

FETHIYE – A GREAT PLACE TO STROLL, WALK, HIKE & TREK

INTRODUCTION

Fethiye & the surrounding areas have some features that we all benefit from. Firstly, there is the climate, which is very temperate and supports a primarily outdoor lifestyle. Secondly, there is the scenery which includes wonderful beaches, pine clad mountains, green valleys and wonderful calming rivers and waterways. Finally, there is the history, the remains of which are literally scattered all over the region. This is an environment that supports great fresh air and a healthy lifestyle for those that get out and about.

One of the best ways to get the best out of all of this is to go “walking.” Going out for regular walks has been an important part of my life since I first landed in Turkey 24 years ago. In that time, I have helped develop and maintain walking routes along and around the Lycian Way. I have also offered self-guided and guided walking holidays along most sections of the Lycian Way. Since moving to Fethiye I have walked many parts of the Western end of the Lycian Way and joined a number of the local walking groups. I have also explored some of the other walking routes around Fethiye the details of which are on online sites that support independent walking.



Two Views of the Aquaduct at Deliklikemer that Supplied Water to city of Patara

For me, walking has helped me maintain a reasonable level of fitness and has supported my recovery from several debilitating illnesses. The support of positive mental health that comes from regular exercise is well documented and is something most walkers enjoy.

Throughout all these various activities I have met some wonderful people (on the routes & in walking groups) and seen some fabulous scenery & historical sites. I have developed a deep appreciation of the spring flowers of the region and have documented over 400 individual species. I have also come to appreciate the wildlife that you can encounter along the way.

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Turkey is home to a vast number of flower species and many are unique to Turkey (endemic). If you enjoy the flowers you can see on your walks here is a link to a video that will tell you a lot about them. It's presented by Dr. Patrick Harding who is explaining what we did when we ran walking tours to explore the flora and fauna around Adrasan (on the Lycian Way near Antalya).

To watch the video - [Click Here >>](#)  Includes loads of flower pictures

Objectives

In this document I have tried to lay out what walking is available in the area and how you can best find out about it. This will comprise overviews of: -

- the long, point-to-point walking trails such as the Lycian Way
- the walking groups in the area
- the online resources that are available to help you find your own walks
- a few points to help stay safe whilst you are walking

I hope you find it enjoyable, entertaining and above all useful.

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“WALKING” WHAT’S THAT?

Different people have different aspirations and abilities due to their lifestyle objectives and physical capabilities. Similarly, walking groups, walking routes and trails vary a great deal. What is important is to match the walks to you and what you want from a regular or occasional walk.

A main point from my perspective is that there are no good or bad walks and equally there are no good or bad walkers. The only potential pitfall is that someone ends up on a walk that is wrong for them.

To try and ensure clarity, I want to take time out to define the general terms I use when describing a walk, a group or trail. So here we go

- Stroll a short (< 5km) walk on a good surface, generally flat and at a gentle pace
- Walk a route normally of 4km or more that may include some moderate hills and some rougher ground
- Hike probably 8km or more sometimes with multiple or challenging hills which may also feature rough ground and/or some scrambling
- Trek generally, longer walks on routes that will require a good level of physical fitness due to challenging hills and tough “off road” sections. Challenges may include steep climbs or descents, rough and loose terrain, a degree of scrambling or light climbing



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POINT-TO-POINT WALKING TRAILS

There are a few of these trails in the area. The most well-known of which is the Lycian Way, Turkey's first long distance walking route. These routes comprise a series of sections that connect in a series to make a long trail or way.

The Lycian Way

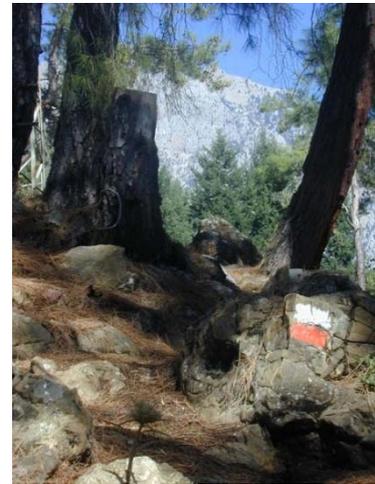
The start of the Lycian Way is above Ölüdeniz and meanders along the coast and through the hinterland all the way to Geyikbayırı near Antalya. Sections are typically 15-25km long and the majority are **treks** and **hikes** with only a few parts that would be considered as **walks**. The total length of the trails is 760km. The entire trail is marked, to the GR2 standard, with Red & White painted stripes and occasional yellow signposts, there is also regular use of cairns (piles of stones) that also mark the route.



