





TOURIST GUIDE  
OF THE MUNICIPALITY  
OF SOUFLI



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OF SOUFLI



**Soufli, Greece**

Officially recognized as a Best Tourism Village by UNWTO in 2021



**ΔΗΜΟΣΥΝΕΤΑΙΡΙΣΤΙΚΗ  
ΕΒΡΟΣ Α.Ε.**

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## TOURISTIC GUIDE OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUFLI

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## INTRODUCTION

The guide you are holding aspires to share the unique wealth of this region with everyone wishing to visit it or acquire a better knowledge of it.

The Municipality of Soufli has a lot to offer, beginning with the elements that constitute its timeless uniqueness: firstly, the internationally protected Dadia-Lefkimi-Soufli National Park with its wonderful biodiversity and secondly, the settlement of Soufli, the city of silk known all over the world. The economy of Soufli stays alive, starting from the sycamore trees to the processing and promotion of the famous Soufli silks and leading to the architecture of the “koukoulospita”, the buildings for the processing of the silk cocoons. This combination creates an urban landscape like no other, whose spearheads are the Tzivre factory and the silk museums.

Far and beyond these internationally known landmarks, an entire legacy of tourist destinations is proposed to the visitor, as these destinations are equally charming and ready to be promoted. One can visit the most ancient, 40-million-year-old fossil forest, the heritage of prehistoric, megalithic civilization, with dolmens, totemic “mushrooms”, rock paintings, rock-cut sanctuaries and prehistoric castles. Visitors can also relish in the unique architecture of the mountainous villages, the historic stone bridges and other monuments of the rural landscape and they can admire the most important Bektashi monastery in the world, Kizil Deli, the other revered tekkes and Muslim institutions, the post-Byzantine temples with the incised altars, the wooden templa, their icons and architecture, and especially the two historic monasteries who have been safeguarding the faith and love for our homeland. The expression of traditional living is also very interesting, as it creates a mingling of cultures and influences, along with the rich gastronomy, the ancient tradition of viticulture and winemaking that is still alive today, beekeeping, but also modern activities, events and celebrations on the theme of mushrooms, tsipouro and silk, as well as the lakeside and equestrian activities in Tycherio, and so much more. Above all, it is the popular spirit, as it unfolds daily in the picturesque “huts”, spread out on the gentle slopes outside Soufli, where the residents cultivate their vineyards, eat and drink, discuss, philosophize and, above all, gaze upon the world with perpetual, genuine Thracian optimism.

**In December 2021, the Municipality of Soufli entered the world map of alternative tourism, as the only Greek “Best Village of Tourism”,** demonstrating its extroversion and initiative and showcasing the unique, numerous proposals it draws from its rich ‘arsenal’ of nature and culture, that it anticipates to bequeath to all those who wish to partake in an unforgettable journey.





## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

**The Dadia-Lefkimmi-Soufli National Park:** There are four protected areas of the network **Natura 2000** within the boundaries of the Municipality of Soufli, which cover approximately 70% of its total territory. Among them, the forest of the National Park Dadia-Lefkimmi-Soufli occupies a special position, due to its location on the crossroads of Asia, Europe and Africa, on the eastern migration route of migratory birds. The area was declared protected in 1980, the Managing Body was established in 2003 and it has been declared a **Natural Park** since 2006.

**An impressive number of plants and animals** of over 360 plant species and 410 fauna representatives has been observed in the area. What makes the forest unique are the **birds of prey**, considering that 36 out of 38 species of diurnal raptors such as the Golden eagle, the Imperial eagle, the Lesser spotted eagle, the Spotted eagle, the White-tailed eagle and the Short-toed eagle have been sighted here. Moreover, it is the breeding site of three out of the four European vultures, the

*1. Panoramic view of the natural landscape, 2. Erythropotamos (the "Red River")*





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Griffon vulture, the Egyptian vulture and mainly the Black vulture which forms here its only colony in the Balkans with a population of 30-35 breeding couples and 120-130 individuals. The number of Black storks that nest in the area is, as well, of a high importance.

**The Evros River:** The eastern, lowland areas of the Municipality are dominated by the Evros River. The longest river that flows entirely in the Balkan Peninsula creates a



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landscape of high aesthetic value. For centuries, the life-giving river that brought civilization and economic prosperity has been exceptionally worshiped in Thrace, while even today it influences economic life; at the same time, though, it constitutes the border that separates Greece and the European Union from Turkey.

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3. The lake of the dam of Lyra, 4. Sunflowers,  
5-6. The National Park of Dadia - Lefkimmi  
-Soufli: birds of prey, 7. The Evros River, at  
the vicinity of Soufli



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**The Petrified Forest of Fylakto-Lefkimmi-Lagyna:** The natural geological monuments of Evros can be considered unique worldwide, due to their rareness, age and size. The forest stretches across all the riparian areas of the prefecture; nevertheless, it presents its higher density in the area of the Municipality of Soufli.



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size. The forest stretches across all the riparian areas of the prefecture; nevertheless, it presents its higher density in the area of the Municipality of Soufli.

Impressive is the number and variety of perfectly preserved fossils of oak trunks and other broadleaf trees of the subtropical zone, the fern, palm tree and vine twigs, as well as the corals, shells, urchins and shark teeth, of ages older than 25 million years, which go back as far as 40 million years.



