

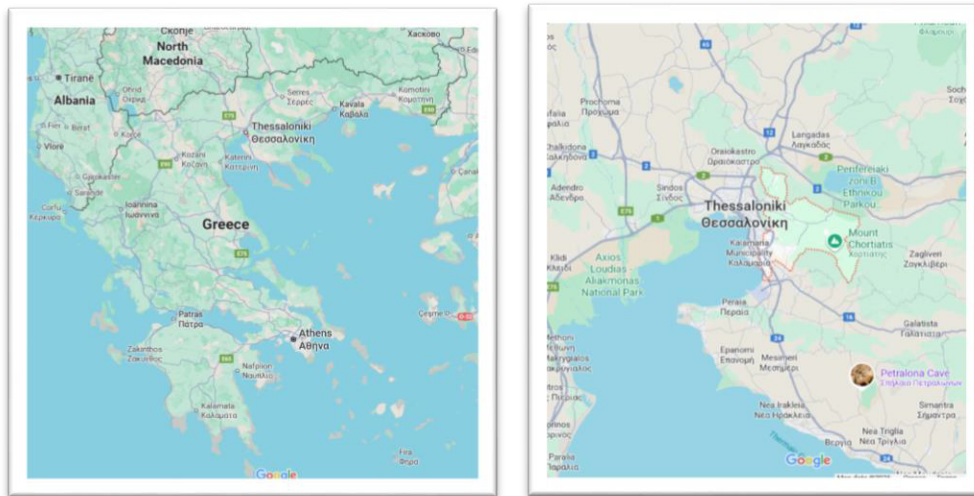


## MUNICIPALITY OF PILEA – HORTIATIS

THESSALONIKI, GREECE

### MEMORIAL TOURISM IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PILEA-HORTIATIS

#### LOCATION - DEMOGRAPHICS:



The Municipality of Pilea-Hortiatis is located 18 km northeast of the urban Complex of Thessaloniki, in Northern Greece. It extends from Mount Hortiatis to the Thermaic Gulf and includes the settlements: Filyro, Pilea, Panorama, Exohi, Asvestohori and Hortiatis.

**Coordinates:** 40°35'N 23°02'E

**Geographical size:** 155.800 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population in total:** 70.653

**Population per settlement:** Pilea (34.678), Panorama (17.546), Asvestohori (6.404), Filiro (5.440), Hortiatis (4.809), Exohi (1.776)

**Administrative Seat:** Panorama

**Historical Capital Town:** Hortiatis

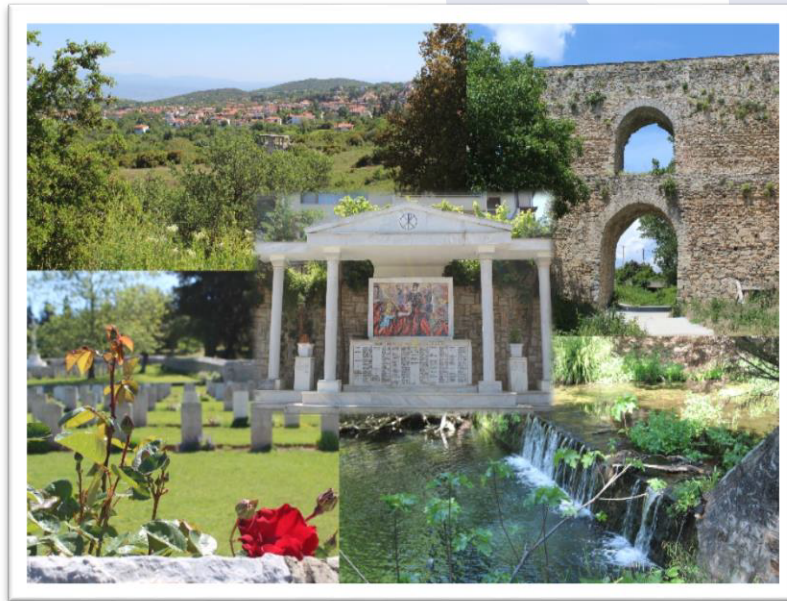
**Economy:** The economy of Pilea-Hortiatis is diverse, driven by its strategic location near Thessaloniki, housing large multinational corporations, major shopping centers, numerous private hospitals and medical facilities, and esteemed educational and research institutions, including European bodies.



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#### TIMELINE OF HISTORY:



**Prehistoric Times:** The first evidence of early organized human presence, activity and habitation was found in Pilea, in a tumulus at the site “Eleones”, where a settlement had been founded.

**Ancient Greek Era:** The first historical information about the town “Kissos” comes from the Greek geographer Strabon who listed it among the six towns whose inhabitants were forced to leave their homes and move to the new town Cassander had founded and named after his wife “Thessaloniki”.