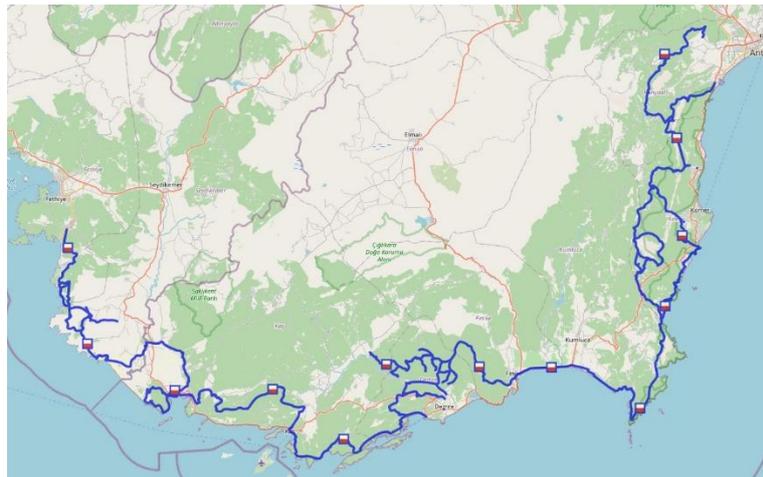
Signposts



Cairn



GR2 Marking



There is loads more information on the Lycian Way Website 

Some of the individual walks can be a serious challenge physically and pass through remote areas, sometimes ending somewhere remote and isolated, meaning that logistics can be an issue. If you plan on doing some of these trails independently, I highly recommend buying the guidebook which is available online 

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The Eco Trails Network

The ECO Trails project provides a network of 430km of walks between Yanıklar & Karabörtlen Junction. The network comprises three routes: -

- Coastal
- Northern
- Middle (flatter & easier route)

The Coastal & Northern routes can be quite challenging in places and should not be considered as walks or strolls. The middle route is less challenging but none of the routes should be undertaken without some research. **NOTE** some routes are unmarked but can still be walked using a GPS unit or GPS app on a phone.

Fortunately, there is a good website in Turkish & some English that provides basic descriptions and downloadable GPS Points. If you are unfamiliar with GPS systems & apps see the notes in the Online Resources section later in the document. Each section can be walked in isolation and are often accessible by public transport.

A main objective of the ECO Trails project is to link the Fethiye Belediye trails (and thereby to the Lycian Way) to the Carian Way which is another point-to-point walking trail which is further to the Northwest.



There is more general information and a mine of detailed, section by section information on the website



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Fethiye Belediye Alternative Trails



Fethiye Belediye (local authority) have developed some extensions and alternatives to the Western end of the Lycian Way. Easily digestible information is difficult to find online. I have walked a number of these routes and would say that they are similar to much of the Lycian Way for the level of challenge. Having said that some sections are shorter and some short sub-sections can also be found. For example, the section between Ovaçık and Ölüdeniz via Kayaköy is 13km long. However, there is a very pleasant sub-section that you can start above Hisaronu and continue to Kayaköy ruins that is just a little over 5km. However, the original routes have been added to quite extensively in places so there are several places where tracks criss-cross and can cause confusion. I have never found any route descriptions or maps that can be used as guides. The routes are however extensively recorded as GPS Points on Wikiloc (more about Wikiloc in the Useful Resources section later).

Fethiye Alternatif Routes GPS Information from Wikiloc:

Fethiye - Kayaköy Area

[Fethiye-Kayaköy-Ovacik \(18 km.\) - GPS points](#)

[Ölüdeniz-Kayaköy-Ovacik \(13 km.\) - GPS points](#)

[Kayaköy-Gemiler Koyu \(6 km.\) - GPS points](#)

[Kayaköy-Afkule Manastırı \(10 km.\) - GPS points](#)

Babadağ Area

[Ölüdeniz-Kozağaç-Babadağ Zirve-Kirme \(24 km.\) - GPS points](#)

(Follow the Lycian Way to Kozağaç)

[Babadağ Zirve-Pinara Antik Kenti \(20 km.\) - GPS points](#)

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Faralya - Kabak

For those who want to walk along the coastline, this route can be an alternative to the Lycian Way, which runs on the plateau above.

[Sahilden Faralya-Aktaş Sahili-Kabak \(9 km.\) - GPS points](#)

Kabak Sahili - Cennet Koyu - Kalabantia - Osmanlı Sarnıcı (Likya Yolu)

[Kabak Sahil - Balartlı \(Cennet\) Koyu - Kalabantia \(İnsuyu\) - Osmanlı Sarnıcı/Sancaklı \(Lycian Way connection\) \(7 km.\) - GPS points](#)

[Osmanlı Sarnıcı/Sancaklı-Kalabantia Incesu Koyu-Kalabantia Asarardı Koyu \(9 km.\) - GPS points](#)

Ge Köy - Yediburunlar - Büyükçakıl Beach

[Ge Köy-Yediburunlar Lighthouse-Büyükçakıl Beach \(12 km.\) - GPS points](#)

Given the lack of maps and written guides it is important that you use GPS points to help you stay on track. The paths are generally well marked with Red & Yellow painted markings. Some of the paths are used by both the Fethiye Alternative network AND the Lycian Way. Where this is the case, you will find either Red & Yellow AND Red & White markings OR Red, Yellow and White markings. There are also quite a few cairns.