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8-9. Petrified trunks,  
10. Petrified oak trunk in Fylakto,  
11. Petrified trunks in Katrantzides, Dadia,  
12. Petrified trunks in Lefkimmi



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## HISTORY AND MONUMENTS

**The contribution of the Thracians** to the formation of the ancient Greek religion, music, poetry and mysteries, as well as their early hellenization cults are generally accepted, while their catalytic participation in the configuration of the Greek nation, through the early colonization of Central Greece and the Aegean islands during the second millennium BC has been gradually started to emerge.

The region of Soufli region can boast about the paternity of **Orpheus**, the hero-king-god, the religious reformer, the founder of music and poetry, the greatest trobadour of Antiquity for Thracians and Greeks, who submitted to his melodies wild beasts, plants and even lifeless objects. Here, next to the waters of Evros, the god-hero was torn by the Maenads to pieces and his head was thrown into the river, while the tradition preserves the myth that Orpheus founded the most ancient temple in the world, the “first church”, at Protokklisi, in honor of the God Pluto. This land can still be regarded as the homeland of Dionysus, the god of viticulture and wine and of the wild goddess Vendis-Artemis, whose sanctuary is located, according to the archaeologists, in the riverside Armorio.

**The Megalithic civilization** sinks deeply into Prehistory. In the mountainous lands of the Municipality of Soufli, the dolmens-megalithic tombs, the immense carved totemic mushroom sculptures, the rock incised graffiti with the rich representations that range from dance scenes and praying figures to lizards, swallows, balances of psychostasis and



1. Prehistoric carved totemic mushroom,  
2. Rock graffiti in Goniko



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symbols of eugenics, the cromlechs, the menhirs-tombstones, as well as the open-air sanctuaries with the carved niches, the stairs, the “thrones”, the “winepresses”, the sacrificial altars and pits and the remains of the walls and houses of fortified settlements mark an unknown and thrilling past from the Late Bronze Age, Early Iron

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3. Ancient quarry in Gybraina, Dadia, 4. Rock graffiti at the site Franga, Mandra, 5. The prehistoric fortification of Sejtan Kale, 6. Prosopomorphous double tomb, Piges, Lagyna



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7. Thracian rider from Ai-lia, Kornofolia,  
8. Surface finding (spur) from Palaiokastros in Soufli,  
9. Macedonian type tomb in Lagyna, 10. Dolmen (megalithic tomb) in Roussa



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Age and sometimes even earlier.

During the Early Antiquity the Kikones were settled in the area, later on the Corpili and possibly the Paeti, on the banks of Evros. In the late 6th century BC the Persians conquered the land, while soon after, the Greeks who had already settled on the Thracian shores penetrate the hinterland and develop commercial and cultural relations with the natives.

The hellenization of the area was intensified during the reign of Philip II of Macedonia and was integrated during the Roman Rule. In between, during the 3rd century BC, the Celts/Galls had established their kingdom in Thrace. In the Byzantine Era, the area was at the centre of developments due to its proximity to the capital



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of the Empire, Constantinople, and therefore it became its bastion, granary and its cultural “little brother” as well.

The history of the antiquity emerges through unknown until today archaeological sites, which were inhabited incessantly since the prehistoric times. **Zeirinia**, probably an autonomous city (polis) and not simply a Roman station, located to the south of Kornofolia, is characterized by its duration, from its prehistoric settlement to the Early Christian period. Its abundant archaeological findings denote the penetration of the Greeks and the importance of the riverside port of the settlement. The “Macedonian” tomb of Lagyna, which is only partially preserved, is one of the earliest, as it dates back to the late 4th century BC. Had it survived intact, it would have been the most impressive of its kind in Thrace.

At the north end of Soufli, the prehistoric and classical settlement of Trani Petra is succeeded by the **fortification of Palaiokastro** (6th century AD), whose found ecclesiastical items perhaps could identify it with Agios Theodoros, mentioned by the historian Prokopios among the castles that were erected or repaired by the Emperor Justinian in order to intercept the barbarian raids. Of importance, as well, are the **early Christian castles** of Agiasma, located above Kissario and the extensive fortified settlement of Gybraina, near Dadia.





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The area of Central Evros is conquered by the Turks shortly after the mid-14th century, to be followed by 560 years of foreign yoke. The mountainous region of Soufli becomes the base for the consolidation and expansion of the new sovereigns, since it is the place where the heterodox Bektashi Order is settled, Soufli itself seems to be developed as a main

*Seyyid 'Ali Sultan tekke (Qızıl Deli tekke) in Roussa: 11. The abbot's konak, 12. The cemetery with the uninscribed tombstones, 13. The burial chapel of Seyyid 'Ali Sultan*



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riverine port of the mountainous settlements and pious foundations from the early 15th century, while in the second half of the 16th century its population is strengthened with the arrival of Greek settlers from Epirus.

