, Tsangarada-Damouhari-Ai Iannis, Kissos-Mouresi, Chania-Kissos, Portaria-Chania, Damouhari-Fakistra. For more information on the paths to take, visit the Walking Pelion blog: [www.walking-pelion.blogspot.gr](http://www.walking-pelion.blogspot.gr)

## 6) Ski in Pelion

Yes, that mountain landscape is perfect for skiing or snowboarding and believe me, it gets snowy in those hills. Pelion is home to the **Agriolefkes – Pelion Ski Center** which has four slopes for downhill ski approved by the International Ski Federation. For more information, visit [www.pelionski.gr](http://www.pelionski.gr).



## 7) Horse Riding in Pelion

With such incredible natural scenery, horse riding is considered one of the top things to do in Pelion. There are several companies throughout the peninsula offering tours and services. One to try is the **Riding-Naturalist Club of Milies**.



Horse hanging out in Afissos. Photo by Passion for Greece.

## 8) Sea Kayaking and Rafting in Pelion

If you love sea and river adventures, it's another one of the top things to do in Pelion. Check out the blog: [A Greek Adventure](#) for details on this exciting way to explore the region.



## 9) Local Pelion Gastronomy

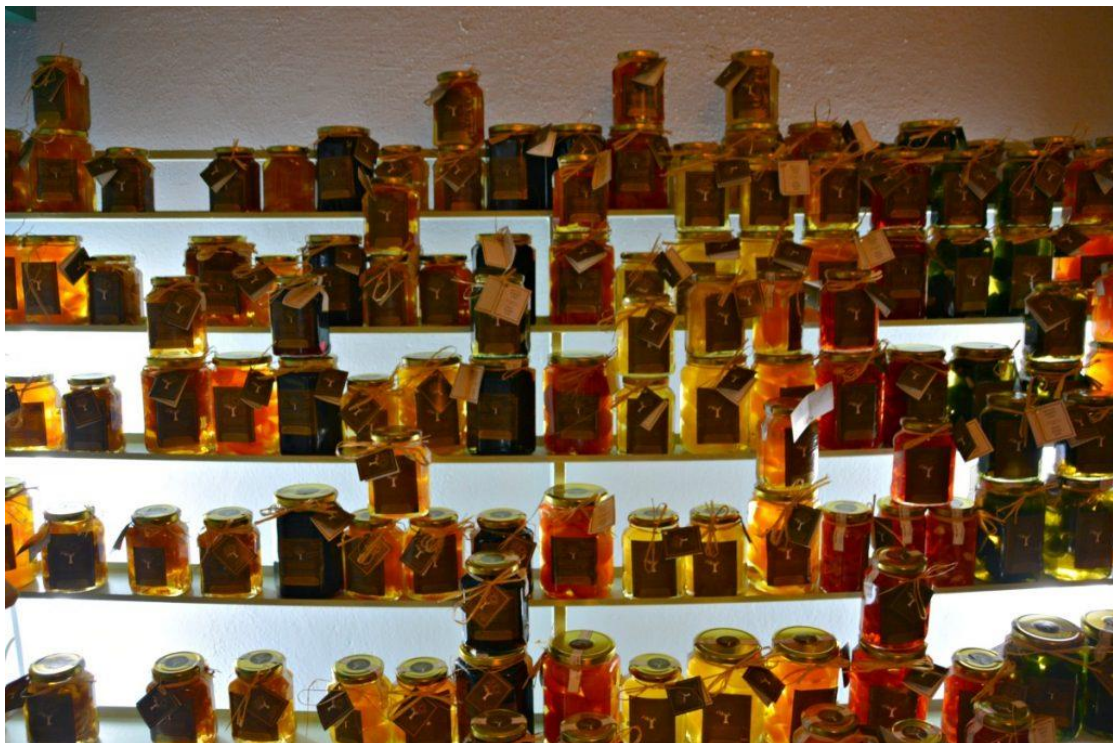
Having eaten my way through many regions of Greece, it continues to astound me just how there are so many types of distinct local flavors and specialties to discover.



I was truly impressed by many of the dishes I tried in Pelion. In general, be on the lookout for hearty dishes like *fasolada* (bean soup), *kapama* (slow roast goat in tomato sauce), *boubari* (local sausage) *kouneli stifado* (rabbit stew), *spetzofai* (stewed pork sausages and peppers) and *tyropsomo* (cheese bread).

## 10) Buy Local Preserves

Pelion is known for the tasty and traditional sweet preserves and jams. There are many types to choose from. An exotic one I have come to like is *kidoni* (Greek quince).



## 11) Pelion Beaches

During the summer season relaxing at the beach is one of the top things to do in Pelion. So many line the peninsula coast. On the Aegean Sea side, head to **Milopotamos**, **Fakistra**, **Papa Nero**, **Agios Ioannis**, **Agioi Saranta** and **Horefto**. On the Pagasitikos Gulf side, head to **Kato Lehonia**, **Kala Nera** and **Afissos**.



Milopotamos



Agioi Saranta



Agios ioannis



Papa nero

## 12) Stroll Makrinitza village

It was rainy, cold, grey and foggy without a bit of sea view to be found yet Makrinitza stole my heart.

If it is so beautiful in drizzle, I can only imagine it in other seasonal colors. The main pedestrian lane is lined with adorable stonework mom-and-pop shops selling handcrafted items and local products.



Ancient trees tower over the main square where a historic fountain and church can be admired as well.