Red & Yellow



Dual Markings

Where trails criss-cross, make sure to follow the correct markings and check the GPS points regularly, particularly at junctions and turns.

Probably the most useful place to research these walks is on Wikiloc using the links above, this will give you simple maps and GPS points to download.

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WALKING GROUPS IN THE FETHIYE AREA

One of the richest sources of ideas, information and personal experiences of walking in and around Fethiye, is of course the people that are doing regular walks. There are four walking groups that you can join, do some walks, meet some like-minded people and find out a lot about where you can walk in the area.

One of the advantages of these groups is that they have a treasure trove of favourite walks the majority of which are not those on the point-to-point networks. The groups look to go on walks that are easy to get to without the logistical challenges of a one-way walk. Many of their walks are circular (returning to the start point). Most group walks are based on start and end points that are on local bus service routes.

Walking groups are often social groups that offer an optional meal after the walk or go for a drink at a bar or a patisserie. Some arrange group boat trips or evening meals, particularly such as at Xmas. There can also be celebration events such as group birthdays. Some groups also organise walking trips away.

Joining a walking group can clearly be beneficial and a useful introduction to walking in the area. However, the key to getting the most from it is to find the right group for you. The following reviews will hopefully help you find which groups are the right ones for you.



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Review of Fethiye’s Walking Groups

I have written a brief description of each group to overview their walks, where they walk, how they operate, how you can find out about them and contact information. This section concludes with a table of group characteristics to help you choose a group or groups to contact or join.

Ölüdeniz Hash House Harriers

Despite their name this group organises walks in a number of areas as well as Ölüdeniz. It’s a friendly walking group whose walks are generally 5-6km and often mostly flat. Where hills are involved (normally quite gentle hills), there is often a shorter, easier route available. Group size varies from 12-30 with a number of part time residents joining in spring and autumn. The group walks all year round with a start time of 10:30-11:00am. Summer walks are often easier (flatter or shorter) because of the heat. Walks are scheduled on alternate Sundays. The group can be contacted via their Facebook page. Their e-mail address is oludenizh3@gmail.com .

Details of each walk are posted a few days (normally the Monday before). This will give a brief overview of the walk, meeting time & place and arrangements for refreshments after the walk. Walks follow a trail that has been marked in advance using flour and or tape. However, you would rarely find yourself walking alone.

Walk Standard : Strolls to medium Walks

Fethiye Hash House Harriers

Fethiye Hash House Harriers are the original and only registered Hash House Harrier group. They walk on alternate Sundays. Walks are generally 5-8km and are aimed at getting into scenic areas. Hash groups use flour and tape markings to show where the trail goes. Traditional Hash groups also add in check points and false trails which aim to slow down the front runners. As well as the bi-weekly walks the group have special events and celebrations. This could be a member’s birthday or somebody reaching a significant number of walks. Achievements feature commemorative t-shirts or memorabilia. The group also arranges group dinners and get togethers.



I’ve Done 300
“Runs” with FH³



“Run” No. 555 was
5.55km long for
FH³

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The group also host Hash House Harrier events such as the group's birthday which, in 2024, welcomed 70+ guests from around Turkey, UK & Europe. This year (2025) the group has its 20th birthday in September and plans are being made for welcoming 150-200 worldwide guests for a long weekend of celebration.

For the last three years, the group has organised 4-night, 5-day trips to Adrasan, near Antalya to do some walking on and around the eastern Lycian Way. Trips have also been arranged to Ordu on the Black Sea coast and other places in Turkey. There have also been some day-trips to join other Hash Groups such as Antalya, Bodrum, Istanbul & Izmir.

Walk details are posted on the group Facebook page normally on Monday or Tuesday before the walk. The walks are held year-round. Meeting times are 10:30-10:45 between autumn and spring. Earlier walk times are arranged during the summer to avoid the extreme heat from Mid-June to Early September. Group size ranges from 8-25.

Further information and contact info can be found on the group Facebook Page.

E-mail >> jonny_turk@hotmail.com

Walk Standard : Walks – Some short Hikes particularly on trips away



The 2024 19th Birthday Group



Post Birthday Walk Refreshments

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General Information About Hash House Harriers Groups

Hash House Harrier (H³) groups can be found all over the world and there is a Worldwide Association of registered groups. The association also assist in arranging massive H³ events, such as Euro Hash where a chosen city will host upwards of 5,000 'Hashers'

Hashing originated in December 1938 in Kuala Lumpur, [Selangor](#), then in the [Federated Malay States](#) (now [Malaysia](#)). A group of [British](#) immigrants began meeting on Friday evenings, to run in a fashion patterned after the traditional British game of [hare and hounds](#), in which one or two "hare" runners scatter a trail of cut paper for the "hounds" to track.^[1] Apart from the excitement of chasing the hare and finding the trail, Harriers reaching the end of the trail would partake of beer, [ginger beer](#), and cigarettes. With hash names in parentheses, the original members included Albert Stephen Ignatius Gispert ("G"), Cecil Lee, Frederick Thomson ("Horse"), Ronald Bennett ("Torch"), Eric Galvin, H.M. Doig, and John Woodrow.^[2]

A. S. Gispert suggested the name "Hash House Harriers" after the [Selangor Club](#) Annex, known as the "Hash House", where several of the original hashers lived and dined.^{[3][4]} The "Hash House" got its name for "its hodgepodge of edible servings being passed off for food". The term [hash](#) was used as an old British slang for "bad food".