**The stone-masonry bridges** play a major role in the dense road system that connects Constantinople with the hinterland of the Balkans. Such constructions are preserved in Sidiro, in Giannouli, with byzantine foundations and three arch openings as well as in Sidirochori and Pessani, the latter of a smaller scale. The old baths of Soufli were demolished for no apparent reason, while archaeological excavations could reveal the extensive riverine complex at Mikro Dereio that consists of the Caravanserai, the baths and the Bektashi tekke. The most important, though, was the



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14. The "Low Tekke" in Mikro Dereio,  
15. Old fountain in Lefkimmi,  
16. Old stone-masonry house in Kyriaki



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17. Stone-masonry arched bridge in Pessani, 18. Stone-masonry arched bridge in Sidiro, 19. Stone-masonry arched bridge in Giannouli, 20. Soufli in 1913 by professor Lj. Miletic



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tekke -monastery of, Seyyid 'Ali Sultan or Qızıl Deli, which was founded in 1401-02, and is the only one in operation worldwide out of all the big Bektashi centres, including the meydan -congregation hall, the burial "türbe", the ritual kitchen, the immense sacred mulberry tree, the fountain, the abbot's konak and ancient cemeteries with poetic chronograms that resemble Orphic Hymns.

Most of the present-day settlements of the region of Soufli appear during the first years of the Turkish rule, while others, earlier ones, reappear under a new name or in a new location. Some of them, such as Soufli, Kornofolia, Dadia and Lefkimmi project, already since then, their Greek identity.

The contemporary history of Soufli begins in **the early 19th century**. In 1801 the settlement is set on fire by "Kirdzhali" brigands. At the same time, however, the settlement is enriched with a robust population, driven away by the Albanians, who were dominating Epirus at the time.

In 1821 the territory of the Central Evros pays a heavy toll for the National Revival Struggle, since the plain lands and the proximity of the large Ottoman centres expose the population to the Turkish vengeance. Nevertheless, according to the tradition, a heroic moment of the Revolution takes place in Lavara, when on the 2nd of May 1821, the valiant men of the village, with the aid of the women, decimate a powerful Turkish force in the location of Kouri. Kornofolia is the birthplace of the chieftain Thanasis Belias or Karabelias, who after years of armed action in the area, sets himself, in command of 1500 Thracians in Alexander Ypsilantis army, in which he is appointed aide-de-camp. After the failure of the revolution in the Danubian hegemonies and numerous arduous adventures, the hero is captured and finds a



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tragic death in Andrinople. His name becomes a legend and his activity a song. A few decades later, Vangelis Matsianis from Lavara is raised to a hero, whose deeds and tragic death are still sung in Thrace.

Meanwhile, the development of sericulture has already begun before 1830 and Soufli soon is turned into a prosperous urban centre. **Silk production** commences at the end of the century, where catalytic is the role played by the construction of the railway and the railway station of Soufli.



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21. Haretsi (cocoon market) in Soufli, 22. The old wooden walled Soufli Railway Station, 23. Houses of the refugee settlement in Lagyna

Alongside with domestic sericulture the architecture of the cocoon houses is as well developed, which defines the landscape of Soufli: large, two or three-storey “industrial type” brick buildings, with a symmetrical development of the facades and large, open-plan interior spaces, dedicated to silkworm breeding. The prosperity of the settlement is reflected on the professional buildings, as well as the large public buildings such as the robust neoclassical old Elementary School and the French Customs building, later on the High School of Soufli, and today the Public library, an exquisite example of eclectic architecture throughout Thrace.

**The beginnings of the 20th century** are brilliantly highlighted by the struggle of the Thracian Greeks against the Bulgarians (1904-08). The Balkan wars of 1912-13 are succeeded by the period of the stillborn Democracy of Komotini, from August 1913, when Soufli is raised to one of its seats, under the president Konstantinos Kourtidis, while after that, until 1919, the area is faced with the fierce Bulgarian occupation. On the 14th of May, 1920, the Greek army occupies the area in the name of the Allies and in continuation the Western and Eastern Thrace are incorporated in Greece. In the autumn of 1922, the Greeks of the Eastern Thrace are uprooted from their homelands. Many refugees, in the hope of returning to their birthplaces, establish prosperous settlements on the west bank of Evros. Despite of the territorial losses beyond the river, the mid-war Soufli prospers thanks to silk, with four functioning silk factories, while literature and arts as well flourish, together with other sectors of the economy, such as viniculture and carriage manufacture.





## RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS

The area is adorned by important **religious monuments**. The orthodox faith is manifested in various expressions in the **post-byzantine churches of the mid-19th century**, those of Taxiarches in Korymvos, Saint Athanassios in Protokklisi, Saint Dimitrios in Mavroklisi, the orthodox church of Saint Dimitrios and the un- iatic church of Kyriaki (Saint Kyriaki today), the church of the Assumption of Virgin Mary in Kornofolia, the two churches of Lefkimmi –the church of the Assumption of Virgin Mary and, above all, the very old church of the Nativity of Virgin Mary, in the historical Saint Athanassios of Lavara (1834)– and, of course, the churches of Saint George (1854) and Saint Athanassios (1840) in Soufli. Here, we can find almost exclusively the engraving of the names or initials of believers on the Holy Table, the wooden-carved iconostases, ambos and episcopal thrones, the icons of celebrated, as well as humble Thracian hagiographers, the triptychs, the ancient sacred books,

1. The belfry of the church of Saint Athanassios in Soufli and the old French Trade Union,
2. The interior of the church of Saint Athanassios in Soufli





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3-4. The holy church of Saint George in Soufli and interior view with the wooden-carved iconostasis, 5-6. The holy church of Saint Taxiarches in Korymbos and stone-relief with the ktetor's inscription on the gate lint, 7. The holy church of the Nativity of Virgin Mary in Lefkimmi



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the unique mouldings, the burial steles with the representations of the professions of the deceased, as well as the architecture with its diversity in construction and materials.