Makrinitza

## 13) Stroll Afissos village

The main path in Afissos was another beautiful experience in cold, rainy weather. Set by the Pagasitikos Gulf, you can stroll by the sea and choose from a variety of cafes and tavernas to stop for a relaxing drink or coffee.



Rainy winter day views in Afissos

Most of the businesses were closed during my walk but I had a lovely coffee at the **Hotel Maistrali** which had a fireplace blazing next to a perfect sea view. The boardwalk ends at Afissos Beach.

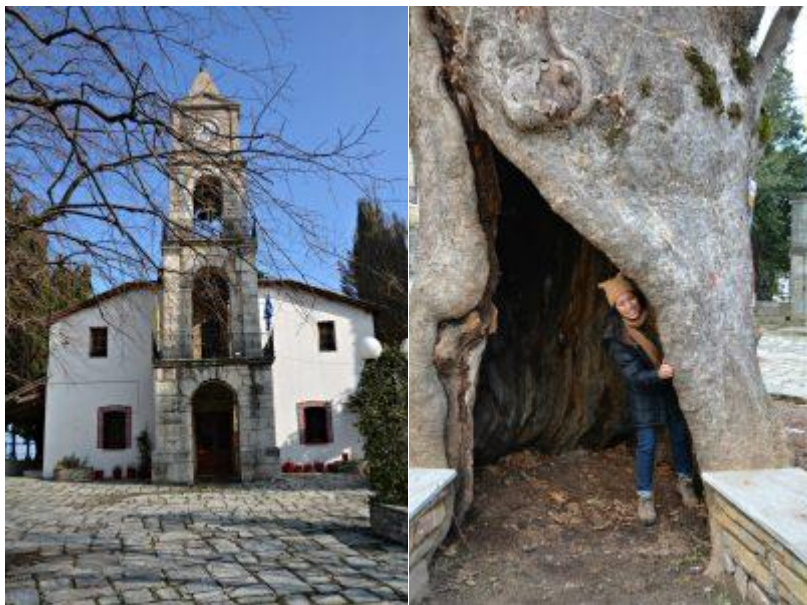


## 14) Explore Zagora

The biggest village of Pelion is Zagora. It was once a silk producing center and a place of trade in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Stop to eat at O Patis taverna and then stroll to the church square. Afterwards, head to the main square where there's a smattering of lovely cafes and a fantastic old tree waiting for a photo as well.



Zagora



The library of Zagora houses thousands of rare books including the original manuscript of *A Few Seconds* by Fanis Loverdos.

## 15) Relax at More Village Squares in Pelion

Greek village squares are special places. Often, you'll find the best views, nice eateries, cafes, small churches and in between all of that – the buzz of the season- by which I mean children playing, couples holding hands or groups of friends enjoying the day together.



Besides the aforementioned villages, there are other incredible villages that are considered the most scenic in Pelion.



If you have more time consider **Kissos, Xourichti, Tsagarada** and **Portaria**. In south Pelion, visit **Argalasti** which is known for its fountains, **Lafkos, Paou, Syki, Chorto** and coastal **Lefokastro**.

## 16) Admire the Trees of Pelion

While exploring Pelion, I couldn't help but notice the amazing, old and storied trees that seemed to be everywhere. Gigantic plane trees set the stage in the squares or lined the villages and some truly wise ones overlooked the sea.



Love the trees in Pelion.



## 17) Visit a Women's Cooperative

The region of Pelion has a strong network of women's cooperatives. The first one started in Zagora, in 1993, as a way to keep the local way of producing traditional products alive.



We stopped in the cooperative located in Vyzitsa where a wonderful selection of seasonal jams, marmalades, spoon sweets and other products are produced with love and care. Definitely support them and take an authentic local food product home with you.



## 18) Go to a Festival

Another one of the top things to do in Pelion is attend a seasonal festival. The region is known for its fruit so it's no surprise there are an array of fruit themed festivals.

**Cherry Festival** in Stagiates (July)

**Pear Festival** in Milies (Aug)

**Apple Festival** in Zagora (Sept)

**Chestnut Festival** in Xourichti (Oct)



The annual **International Pelion Festival** (July and August) is a cultural festival. Also in August, Portaria hosts an **International Dance Festival**.

Paying homage to Jason and his Argonauts, the **Argonaftika Festival** takes place in the summer in Afissos.

The region is ripe with flowers and locals celebrate that in August in Makrirachi at the **Exhibition of Flowers** and in May in Alli Meria for the **Festival of Flowers**.

## 19) Visit Volos

While in Pelion, take time out to spend time in Volos. Located at the foot of Mount Pelion overlooking the Pagasitikos Gulf, it is considered one of the country's most scenic little cities.



Volos harbor view. Photo by Provocolate.com

Stroll the pedestrian **Argonauts Avenue** on the seafront. See the exact imitation of the **Argo**, the ship on which Jason and the Argonauts sailed to retrieve the Golden Fleece. Other highlights include Volos **Castle** and **Agios Konstantinos Park**.



I love Volos. Photos courtesy of Provocolate.com

## 20) Tsipouro Tasting in Pelion, Volos

Every region of Greece has its drinks and its drink culture. The Thessaly region is the “hometown” of the distinct Greek liquor called **tsipouro**. The distilled spirit is produced from pomace and contains 40 to 45 percent alcohol by volume.

Tsipouro is meant to be drunken slowly, with good company and tasteful small dishes. I recommend trying tsipouro with mezes at **Lepi in Volos**.



Mezes the Volos way