Given the "colonial" origins of Hashing it isn't surprising that H³ groups have a tradition of bawdy and ribald behaviour. Their slogan is "A drinking group with a walking problem." Some groups in UK & Europe are known for having quite an extreme (cross country) running focus, whilst others are known for bawdy and ribald behaviour. Group meetings are started with a circle (a gathering of the group) where the Hare will give a briefing on the Run. Once everybody has completed the "Run" a circle is called to finalise proceedings. However, it is traditional that the Hare and some other members may be given a drink. The other members may be 'rewarded' with a drink for being first or last to return, being a visiting or returning Hasher or for having a birthday. Some of these 'rewards' may be spurious and just for fun.

More information about Hash House Harriers



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So, some points of clarification on the local H³ Groups: -

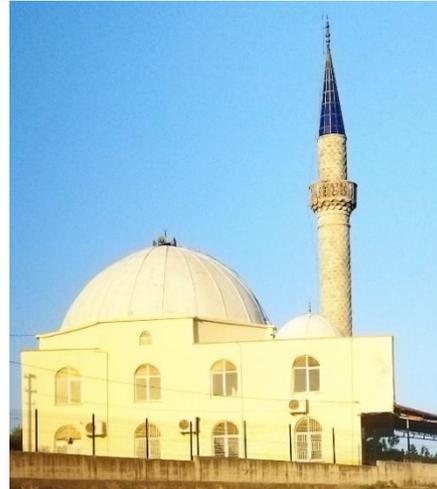
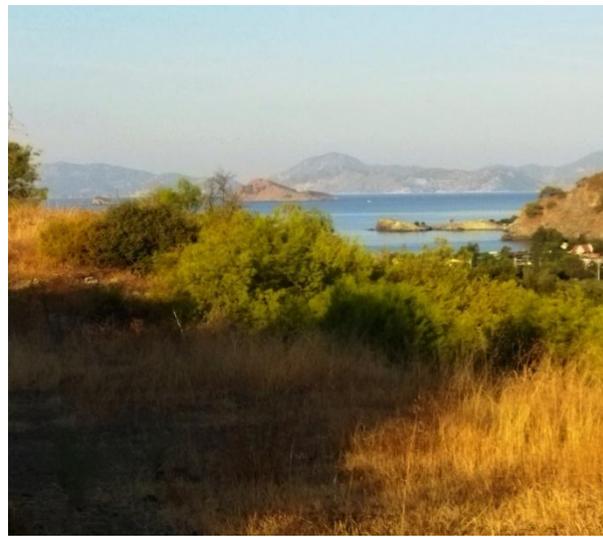
Both the local H³ Groups are primarily walking groups with the majority of members being in their 50's, 60's and 70's. Having said that both welcome members and guests of all ages and families.

- The bi-weekly events are walks NOT runs even though they are often called a run
- Neither group is worthy of a bawdy or ribald reputation (Grey haired and balding maybe more appropriate!)
- 'Reward' drinks are normally short shots of beer but soft drinks are also available
- Compared to the majority of UK H³ Groups, both local groups would be considered tame
- Both groups walk on Sundays, but they alternate their weeks, meaning you can join in with both
- You can meet walkers of all standards in both groups
- the majority of H³ walks are not on point-to-point networks and are based on local residents' knowledge

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Sunrise Walkers

In 2024 there were no walking groups offering walks other than in the stifling heat of the middle of the day. Some groups had stopped walking for the summer period. I have always tried to walk several days each week. In summer I get up early and go for a walk as soon as there's enough light to see where I'm going. At that time of day, the temperature is ideal for walking and the golden early morning light is delightful. It's a time when you can get a different aspect on some of your favourite walks. As I walked, it occurred to me that I couldn't be the only person in Fethiye that would enjoy early morning, summer walks. Thus, Sunrise Walkers was born. I also managed to persuade the Fethiye Hash to start summer walks meeting at 7:30am.

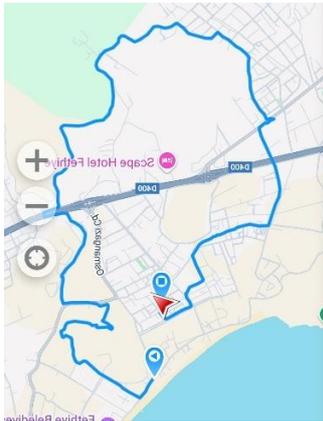


Early Morning Golden Light. An Inspiring Start to the Day

The objectives for Sunrise Walkers were to do none too challenging walks, mostly around Çaliş and Koca Çaliş that were routed around traditional and agricultural areas. The group grew in numbers to 12-13 early risers and we walked on one day each week with a 7:30 start.