First and foremost, the two historical monasteries of the region constitute the depositaries of the orthodox faith and the Greek identity during the dark centuries of the Ottoman rule. The Monastery of the Nativity of Virgin Mary in Dadia and moreover the Monastery of Virgin Mary the Portaitissa (the Door-keeper) in Kornofolia, a embassy church (metochi) of the Iviron Monastery of Mount Athos, are living bearers of historical collective memory.

*8. The holy church of the Nativity of Virgin Mary in Dadia, 9. The holy church of Saint Athanassios in Lavara*



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10-11-12. The holy Monastery of Virgin Mary the Portaitissa (the Door-keeper) in Kornofolia: panoramic view and interior of the Katholikon (main church) of the monastery with the despotic icon of Virgin Mary and the wooden-carved iconostasis



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## TRADITIONAL CULTURE

The **diversity** in the origins of the inhabitants of the Soufli Municipality, in their cultures, the customs and traditions has left its mark both on material life (architecture, diet, clothing etc.) and in cultural events (celebrations, initiation rites customs and festivities) that take place even today and manifest the perpetual motion of its people's soul.

The **Muslim minority mountainous villages** by the Bulgarian border stand out for their unique building tradition, the use of local slate, the simplicity of volumes and the authenticity of the traditional way of life, whose economy is based on mountainous activities. On the other hand, the lowland riparian and semi-mountainous villages are inhabited by **native Thracians, Sarakatsani, refugees** that arrived from Eastern Thrace and Eastern Rumelia and **expats from Eastern Europe**. In these villages, the tangible and intangible wealth of the traditional

*1-2. Stone houses in Sidirochori*





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way of life is projected in the variety of cultural events, shapes and colours, an outstanding example of which is Lefkimmi, a village of exceptional architectural identity.

*3. Kalyves, Soufli, 4. Mavroklisi*



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The wealth and ingenuity of the Thracian culture is reflected in **music and dance**, whose exuberance, diversity and rhythm bear traces of Dionysian influence and notable interaction with the neighboring peoples.

In the **Christian villages**, some of the ancient, pagan rites of passage were passed down to the folklore orthodox informal ritual with the offerings (kourbania) and animal sacrifice rituals that are held in many villages, together with the Procession of the icon of the holy patron, where the desire for good progeny has remained unchanged since ancient times. In the villages of the refugees from Eastern Rume-  
lia, the **custom of Kiopek Mpei**, or Mpei of the Dogs on Monday before Sunday of the carnival season, are clearly considered the most direct

5. Stone house in Roussa, 6. The former Proika building in Dadia, 7. Old Elementary School of Lavara



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continuation of the Dionysian entourage, with an orgiastic explosion of the power of nature and divine ecstasy.

The three-day religious alevi-bektashi “Giaglia” celebration (“celebration at the plateau”) is performed by a very ancient native people in Hilgia, at the eastern ridge of the Rhodope mountain range, every first Sunday of August. Celebrations begin with the nocturnal assembly at Kizil Deli Tekke and end with the Pahlavani wrestling competition. At Hinderelez, on May 6th, when Saint George is celebrated according to the old calendar, summer is welcomed with outdoor celebrations, kourbania and the huge traditional girl cradles.

*8. Hotel Koukouli, former Kalesi cocoon house, 9. Old French Customs building-High school, current Public Library of Soufli, 10. Old 1st Elementary School of Soufli*





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## GASTRONOMY

Gastronomy is a cultural expression that goes far beyond the simple art of satisfaction. Especially in Thrace, which is a melting pot of people and cultures, local particularity is shaped by the combination of the cohabitation among locals and refugees, Christians and Muslims and it becomes evident in the flavor and taste of the local cuisine.

The traditional gastronomy of Evros was based on **local produce**: vegetables in the summer, pork in the winter, after Christmas, and most of all **kavourmas** – cured meat roasted and doused with fat in pots (pousiourti) and which has been enriched in ingredients and techniques today. Common dishes include sour cabbage, chicken, bulgur, couscous and frumenty, sausage and other cured meats, legumes, soups, cheese pies, pumpkin pies, milk pies, spinach pies, leek or minced meat pies, cabbage dolma, giozleme (stuffed flatbread), gioufkades (homemade pasta), lalagites (pancakes), mikikia (doghnuts), katsamaki (corn flour cream), ariani (sour milk), taratori (cold vegetable soup) and sweets like ritselia, baklava, semolina desert, saragli and kazandibi. There is also a great variety of wine, ouzo and raki-tsipouro where the tradition of Soufli is legendary, as these local products used to be exported to France, Italy and elsewhere. Furthermore, the dishes of the big religious celebrations are very special, like babo and varvara, a mélange of flavors prepared on the day celebrating Agia Varvara.

1. Babo, 2. Cabbage with meat, 3. Bulgur dish





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Apart from the common dishes that form the majority of the local cuisine, every cultural group has its own specialties.