**Roman Era:** In 149 BC, Macedonia was incorporated into the Roman state. The construction of large-scale public works reflects the prosperity of the time. An example is the aqueduct (water bridge) of Hortiatis.

**Byzantine Period:** In the area of the present-day Municipality, the ruins of three early-Christian churches were found (4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> c. AD). On the slopes of Mt Hortiatis there was an increased presence of monasteries, with best known being the Monastery of Hortaitis (early 10<sup>th</sup> c. AD).



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***Ottoman Rule:*** In 1387, Thessaloniki was surrendered to the Ottomans after a four-year siege. Thanks to its geographic position, Hortiatis played a significant role in the water supply of Thessaloniki for the next centuries.

***Greek War of Independence:*** Greece was under Ottoman rule until 1821, when Greeks fought for their independence against the Ottoman Empire. The Greek State was established in 1832, primarily including the Peloponnese and the Cyclades. The revolt also broke out in Macedonia but without success. The people of Hortiatis participated actively in the 1821 War of Independence and many of them fought in Southern Greece.

***Macedonian Struggle:*** The Macedonian Struggle that took place in 1904-1908 was a series of military conflicts aiming to rescue the Greeks of Macedonia, after the Bulgarian hostilities against the local population. From 1900 and throughout the Macedonian Struggle, Hortiatis was an important center of action of the Macedonian fighters.

***World War I:*** Hortiatis was liberated in 1913, shortly after the liberation of Thessaloniki. In autumn 1915, French and British army forces disembarked in Thessaloniki and established a new front of the WWI, the Macedonian Front (or Salonica Front). Greece officially joined the Entente coalition in the summer of 1916. By 1917, more than 600,000 British, French, Russian, Serbian, Italian and Greek men had arrived in the area. British and French troops camped outside the village of Hortiatis and remained until 1918.

***Interwar period:*** This period was marked by the compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey by the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) which ended almost ten years of conflicts. The area of Pilea-Hortiatis received large waves of refugees. At the same time, Hortiatis with the crystal waters, the rich vegetation and lush forests, became a holiday destination for the inhabitants of Thessaloniki.

***World War II:*** In October 1940, the Italian forces attacked Greece, and the country officially entered the WWII. By spring 1941, Greece was under triple occupation, divided among Germany, Italy and Bulgaria. The mountain of Hortiatis served as a hideaway and shelter as well as base of operations of the groups of resistance. In September 1944, only two months before the liberation of the country, developments led to the “Holocaust of Hortiatis”, which turned the village into a place of martyrdom for 149 people.

#### MEMORIAL HISTORY IN 10 MONUMENTS:

Municipality of Pilea-Hortiatis

<https://pilea-hortiatis.gr/>



## MUNICIPALITY OF PILEA – HORTIATIS

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#### 1. Roman Aqueduct

The Roman Aqueduct of Hortiatis dates back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and is the only surviving monument of its kind in Central Macedonia. Measuring 223 m. in length and 20 m. in maximum height, the aqueduct supplied Thessaloniki with water from the springs of Hortiatis until 1975.

On September 2, 1944, a group of resistance fighters ambushed the vehicles of the Water Company on the way to the aqueduct. During the clash, two occupants were killed. The incident became the pretext for the Hortiatis Holocaust.



#### 2. Holy Church of St. George of Asvestohori

Asvestohori is associated with all liberation and social struggles throughout its history.

The Holy Church of St. George of Asvestohori is a historical landmark of the settlement. It was built in 1867 on top of an earlier church. The 18th-century iconostasis and the pew of Consul Lambros Koromilas, commander of the organizations of the Macedonian Struggle, are preserved. In the churchyard there is a monument dedicated to the fallen of 1940-1941.



#### 3. Commonwealth War Cemetery in Exohi

After the formation of the Macedonian Front in 1916, the British and French forces camped at the area of Hortiatis. Towards the end of World War I, the British Health Service organized there the hospital and the convalescent homes of the Entente Allied forces, due to the area's healthy climate.

Near the hospital, the British Health Service founded military cemeteries. The Commonwealth Military Cemetery of Exohi-Hortiatis (Kirechkoi-Hortakoi) commemorates 588 British soldiers of the WWI – most of them victims of the 1918 Spanish Flue, 58 Bulgarian war prisoners of the WWI, and 17 British soldiers fallen during the Second World War.



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#### 4. Chapel of Agia Paraskevi Hortiatis

The chapel of Agia Paraskevi is in a lush forest with running water. A water supply system (qanat) was constructed here several centuries ago, to provide an alternative source of water supply apart from the Roman Aqueduct. This qanat was the largest one in Greece and operates until today.