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We have continued walking through the winter with later starts but always making our walk the start of the day. We usually end up at a patisserie or beachfront bar for coffee and cakes. The summer walks tend to be a maximum of 6km (to avoid rising temperatures) and are generally flattish. As it gets cooler, we take on slightly more challenging walks with some gentle hills and trails of 7-9km in length. Here are details of the walk that we did on 25/2/2025 – 9:30 start.



This is a friendly group that is open to anyone to join. We walk as a group and make sure that we don't leave anyone behind. I generally set and lead the walks myself and make sure that the pace is suitable for everybody. We are walking to enjoy fresh air, scenery, to get some gentle exercise and have a great start to the day.

I plan to set up a Facebook page in the coming weeks. In the meantime, if you want to know more or to join us contact me in any of the following ways: -

Jon Graham on Facebook www.facebook.com/jon.graham.5437 . You can message me from my FB page.

WhatsApp +90 536 546 7143

E-mail jonny_turk@hotmail.com

Walk Standard Full Walks to Medium Hikes. Mostly Medium walks in summer.

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Fethiye Wacky Walkers

The Wacky Walkers operate in various areas such as Çalış, Koca Çalış, Ölüdeniz, Kayaköy and Esenköy amongst others. The trails are mostly based on local knowledge and exploration. They are generally not the point-to-point networks although some walks use part of those trails. The group is well organised and has been conducting walks for a number of years. The group now has a portfolio of known walks that they offer each year. The meeting points are always on local bus routes and the vast majority are circular (return to the start). The group size can vary from 10-35 people but is very well organised by a number of experienced leaders who monitor the front, middle and back of the group.

The walks tend to be more challenging than those from the groups discussed so far. They are normally 12-13km long and take about 3 hours including a stop for a picnic lunch. Some of the walks include some long hills that some find more challenging than they want. The details of the walks are published each week on Sunday or Monday, in time for a walk on each Wednesday. The briefing gives details of how difficult the walk will be and often includes a graphic video of the proposed walk. Meetings are 11:00am

Example of a Graphic Video of the walk on 26/2/2025



The group keeps members to a manageable level and restricts registered members to those that are regularly active with the group. You have to be a member to be able to see the Facebook page and need to be invited to join the group by an existing member.



If this seems to be your kind of group, I would suggest you join me on one of the Sunrise Walkers trails and we can make sure it's right for you and I can help you register with the group. A number of Sunrise Walkers also walk with the Wacky Walkers.

Fethiye Wacky Walkers head out on Wednesdays from autumn (Sept/Oct) to spring (May/early June) but do not walk in the summer due to the high midday temperatures.

Walk Standard - Full Walks and Hikes with an occasional Trek (with warnings in the walk announcement).

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Group Comparisons

The table below gives an at a glance view of the walking groups that have been included in the reviews above.

Group	Stroll	Walk	Hike	Trek	Length	Day	Time
Ölüdeniz Hash	*****	***			5-6km	Alternate Sundays All Year	10:45
Fethiye Hash		*****	*		5-8km	Alternate Sundays All Year	10:30 & 7:30 (in summer)
Sunrise Walkers		*****	***		7-13km	Every Tuesday All Year	9:30 & 7:30 (in summer)
Wacky Walkers		*****	*****	**	10-13km	Every Weds Autumn to Spring	11:00

- * One or two walks may have a little of these features
- ** Some walks will have a bit of these characteristics
- *** Quite a few walks will be of this classification
- **** Majority of the walks will be at the upper end of these characteristics
- ***** Most walks will be at the upper end of this classification

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USEFUL RESOURCES

I would highly commend joining a walking group or two to find some nice areas and paths to explore. The walks themselves and the people are an absolute mine of information about walking around these parts,

If, however you want to do your own thing or you want to undertake a point-to-point walk such as part of the Lycian Way, then you will need to do your own research.

Having said that, there are a lot of travel agents offering Group Lycian Way hikes. Most are 3-4 days in duration. A search for Lycian Way on Facebook will help you find some information and the cookies will ensure you soon have a steady flow of adverts for such tours. These group tours are often targeting Turkish guests, but in my experience the guides will often have some degree of English and there will often be Turkish guests who can also speak English.

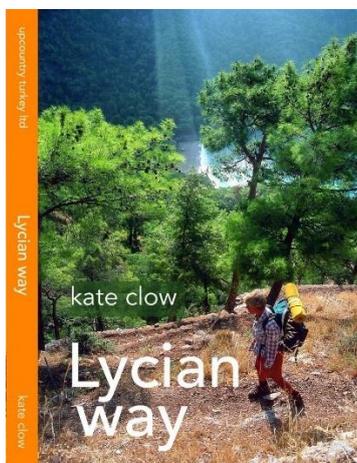
This section attempts to point you the direction of the most useful resources to help you find and plan an independent walking programme.