The cuisine of the **Muslims** of the mountainous zone, one of the oldest in the Balkans, offers delicacies like gaigana, tikva (a kind of pumpkin soup), mushrooms with potatoes, pitar (a common dish made with animal fat) and patetnik. For the **Sarakatsans**, lamb or goat meat and cheese were the principle ingredients on the table: cheese pies, spiral pies, gravari, koulouropita, blancos, boukvala, stachtokouloura, kousmaropita etc. **The refugees from Eastern Thrace and Eastern Rumelia** have enriched the local cuisine with flavors of their lost homelands and eastern spices. Therefore, the **Eastern Rumelians** recommend New Year's pie with hidden omens or roasted lamb and the **Arvanites** recommend bourani, Saint George prses or bugatsa with buffalo butter. The **expats from Eastern Europe** have added their own touch to the traditional cuisine with dishes such as beans or dolma with black cabbage, Pontiac borts, manti, perek pie, pisia and otia.



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The local restaurants and taverns offer their gastronomic treasures, creating a conversation with the region and its destinations.

3. Mushrooms from Dadia, 4. Legumes, 5. Patetnik



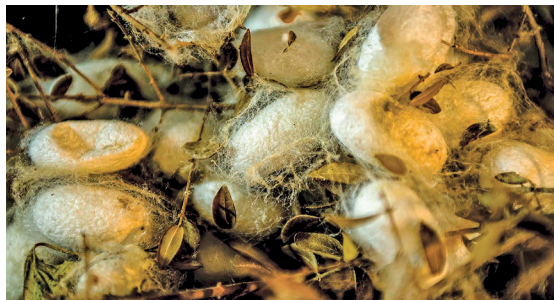
## SERICULTURE - APICULTURE HUNTING TOURISM

The procedure of **silk** production is divided in two phases, the agricultural sericulture of mulberry tree cultivation and breeding the silkworms in four stages, from egg-seed hatching to cocoon selection and its conversion into silk thread and fabric, which involves the home or artisanal-industrial phase of sericulture. Silk economy has been on the rise in the last years considering that two factories, a few home industries, dozens of seed producers, four museums and a three digit number of Soufli Silk sales outlets around the world promote more than ever this particular product as the regional trademark.

**Apiculture** is an activity that has thrived in Central Evros since ancient times and has recently made a dynamic comeback with over 8,800 beehives. The above ground and underground waters benefit the soil and the development of this activity, along with the rich flora which combines self-grown bee-friendly plants like erica, paliurus, acacia, oak, all kinds of herbs, sunflower and other annual cultivations.

**Hunting tourism.** The woodlands of the eastern ridge of Rhodope, the sacred mountain or Tanri Dag, as mentioned in historical texts, was the favorite hunting ground of Byzantine and Ottoman emperors and princes, and these regions still attract large numbers of hunters from all over Europe. The active local hunting association looks after the area, which is a passage for migratory birds from Eastern Europe and the natural habitat of all the favorite species of hunting enthusiasts.

1. Cocoons, 2. Beehive







## MUSEUMS - COLLECTIONS

Museums create, together with other sites of interest, an open, broad network of destinations spreading throughout the Municipality.

**The Silk Museum** belongs to the thematic network of Technological Museums of the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation. It is housed in the mansion of the prominent figure Konstantinos Kourtidis from Soufli and it consists of two traditional buildings dating from the early 19th century and from 1883 respectively, which were both donated to the foundation. The permanent exhibition traces the timeless history of silk, focusing on the course of Soufli towards becoming an important silk production centre, from the late 19th century to the present day.

**The Art of Silk Museum** is housed in the 1886 elegant building of the Tsakiris family of silk producers and offers the visitor an acquaintance with the history of Soufli through art, sericulture techniques and silk production. The exhibits range from hand weaving looms and serigraph machinery to elaborate traditional costumes.

*1. Municipal Historical Museum, Former Brika Mansion, 2. "Chrysallida" collection of the museum*





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3. The Art of Silk Museum,  
4. From the collection of the  
Folklore Museum "Gnafala"

hibition focuses on ethnography, since, according to its founders "the motive for its creation has been the love for Soufli and its history... a remarkable collection of old artifacts that create vivid images that stay imprinted on our minds forever".

**The Municipal Historical Museum**, formerly the Birka mansion, another emblematic town building, combines "western suburban mansion" architecture with that of a dollhouse. It was donated to the Municipality and it has been restored into a museum that promotes the general history of the town, including music, literature, sport, cultural life, architecture and contemporary art and it is soon to be virtually linked to other bodies promoting the history of region, as well as to its localities and activities.

**At the Fossil Information Centre**, at the entrance of Lefkimmi, the visitor can be informed about the petrified forest of Evros, its importance, the fossilization procedure and he can also admire unique fossilized exhibits, like branches, tree leaves and other flora and fauna specimens that date as back as 40 million years.

**The Bread and Wheat Museum** in Lefkimmi is a special collection of artifacts that are related to wheat and bread, ranging from wheat cultivation tools to con-



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5. Silk Museum of the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation,  
6. Fossil Information Centre in Lefkimmi



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tainers for the preparation or consumption of baked goods. In addition, educational programs and organized activities contribute to getting acquainted with the traditional stages of making bread, which has been the main aliment of people throughout the ages.

**The Tzivre brothers compound** was constructed in 1909 by the Milanese Ceriano brothers. In 1920, it was purchased and expanded by the Tzivre brothers who were Jewish cocoon traders from Didymoteicho. It was in operation until the mid 1960's. The Municipality of Soufli purchased the compound and implemented a program of successive restoration works. Its facilities house a multicultural centre whose activities are connected to the contemporary perspectives of silk economy. The attraction of important target groups via the organization of festivals, workshops, national and international fashion and fabric associations events, as well as film shoots is also very significant.