#### 5. Holy Church of St. George Hortiatis

The Church of St. George was erected in 1837 and is designated as historical monument. It was built on the remains of an earlier church with materials that came from the Byzantine Monastery of Hortaitissa. In its courtyard is the bust of priest Demetrios Tomaras who was martyred with his family on September 2, 1944.



#### 6. Byzantine Church of Metamorphosis Sotiros Hortiatis

Close to the Church of St. George is the recently restored Church of the Transfiguration of the Savior (Metamorphosis tou Sotiros). It dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and was built on the grounds of the Holy Monastery of Hortaitissa, which had been operating since the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Impressive frescoes have been restored and preserved inside the church. Next to the church, there is a two-store restored Macedonian Residence that operates as a small museum.



#### 7. House of Daboudis Memorial

The Daboudis House is one of the two sites of sacrifice during the Hortiatis Holocaust. On September 2, 1944, the Nazis led civilian residents at the Daboudis family home, locked them up, and burned them alive. Inside the historic house, the bones of the martyrs are kept. The names of those executed are commemorated outside.



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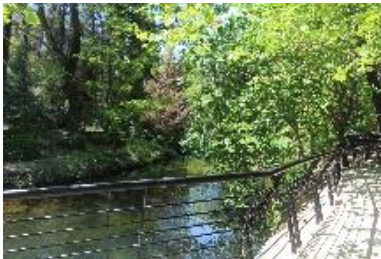
#### 8. Holocaust Memorial of Hortiatis

The Holocaust of Hortiatis refers to the massacre of 149 non-combatant residents by the Nazis on September 2, 1944. The Holocaust Memorial is engraved with the names and ages of those murdered, while the mosaic depicts the events. The sculpture was erected on September 2, 1960. It was created by the engraver Mrs Geti Kremmidas who used marbles from the historic Monastery Hortaitissa for its construction.



#### 9. Gouramanis Bakery Memorial

On September 2, 1944, the Nazis attacked the village of Hortiatis and begun to execute everyone they found on the way. The rest of the residents were led to the Daboudis House and the Gouramanis Bakery, where they were burned alive. Those who tried to escape were killed by the machine guns that the executors had put at the entrance of each building. A chapel and a memorial plaque were put on the spot of the massacre.



#### 10. Platanakia Natural Park at Panorama

Platanakia is a natural forest with dense vegetation. The stream that runs through the forest was connected to the Roman Aqueduct from where the water was channeled through eight watermills and hydraulic structures. It was reforested during the interwar period and constitutes the natural park of the settlement of Panorama.

### MEMORIAL EVENTS:

**ASVESTOHORI:** One-day Memorial Events for the 20 Greek patriots, who were executed by the Nazis on July 26, 1944.

**HORTIATIS:** Three-day Memorial Events for the 149 civilians of Hortiatis who martyred tragically on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1944.



## MUNICIPALITY OF PILEA – HORTIATIS

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#### GETTING THERE:

**BY AIR:** Thessaloniki Airport (IATA: SKG), Athens Airport (IATA: ATH)

**BY TRAIN:** Thessaloniki Central Train Station

**BY BUS:** Thessaloniki Central Bus Station “KTEL MAKEDONIA”

#### **DISTANCES BY CAR (TO TOWN HALL OF PILEA-HORTIATIS):**

Thessaloniki Airport: 10,9 km

Thessaloniki Central Train Station: 14,8 km

Thessaloniki City Center: 12,1 km

#### HOTEL ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES:

**Hotel September:** 5\*, 100 beds, <https://www.hotelbrain.com/hotels-in-thessaloniki/september-hotel-thessaloniki>

**Hotel Panorama:** 4\*, 85 beds, <https://www.hotelpanorama.gr/>

**Hotel Pefka:** 3\*, 92 beds, <https://www.pefkahotel.gr/>

Operating all year round.

#### CONFERENCE – EVENT FACILITIES:

**Panorama Cultural Center:** 8 halls (Amphitheater – capacity: 230 seats, Amphitheater – capacity: 218 seats, “Litsa Fokidi I” hall – capacity: 200 seats, “Litsa Fokidi II” hall – capacity: 100 seats, “Litsa Fokidi III” hall – capacity: 300 seats, Conference & Meeting room – capacity: 150 seats, Open-air Amphitheatre – capacity: 200 seats, Open-air Theatre in Filyro Forest – capacity: 180 seats)

**Asvestohori Cultural Center:** 1 hall – capacity: 140 seats

**“Ioannis Manoledakis” Center in Asvestohori:** 1 hall – capacity: 110 seats

**Foyer of Pilea Cultural Center** – capacity: 80 seats

**Filyro Forest open-air Amphitheatre** – capacity: 180 seats

**Hotels:** September, Panorama



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MUNICIPALITY OF PILEA-HORTIATIS IS A MEMBER OF:

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