Lycian Way Website, Guide, Map & GPS Data

The Lycian Way Guide is an essential part of planning any self-guided foray along the Lycian Way. The book provides quite detailed descriptions of each section, for which there is also an elevation chart. Most routes take you off the beaten track and can be steep, rough, narrow and or slippery in places. Heavy rain can make major changes to the trails. The guide includes a map of the entire route. If you buy a copy of the book, you will also get access to the official Lycian Way GPS Data, which can be downloaded.

You can find the official website where you can do some research, find updates on changes to the route and also buy the guide. It should be noted that the route descriptions are written from West to East and as such are less useful if you choose to walk in the opposite direction.

Official Website 



Kate Clow Set Up the Lycian Way



The Lycian Way Book includes a map of the whole route

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ECO Trails

The ECO Trails website has a lot of very useful information and is very searchable. It also has cycling trails. You can search by which route (Coastal, Middle or Inland) and by grade Easy, Average or Hard. The result is a map showing you locations that fit your search. Click on a route and you get a detailed map and an elevation chart. The elevation chart shows angles of ascent/descent and if you click on any point, it will show you elevation & distance from the start.

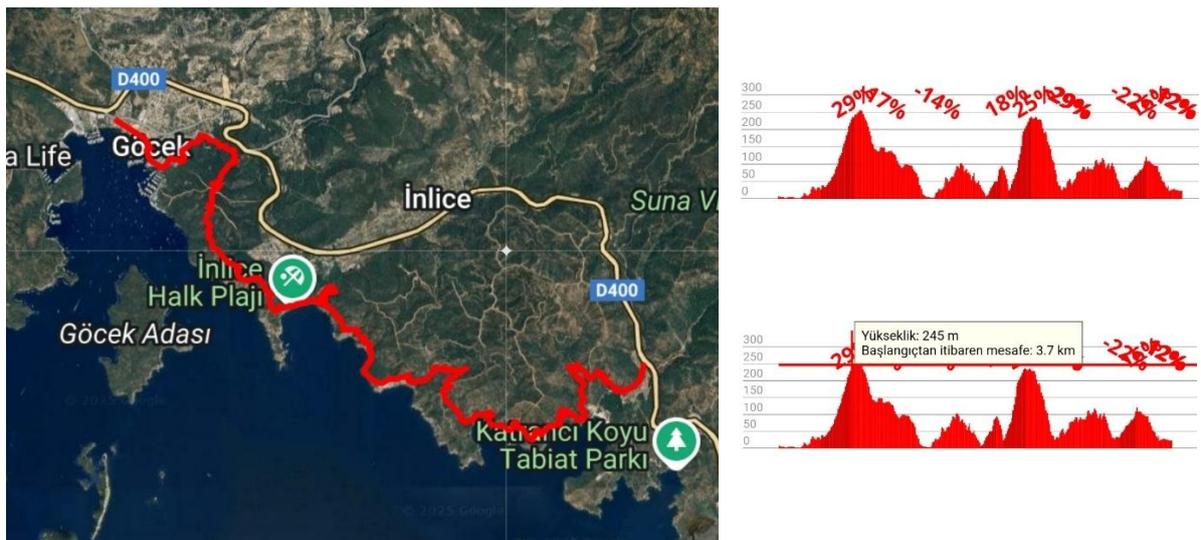
There is a button for English language but this works sporadically, but key elements are in both Turkish & English.

An icon above the map can be clicked to download GPS Points.

A word of warning – if the grade is hard you will need to be fit, agile, sure footed and ready for narrow paths, some with steep drops to the side.

A Hard route: -

19.31km 6hrs 20mins Average Speed 3km/hr



This is clearly a challenging walk but you might choose to make it a bit more manageable by either ending the walk at İnlice Beach or starting there and heading either to Göçek or to Katırcı Beach.

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Wikiloc App & Website

This is my go-to resource when I plan walking in a new area.

You can access Wikiloc online  or you can use the App which I downloaded from Play Store. You need to register to be able to use all the features, like offline maps, route planning, 3D maps and downloading GPS data to a GPS device or to your phone. The annual subscription for this premium service is just over 60YTL which I think is great value. Wikiloc trails can be found all over the world.

Here is an example of how I used Wikiloc to plan a walk from Ovaçık area to the ghost village of Kayaköy. The first thing I did was go to Kayaköy and explored some of the lanes around the village. I used the GPS Apps I have on my phone to record where I went. So, I had a 3½km walk around Kayaköy village.

The pictures below illustrate how I proceeded from there.