7. Bread and Wheat Museum in Lefkimmi, 8. Tzivre industrial complex,  
9. Interior of silk reeling machinery at the Tzivre compound







## CELEBRATIONS - CULTURAL EVENTS



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1. Chapel of Agios Tryfonas in Soufli, 2-3. Grapevines in Soufli



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**The Soufli silk festival** has been established for decades and it takes place every year in June during the peak of the sericulture process. Traditional and contemporary music concerts, sericulture and silk manufacturing events such as seminars, virtual representations, art and silk manufacturing technique workshops, film projections, interactive games, pet races and revival of traditional events take place.

**A tsipouro festival** takes place every year in Soufli at the beginning of November and it marks the end of the viticulture season. It includes seminars, wine tasting and a variety of other events and it culminates with a two-day Thracian music and dance celebration at the facilities of the Viticulture Association. The long tradition in viticulture and wine production is also promoted during the vine harvest celebrations in September and on the day we celebrate Ag. Tryfon, the protector of vine, on the February 1st, at the saint's chapel.

**The "San paramythi..." theme park** opens its gates at the Tzivre industrial complex every year during the Christmas period. All visitors, young and old, enjoy unique events, film projections, multimedia representations, music, fairy tales with the children's favorite characters, dance and much more.

**The Mushroom festival** aims at spreading the love and promoting knowledge on mushrooms. The visitor is called to discover, with the help of specialists, the mysterious world of mushrooms through seminars and outings to the extraordinarily beautiful landscape of Dadia forest. The festival also offers exquisite mushroom dishes, children activities and special happenings like mushroom desiccation or truffle hunt with trained dogs.

**St John the Baptist Race** takes place in Tycherio on the last Saturday of August with an impressive number of participants. There is a 5 and a 10 km race, as well as a 600m race for children. There is the imminent prospect to internationalize the race and to organize an exhibition to promote local products.

**The Tycheros Youth Festival**, held at the ecotourism centre of the lake, enters its third decade and along with other cultural events taking place at the same time, it satisfies the music needs of the agricultural population of the border areas, specifically of the younger generations.

**The activities at the artificial lake of Tycherio**, in combination with the restaurant and accommodation services have turned the area into a very special tourist site. Boat or pedal boat rides in the lake, horse-riding as well as excursions to the forest of Dadia and the Evros Delta are some of the activities offered.

**Tycherio carnival** is an established folkloric event with participants and spectators from all over Thrace. It combines new elements with traditional life as preserved in Thrace, with more authenticity than anywhere else.

During the summer months, the Municipality of Soufli, in cooperation with the local authorities hosts various cultural events throughout the prefecture, offering a truly **Cultural Summer** full of experiences, participation, psychological and spiritual uplifting.

4. Horse-riding tours in Tycherio,
5. Dancers from Soufli in traditional costume,
6. Panoramic view of the Lake of Tycherio

