



dated between 4000 - 1200 BC; Sesklo (13.5 km) with the remains of the oldest acropolis in Greece (6000 BC), as well as the foundations of a palace and mansions among the most typical examples of neolithic civilisation.

A bit further to the west lies the village of Velestino (17 km) birthplace of the revolutionary poet Rigas Ferraios, built on the site of the ancient city of Pherai.

**Southwest of Volos:**

Near the coast road heading southwest of Volos, you'll spot a pine wooded area containing the ruins of ancient Dimitrias (4 km), the important city founded by Dimitris Poliorkitis in the 3rd century BC. In this particularly extensive archaeological site there are ruins of a temple, palace, and theatre with incomparable acoustics. Portions of the city's circuit wall can be seen on a hill to the right of the road.

The famous grave stelai adorning the Archaeological Museum in Volos were discovered in the towers still standing on the acropolis. A little to the east, at Pefkakia, are the scant remains of a Mycenaean settlement identified as the Homeric city of Neleia.

The road then passes by Nees Pagases (5 km), today a summer resort with good facilities for tourists built on the site of ancient Pagasai, an eminent commercial centre of the 5th century BC, and port of ancient Pherai. Maratho (13 km) and Chrysi Akti (15 km) further south are renowned for their crystalline waters and the fresh fish served in their tavernas.

The main road continues along the shore, passing Nea Anhialo (18 km), a pleasant market town built in a fertile region in a position formerly occupied

by Ancient Pyrrasos, which together with the neighbouring city of Phthiotic Thebes was the most important commercial centre on the Pagasitic gulf. Its little museum contains neolithic and early Christian finds. Continuing on you come to Mikrothives (25 km) which took its name from Pthiotic Thebes. There are ruins of the old city - walls, temple, theatre and a stoa - on the nearby hill.

At Almiros (35 km), the centre for animal husbandry and farming in the area, you can visit the Archaeological Museum, while the Kouri park, the ruins of Ancient Alos and the monastery of the Panagia Xenia at Orthris are other sites in the vicinity worth investigating. The seaside village of Amaliapolis (57 km) near Cape Almiros is a very popular holiday spot.

One of the largest villages in the Almiros area is Sourpi, surrounded by bountiful olive groves. Its taverns serve delicious «kokoretsi», a treat made of liver and lights, spit-roasted on glowing coals. As you proceed along the coast road, which cuts through the southern section of Magnesia past extraordinarily picturesque scenery, it is worth stopping at Pteleos (60 km), a historic village with more olive groves, and at its port, Pigadi, a quiet fishing hamlet with sparkling waters and an abundance of fresh fish; at Ahilio (67 km), an idyllic bay with a long beach, and an ideal sanctuary from the August heat; and Agios Dimitrios, a village on the Malliac gulf bordered by golden beaches.

Finally the village of Kanalia (26 km) surrounded by almond trees is well worth a visit. Every March there is an almond blossom festival. Here also there is a thriving bronze handicraft industry.

# what's COOKING?



## Tirokafteri (Spicy Cheese Dip)

This is a traditional spicy cheese dish, which can be served as a meze with ouzo or beer, or as a dip. It is quick and easy to make. Garnishing with chopped sweet red peppers (see photo) is optional, though normally it is not done. The red peppers do add a refreshing flavour to the dip, though.

We specify that you should use young, tender chili peppers - the reason for this is that if you don't, then you will have to grill the peppers until they colour and then remove the skins. With young, tender peppers, this is not necessary.

**INGREDIENTS**

- 3 young, tender green chili peppers (approx. 15-20cm long)
- 250g feta cheese
- 125g Greek anothiro cheese (ricotta if you can't get it)
- 2 teaspoonfuls lemon juice
- 100ml extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp sweet red peppers chopped for garnish (optional)

**METHOD**

- Wash the peppers, remove the stalk and the seeds.
- Put all the ingredients in a liquidizer and mix them well.
- Place it in a bowl and sprinkle with some olive oil and garnish with peppers if you so wish.



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