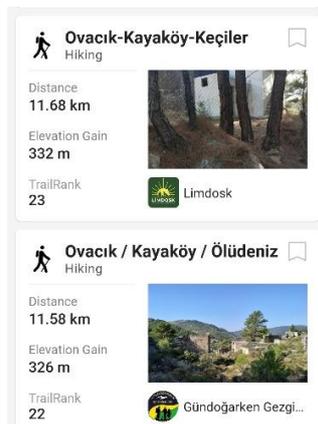
Step 1 - Find some walks by searching trails that had “Ovaçık & Kayaköy” in their text. I found 2 trails as shown in the 2nd picture below.

Step 2 - Click on the trail and review the map. By doing this I discovered that the first trail went to Kayaköy village but not into the Ghost Village.

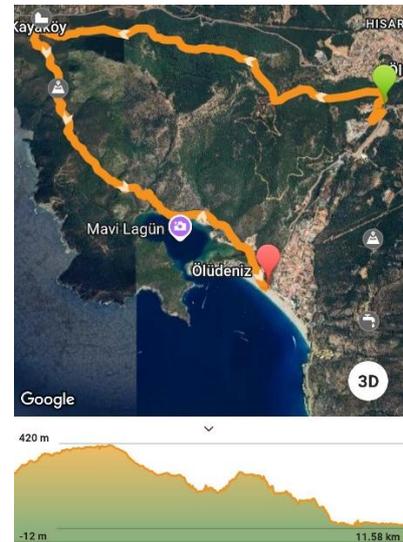
Step 3 – Having chosen the second trail I continued reviewing the map and found my preferred starting point, which was on a road where a forest track headed into the forest. Thus, I avoided a long hill on a tarmac road.



The App on Play Store



Choose a route by reviewing the map



Download GPS & choose which parts to walk

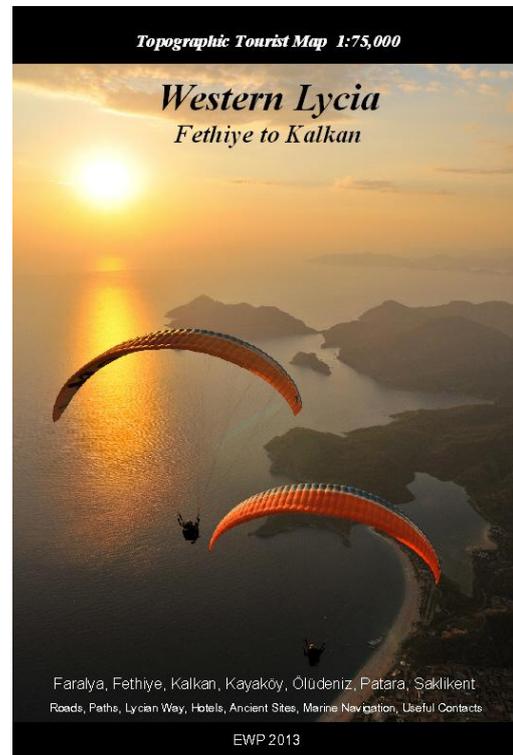
Step 4 – Download the GPS data to my phone and review it on the map and confirm the start and finish points and the distance between them which was just over 5½ km. So, when

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combined with my Kayaköy village walk I had a 9km walk on forest tracks, through the ruins of the Ghost Village and around the lanes and backstreets of Kayaköy village. There was also a handy dolmuş service back to Hisaronu close to the start point.

Western Lycia Map

If you're new to the area, an excellent way to find where the marked trails are is to look at a map. Probably the most comprehensive and detailed is a map of Western Lycia, by Andrew Wielochowski. This covers the Western end of the Lycian Way as well as other routes in the area. You can buy this map as well as others covering the whole of Lycia at the link below.



Pedal Antik Cycle Routes

As you find trails to walk around Fethiye you will probably see red signposts like the one opposite. These indicate cycling trails and there are a lot of them! Many get away from the roads and can be a whole or part of a walk. Certainly, they're an indication of areas that might be worth exploring.



The website includes this map and details of each route.



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Turkey's For Life

This website by a couple who came to Fethiye in 1998 and never went back. It has a wealth of information about living in Turkey. The link below takes you to a review of their favourite walks in and around Turkey.



Using GPS Data

You can record trails and follow the trails listed on Wikiloc using the Wikiloc app. I tend to record my own walks and add comments at key points of the route so I use two apps on my phone (shown below).

If you have not used GPS Data before here is a quick review and links to the Apps that I use.

GPS Data comes from the Global Positioning System which uses data from satellite systems that can accurately identify your position from a GPS Device. These days GPS systems are available on Tablets, Phones and Watches. These systems are, therefore, very accessible and most are quite easy to use.

The GPS points that you download from are accurate enough to show your position within a 1m radius. This means that if you come to a fork in the trail and are not sure which way to go, you can walk 5m down one option (to be at least 2m from the other track). You will then be able to see whether or not you are on track.

I use this app to record my trails

Record gps tracks of your trips, analyze statistics and share with friends!



I use this app to follow my trails and others I have download

GPX Viewer shows tracks, routes and waypoints from gpx and kml files.



