

## Simonopetra

Thursday, 28 December 2006

Last Updated Friday, 29 December 2006

Monastery  
of Simonos Petra is  
thirteenth in the hierarchy of the Athonite monasteries.

The  
monastery is located in the southern  
coast of the Athos peninsula,  
between the Athonite port of Dafni and Osiou  
Grigoriou monastery. The  
site upon which the monastery is  
built is exceptionally harsh. It is built on top of a single huge rock,  
practically hanging from a cliff 330 meters over the sea.

The  
monastery is inhabited by 50 monks.

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The  
monastery was  
founded during the 13th century by Simon the Athonite. Tradition holds that Simon, while dwelling in a  
nearby cave saw a dream in which the Theotokos instructed  
him to build a monastery on top of  
the rock, promising him that she would protect and provide for him and the monastery.

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In  
1364, the Serbian despot Jovan Ugljesa funded  
the renovation and expansion of the monastery.  
In 1581, Simonopetra was destroyed  
by a fire, in which a large portion of the monks died. The most important donor  
for monastery's innovation was Michael the Brave, Prince of Wallachia, who donated large portions of land as well as  
money to the monastery. In later  
years the monastery was also burnt in 1626 and the last great fire happened in 1891, after which the monastery was  
rebuilt to its current form.

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The  
monastery consists of several  
multi-storied buildings, the main being in the place of the original structure,  
built by Simon. The main building has  
been described as the "most  
bold construction of the peninsula".

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Treasures  
held within the monastery

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The  
part of the left hand of St. Maria Magdalena, a part of the hand of Martyr  
Eudokia, a part of the hand of Martyr Barbara, the head of St. Paul, the relics  
of Martyr Panteleimonos, Martyr Paraskeva,  
Martyr Charalambos, blood of Saint Demetrius of ThessalonikiÂ

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Miracle-working icons within the monastery

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Assumption of the Theotokos is in icon painted in the 15th  
century presumably in Northern Greece.

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Our Lady Pantanassa is a gift of Metropolitan Athanasios painted in the XVIth century. Theotokos is depicted embracing the child.

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