

Menikio is the western mountain in the circle of mountains that form the area around Drama. Although it is lesser known than the other mountains, it still plays an important role in the historical and environmental identity of the area.

Menikio is the southern tail of Orvilos and Vrontou mountains and is shared between the prefectures of Drama and Serres. The highest peak is Mavromata (1,963m.), and is in the area of Serres.

Thanks to, and due in part of its significant flora and fauna, it is protected by “Natura 2000” and by the SPA (Sxxxxxx Pxxxxx Axxxxx) for its various bird fauna. The mountain is a part of the Rhodopi mountain range, and consists of transformed rocks (marble) as well as manganese and ferrous minerals. Because of the intense carstic phenomena at Menikio, one can see dolins (pits) and a large number of springs.

Between Menikio and Falakro there is a narrow pass that is known as the “Kalapoti Passage” (Panorama Village) that connects the plateau of Nevrokopi to the plains of Drama. The pass is barely used nowadays. However, it was once used by the locals, and anyone else traveling in the region, in order to move in and out of the area of Nevrokopi, also of strategic importance for the defense of area during World War II. The road was rebuilt by the army in order to be used for the war, and it was from here that the German and Bulgarian forces invaded Greece.

The first time that Menikio is referred to by name is in medieval years by the possessor of the Holy Monastery of Timios Prodromos (which is built on Menikio).

In ancient years, it was probably referred to as “Dusoron” by Herodotus. During the time of the Ottoman occupation however, it was called “Boz Dag” meaning “frozen peak”.

There are several prehistoric findings in the area of Agio Pnevma and around the cave of the Aggitis River, as well as Hellenistic and Roman settlements around Mikropolis.

In Byzantine (medieval) years, the area was in a flourishing state, as known from the few Monasteries that have been found.

During the latter years of the Ottoman rule and occupation, there was an economic boom in the area due to the tobacco cultivation, although it only lasted a few years because of the wars and struggles that had plagued the area for about 70 years.

The chestnut forest of Mikropoli (340m alt.) is a significant point of the mountain, and every year there is a chestnut festival that is organized by the local people. An Environmental Education Center has been founded in the area, and is the starting point of the trails that lead to the chestnut forest, the plateau of “Kallipoli” (where you once were able to see horses running wild), and the area of “Kuskuras”.

There are several significant sightseeing locations, including the “Timios Prodromos” canyon with the Monastery sharing the same name, the chapel of “Agii Anagiri” in the deserted village of Chionohori, the Monasteries of “Profitis Ilias”, “Timios Stavros” and “Agio Pnevma”. The village where the Agio Pnevma is located, you can find the river of the cave of Aggitis, the canyon of the river, and the caves of Alistratis, as well as St. Dimitrios Church in Panorama.

For more information visit: [www.mikropoli.gr](http://www.mikropoli.gr)