I downloaded both apps from Play Store.

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STAYING SAFE

Staying safe whilst walking should be your No. 1 priority!

Staying Safe in a Group

All the groups I have discussed above do a great job of marshalling their members during walks and making sure everyone is OK. After a couple of walks, the leaders will get to know you and your strengths and weaknesses. Thus, they will be able to advise you on the walks they plan.

If you want to join a group, I would commend you to get in touch with them first and ask about their walks, let them know what you are looking for. This will help ensure you find the right group or groups.

Start easy! You may be a fit and confident regular hill walker but that's no reason to not walk with a less ambitious group. Many people walk with more than one group. I have walked with all four. You will find the members to be a font of local knowledge.

Good luck finding a group or groups that helps you get out and about.

Doing Your Own Thing

There are lots of local walks that are on good surfaces and are well marked and as long as you have planned it properly you should be fine.

However, there are walks where can come unstuck! Every year there are stories circulating of people getting lost or getting into trouble. Sadly, there is sometimes news of someone who has lost their life, normally due to getting off track and injuring themselves.

Let me share a story from several years ago, about a lady who was walking with an organised tour on the Lycian Way. She started the route with the group, but after a while started to feel a bit light headed. She decided she would turn round and walk back to the transport vehicle. Having got back to the vehicle she found she felt fine and decided to get back on the trail and try to catch up/follow the group.

The walk she was undertaking is one of the most walked sections of the Lycian Way and is littered with markings and cairns. You would rarely walk this section without meeting people walking in the opposite direction. Suffice to say that the lady's decision making may be questionable but this is a trail where it is quite difficult to go off track. It is also quite a challenging walk with some long climbs and descents on rough surfaces. Also, there is no mobile phone signal for a large part of the route. In this case the lady did not have a phone with her.

The upshot was that the lady went missing and was alone in the open for over 3 days before she was found by the Jandarma search team. She was in hospital for more than a week in recovery. She was very lucky.

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It is worthy of note that she was found just 150m off the trail, but a space of 150m either side of a 15km trail is 4.5square kilometres which, in dense forest, takes some searching.

This story illustrates most of the pitfalls of walking in off-the-beaten-track areas but there is a lot you can do to keep safe.

1. When planning a new walk research, research, research to make sure it's right for you.
2. If you start a walk and it gets too challenging turn round and go back. You know the trail thus far but you don't know what's ahead.
3. On new walks always try to find a trail that looks to be well within your capabilities. Pushing your limits in a place you don't know is foolishly risky.
4. Always use a GPS system to check your progress. Leave a copy of your GPS data with a friend/emergency contact.
5. If you are walking as a couple or a group of friends and particularly if you are walking alone, let someone know where you are going, what time you will start and what time you expect to finish.
6. Always take a phone with you and keep it turned on. Send your location, via Google Maps to a friend every 30 mins.
7. If you think you are off track turn back immediately. You will normally soon come across a marking or cairn that you had missed.
8. Take plenty of water with you, take more than you think is absolutely necessary. Some maps show watering points (taps, springs, troughs) but are you sure they are flowing? Do not assume they are!
9. Take snacks. Fruit is refreshing and trail mix (dried fruit & nuts) gives an energy boost. A packed lunch is a good energy boost and a great excuse for a beautifully scenic picnic!
10. Have the right gear. Proper walking shoes, light clothing (layers if it's cold), walking poles if you use them, sun hat, sunscreen.
11. If you get into trouble your first point of call for assistance is the Jandarma. their emergency number is 112. AKUT is the Turkish emergency rescue who will normally be asked to help, if necessary, by the Jandarma. The AKUT WhatsApp number is +90 (549) 301 47 06 if your call to them is inappropriate (you do not need their specific skills) they will not be helpful. Their main focus is major emergency projects such as earthquakes or rescues requiring mountaineering skills. They are not there to help walkers who have just wandered off track.
12. Take some basic first aid items with you. A few plasters, gauze and antiseptic cleaning solution (iodine).
13. Trails are can be challenging but are rarely dangerous or really difficult. If your trail looks risky you could well be off-track. Check it sooner rather than later.
14. Dogs – the biggest and scariest dogs are the large Kangol sheep dogs. In my experience they rarely attack you, but they can be aggressive if you are invading their space. Don't run, just steadily move on. Do not attack them as they will likely respond in kind. For medium sized dogs make as though you are going to throw a rock at them.

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SUMMARY

There is a wonderful number of great walks for all levels of ability. There are lots of people and groups that can help you enjoy the great outdoors.

There is a load of online support to help you find you own walks.

Walking in is this area is generally safe if you are sensible and take reasonable precautions.

Walking is good for your physical and mental wellbeing and is a great way to enjoy scenery, local culture, and history.

Walking groups are a good way to find walks, meet new people and perhaps a social scene.

I hope you will get out and about and get the most out of the wonderful environment that surrounds us all.

Jon Graham - 8th March 2025