

Konstamonitou

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The Holy Monastery of Konstamonitou is the most secluded monastery on the peninsula surrounded by woods and mountains. There are different versions of the monastery's name, it was named either after Constantine the Great or one of his sons or chestnut grove, and hence it is sometimes called Kastamonitou.

Among the Monastery's benefactors were Prince George Brancovits, Anna, Princess of Serbia, and Radits, Commander-in-Chief of Serbia, who helped the Monastery in the 15th century. However in spite of the financial support the taxation of the Turks led the monks to take loans from Jewish moneylenders and almost lead to the monastery's bankruptcy. In 1705, the intervention of the French Consul Armand was the salvation of Konstamonitou. In 1717 the east wing of the Monastery was burnt down. The vigorous Abbot Symeon helped to put the Monastery on its feet again and with the funds which he raised built the katholikon in 1867 on the ruins of its predecessor, and restored other buildings. The katholikon is dedicated to St Stephen the Protomartyr.

The Monastery has five chapels within its precinct and four outside.

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Treasures held within the monastery

A piece of the True

Cross, a Byzantine liturgical bier cover, vestments, and sacred vessels. The library of Konstamonitou contains 110 manuscripts and approximately 5,000 printed books.

Miracle-working icons within the monastery

Our Lady Antiphonetria the name of

the icon is linked with the period of poverty in the monastery

when Theotokos announced that the monks would have abundance of food because she pities them.

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Our Lady Hodeghetria. The icon's framework
was given to the monastery in 1360 by Serbia Duchess Anna.

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The icon of St. Stephen. According to the myth the icon was brought to the monastery from Jerusalem in the XIth century by Alexey Komnin. The eye of the Saint is pierced and the edges of the icon were partially burnt during iconoclasm years. The Saint holds a censer in his right hand and a model of a Cathedral in his left hand.