4



5

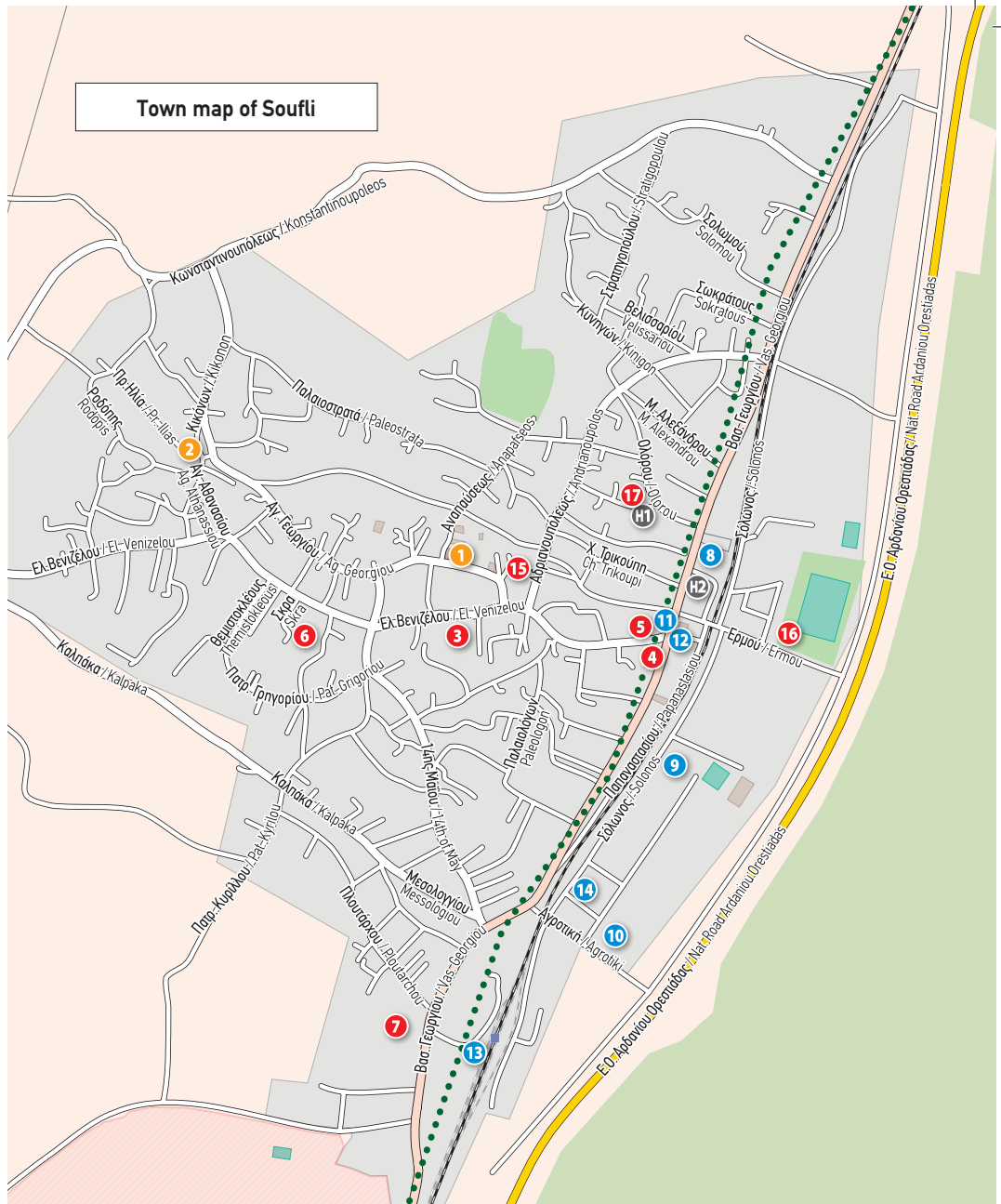


## Map of the Municipality of Soufli



### Map of the Municipality of Soufli

- 1 The Dadia-Lefkimmi-Soufli National Park
- 2 The Evros River
- 3 The lake of the dam of Lyra
- 4 The Petrified Forest
- 5 The castle of Gybraina
- 6 The fortification of Sejtan Kale
- 7 Piges, Lagyna
- 8 Carved prehistoric mushroom
- 9 Macedonian type tomb in Lagyna
- 10 Dolmen in Roussa
- 11 Rock graffiti in Goniko-Tsogar
- 12 Derveni-Zeirinia
- 13 Palaiokastros in Soufli
- 14 The castle of Hagiasma, Lavara
- 15 The bridge of Sidiro
- 16 The bridge of Giannouli
- 17 The bridge of Pessani
- 18 The bridge of Sidirochori
- 19 The tekke of Sidiro
- 20 The tekke in Mikro Dereio
- 21 The tekke Kizi Deli in Roussa
- 22 The Kouri location in Lavara
- 23 The church of Saint (Hagioi) Taxiarches in Korymvos
- 24 The church of Saint (Hagios) Athanasios in Protokklisi
- 25 The church of Saint (Hagios) Dimitrios in Mavroklisi
- 26 The church of Saint (Hagios) Dimitrios in Kyriaki
- 27 The church of Saint (Hagios) Dimitrios in Amorio
- 28 The ex unitive church of Saint Dimitrios Kyriaki (today the church of Saint (Hagia) Kyriaki)
- 29 The church of the Assumption of Virgin Mary in Kornofolia
- 30 The church of the Nativity of Virgin Mary in Lefkimmi
- 31 The church of the Assumption of Virgin Mary in Lefkimmi
- 32 The church of Saint (Hagios) Athanasios in Lavara
- 33 The Monastery of the Nativity of Virgin Mary in Dadia



- 34 The monastery of Virgin Mary the Portaitissa (the Door-keeper) in Kornofolia
- 35 The settlement of Lefkimmi
- 36 The site of Hilgia
- 37 The Bread and Wheat Museum in Lefkimmi
- 38 The Fossil Information Centre
- 39 The lake of Tychero
- H1 Thrassa Hotel
- H2 La Strada Hotel
- H3 Hotel Apolithomeno Dasos, Holiday Villas
- H4 Traditional Guesthouse Lefkippos
- H5 Ecotourism Hotel Forest Inn

#### Town map of Soufli

- 1 The church of St. George (Hagios Georgios)
- 2 The church of St. (Hagios) Athanasios
- 3 Silk Museum of the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation
- 4 The Art of Silk Museum
- 5 The "Gnafala" Folklore Museum
- 6 The Municipal Historical Museum, formerly the Birka mansion
- 7 The Tzivre brothers compound
- 8 Town hall
- 9 Police Station
- 10 Health Centre
- 11 Bus Station

- 12 Taxi Station
- 13 Railway Station
- 14 Fire Brigade
- 15 Old 1st Elementary School
- 16 Public Library, former Old French Customs building-High school
- 17 H1 Hotel Kerkouli, former Kalesi cocoon house
- H2 Hotel Orpheus (Orfeas)

## Useful Information

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**Soufli Town Hall:** Soufli • Tel. 25543 50100 • [www.soufli.gr](http://www.soufli.gr) • [dim@0890.syzefxis.gov.gr](mailto:dim@0890.syzefxis.gov.gr)

**Municipal Office of Tycherio:** Tycherio • Tel. 25543 50208 • [www.soufli.gr](http://www.soufli.gr) • [dim@0890.syzefxis.gov.gr](mailto:dim@0890.syzefxis.gov.gr)

