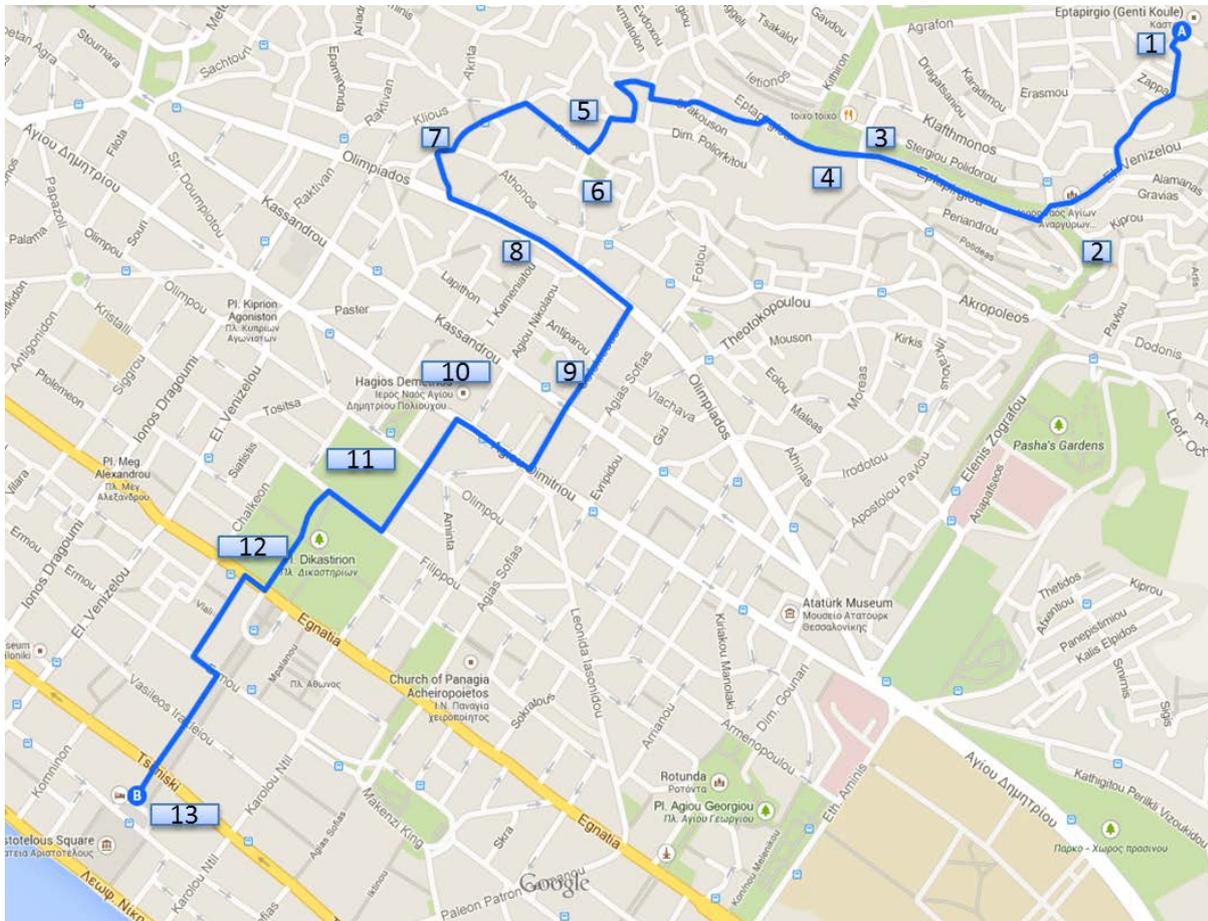


## City Walk 5 “Upper Town: Western Walls”

(approximately 4 km’s).



<b>1. Eptapyrgion (Seven Towers)</b>	<b>2. Pigos Trigoniu (Tower at Three Corners)</b>
<b>3. Byzantine Walls</b>	<b>4. Moni Vlatadon (Vlatadon Monastery)</b>
<b>5. Ano Poli (Upper Town)</b>	<b>6. Musa Baba Mausuleum</b>
<b>7. Tsinari</b>	<b>8. Profitis Hlias Church</b>
<b>9. Yeni Hamam</b>	<b>10. Agios Dimitrios</b>
<b>11. Ancient Agora</b>	<b>12. Panagia Chalkeon</b>
<b>13. Aristotle’s Square</b>	

**1. The Eptapyrgion** (also popularly known as “Yedi Kule”) is a Byzantine and Ottoman fortress located on the north-eastern edge of the ancient acropolis of Thessaloniki. The literal meaning of the word in both Greek and Ottoman Turkish language is “Fortress of Seven Towers”. It was used in the past for military purposes until the 19<sup>th</sup> century and then as a prison until 1989. References to the infamous Yedi Kule prison abound in the Greek *rebetika* songs, a 1930’s Greek style of folk music similar to the Blues. Restoration and archaeological work began in the 1970s and continues to this day. Visitors are encouraged to walk on the guards paths and watch over the prison yards, where many archaeological findings are stored nearby.

To get to Eptapyrgion, go to bus stop “Agora” (bus stop # 1040) which is located on Venizelou street about one block south of Egnatia street, and take the bus route 23 towards Sikies, to get off at “Eptapirgiou” (bus stop # 5021).

**2. The Trigonion Tower** (literal meaning “Tower with three corners) is a unique monument inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list. It was constructed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, incorporating an old square tower that stood at that location, forming part of the Byzantine fortifications. The tower was built in order to deal with the then new war technique of using firearms. Therefore, its entire design serves this purpose, for example the considerable thickness of its masonry and its round shape were dictated by the need to rebound the bullets fired at it and to ensure surveillance of the surrounding areas. This is the corner of the old city where the Ottomans managed to invade in 1430. The site offers an amazing view over the whole city and its harbour, from the north-east corner of its walls.

**3. The City Walls (Fortress) of Thessaloniki** are the result of a long construction process and continuous maintenance that dates back to the foundation of the city by King Cassander in 316 BC. The fortress was built with the purpose of protecting the city from numerous sieges that took place throughout its history, such as those by the Celts in 279 BC, the Goths in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the Slavs in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the Saracen pirates in 904, and the Normans in 1185. The parts that have been better preserved belong to the Byzantine period, particularly the time of the Emperor Theodosius dating back at the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. Overall, 4,300 metres of Byzantine walls survive nowadays out of out of approximately 8,000 metres.

**4. Moni Vlatadon (Vlatadon Monastery)** is an utterly beautiful monastery, the only one that has survived from Byzantine Thessaloniki. It is located in the foothills and on the slopes of Mount Hortiatis and offers magnificent views of the city, reaching in the far distance the peaks of Mount Olympus. It was founded in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century by the Vlataioi brother monks, possibly with the support of Anna Palaiologue, who was in Thessaloniki at that time. The church inside the monastery was built on the place where the Apostle Paul preached and lived during his stay in the city. The site is inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list.

**5. Ano Poli (Upper Town)** is the area that represents the “Old City” in Thessaloniki and is protected by the government in its effort to maintain its traditional style and many monuments. The area features important monuments, traditional and colourful houses, narrow stone-paved streets and traditional taverns, creating a unique atmosphere that takes visitor back in time. Many of the monuments of the area are listed among the UNESCO World Heritage sites.

**6. The Musa Baba Mausoleum** is an Ottoman tomb that dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and it is the only hexagonal Ottoman mausoleum that has been entirely preserved in the city. The tomb is located in Terpsithea Square, which used to be the courtyard of a tekke (Bektashi monastery) that was possibly founded in 1527 during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II.

**7. The Tsinari area** is a small neighbourhood of the “Old City” (Ano Poli) of Thessaloniki. It was named after the Turkish word “çınar” (plane tree) because there used to be a big plane tree in the area, with a small café built next to it that shared the same name. Nowadays the narrow streets and paved alleys of Tsinari are full of ultra-traditional taverns and create an amazing atmosphere that makes one feel as if one travelled hundreds of years back in time.

**8. The Church of the Prophet Elias** is a UNESCO World Heritage site and was built around around 1360, probably on the site of the Byzantine palace of Thessaloniki, which was destroyed in 1342 during the Zealot uprising. Its architectural style is a variant of ‘cross-in-square’ church known as the "Athonite type" and it’s unique in the city. The masonry consists of alternating courses of bricks and white ashlar and is also unusual for Thessaloniki and its region; it has been influenced by the Constantinopolitan architecture. Fragments of the church's original decoration still survive nowadays in the form of wall paintings, which constitute fine examples of late Palaiologan art.

**9. The Yeni Hamam** is an atmospheric 17<sup>th</sup>-century structure and a former Turkish bath. The building has terrific acoustics and it used to house the infamous “Aigli Cinema” and subsequently the “Aigli Restaurant”, which had live music. Nowadays it hosts contemporary art exhibitions and in the summer it also operates as an open air cinema.

**10. The church of Agios Dimitrios**, who is the patron Saint of Thessaloniki, was built in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century as a small church over the vault of the Roman baths, where Saint Dimitrios was martyred. A century later an Illyrian nobleman Leontius erected a much larger church on the site of the old church in thanksgiving, as he was afflicted with a serious illness but was subsequently completely healed with prayer to the relics of St. Demetrius. In the 7th century this amazing monument of early Christianity was destroyed by fire. It was soon rebuilt, more or less in its original form; however it was burnt once again in the great fire of 1917. After the destruction of 1917, the Greek architect A. Zachos rebuilt the church, designing all new sections of the building according to their original form. Even the roof, which is made by concrete, was built like the old wooden roof. Underneath the church there is a crypt, the place where St Demetrios was martyred, which nowadays has been converted into an exhibition space and a museum.

**11. The Ancient Agora** (Roman Forum) is a magnificent archaeological site that was revealed during archaeological excavations in 1966. It occupies an area of about two hectares. It was set inside a rectangular stone-paved square and comprised arcades and large public edifices. The whole eastern side of the site has been nowadays uncovered, consisting of the Square with the eastern and southern arcades, the Cryptoporticus, the Mint, the Bathhouse and the Odeon. The forum was probably built at the time of the Roman Tetrarch period (late 3rd and early 4th century AD), during which Thessaloniki was one of the four capitals of the Roman Empire.

**12. Panagia Chalkeon** is one of Thessaloniki's most beautiful churches and a UNESCO World Heritage site. It was built in 1208 on the site of an ancient temple of Hephaestus. Later on the area was settled by numerous coppersmiths who established their workshops in the neighbourhood; hence

the literal meaning of the church's name is "Virgin Mary of Coppersmiths" in Greek. It is a charming, domed cruciform Byzantine church with skilful decorative elements and mosaics. The tomb of the church's founder lies inside: "Christoforos the most glorious royal premier swordsman..."

**13. Aristotle's Square** is named after the great philosopher Aristotle, who was born in ancient Stagira, about 55 km from Thessaloniki. It is one of the most beautiful squares in Thessaloniki, designed by French architect Ernest Hébrard in 1918, following the city's great fire in 1917. Aristotle's square lies at the heart of the city; at the south end, there is Thermaikos Gulf and on the sides one can see several buildings with beautiful architecture. For a great view of the square and of the gulf, one can visit the rooftop coffee and restaurant of the Elektra Palace Hotel.