**Municipal Office of Lavara:** Lavara • Tel. 25533 50703 • [www.soufli.gr](http://www.soufli.gr) • [dim@0890.syzefxis.gov.gr](mailto:dim@0890.syzefxis.gov.gr)

**Soufli Police Station:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 20100 • [at.soufliou@astynomia.gr](mailto:at.soufliou@astynomia.gr)

**Tycherio Police Station:** Tycherio • Tel. 25540 41201 • [attycherou@astynomia.gr](mailto:attycherou@astynomia.gr)

**Mikro Dereio Police Station:** Mikro Dereio • Tel. 25540 31203

**Soufli Border Guard Department:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 20246

**Tycherio Border Guard Department:** Tycherio • Tel. 25540 421078-9

**Soufli Health Centre:** Soufli • Tel. 25543 50011

**Soufli Fire Brigade:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 22199

**Soufli Forestry Service:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 22656 • [das-sou@damt.gov.gr](mailto:das-sou@damt.gov.gr)

**Professional Crafts and Trade Association of Soufli and Evros:** Soufli • [visitsoufli@gmail.com](mailto:visitsoufli@gmail.com)

**The Municipal Cooperative Society “Evros SA”:** Provatonas • Tel. 25540 20090 • [dimossin@dimossin.gr](mailto:dimossin@dimossin.gr)

**Soufli KTEL Bus Office:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 22291 • [www.ktelevrou.gr](http://www.ktelevrou.gr)

**Soufli Post Office:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 22411

**Soufli Taxi Station:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 22888

**Train Information (OSE/ Alexandroupoli Railway Station):** Alexandroupoli • Tel. 25510 26212 • [www.trainose.gr](http://www.trainose.gr)

**“Democritos” International Airport of Alexandroupoli:** Alexandroupoli • Tel. 25510 893005  
[www.ypa.gr/our-airports/kratikos-aerolimenas-alexandroupolis-dhmokritos-kaald](http://www.ypa.gr/our-airports/kratikos-aerolimenas-alexandroupolis-dhmokritos-kaald)

**Silk Museum of the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 237000  
[www.piop.gr/el/diktuo-mouseiwn/Mouseio-Metaxis/to-](http://www.piop.gr/el/diktuo-mouseiwn/Mouseio-Metaxis/to-)

**The Art of Silk Museum:** Soufli • Tel. 2554022371 • [www.silkmuseum.gr](http://www.silkmuseum.gr)

**Folk Museum “Ta Gnafala”:** Soufli • Tel. 25540 24162 • [www.gnafala.blogspot.com](http://www.gnafala.blogspot.com)

**The Bread and Wheat Museum:** Lefkimmi • Tel. 6988 17549 • [www.museumbreadhistory.gr](http://www.museumbreadhistory.gr)

**Evros Fossil Information Centre:** Lefkimmi • Tel. 25540 33371 • [apolithomenodasos.gr](http://apolithomenodasos.gr)

**Dadia-Lefkimmi-Soufli Forest Information Centre:** Dadia • Tel. 25540 32209/202 • [dadia-np.gr](mailto:dadia-np.gr)

**The Holy Monastery of the Nativity of Virgin Mary in Dadia:** Dadia • Tel. 25540 51361 • [imdos@otenet.gr](mailto:imdos@otenet.gr)

**The Holy Monastery of Virgin Mary the Portaitissa (the Door-keeper) in Kornofolia:** Kornofolia  
Tel. 25540 51111

**Holy Metropolis of Didymoteicho, Orestiada and Soufli:** Didymoteicho • Tel. 25530 22901 • [imdos@otenet.gr](mailto:imdos@otenet.gr)

**Brika Mansion - Municipal Historical Museum:** Soufli • Tel. 25543 50100

**Hotel Thrassa:** Tycherio • Tel. 25540 41629 & 6948 403366 • [www.hotelthrassa.gr](http://www.hotelthrassa.gr) • [hotelthrassa@gmail.com](mailto:hotelthrassa@gmail.com)

**Hotel La strada:** Provatonas • Tel. 25540 42268 • [www.hotellastrada.gr](http://www.hotellastrada.gr) • [hotellastrada@gmail.com](mailto:hotellastrada@gmail.com)

**Hotel Apolithomeno Dasos Holiday Villas:** Lefkimmi • Tel. 25540 33371 • [www.apolithomenodasos.com](http://www.apolithomenodasos.com)  
[info@ap-dasos.gr](mailto:info@ap-dasos.gr)

**Traditional Guesthouse Lefkippos:** Lefkimmi • Tel. 25540 33313 & 6988 617549

**Ecotourism Hotel Forest Inn:** Dadia • Tel. 25540 32263 • [www.forestinn.eu](http://www.forestinn.eu) • [info@forestinn.eu](mailto:info@forestinn.eu)

**Hotel “To Koukouli”:** Olorou and Mokali, Soufli, PC 684 00 • Tel. 25540 22400 • [www.koukoulihotel.gr](http://www.koukoulihotel.gr)  
[info@hotelkoukouli.gr](mailto:info@hotelkoukouli.gr)

**Hotel Orpheas:** Tsimiski 1, Soufli, PC 684 00 • Tel. 25540 22922/3  
[www.thracehotels.gr/portal/hotels/el/orfeassoufli](http://www.thracehotels.gr/portal/hotels/el/orfeassoufli)