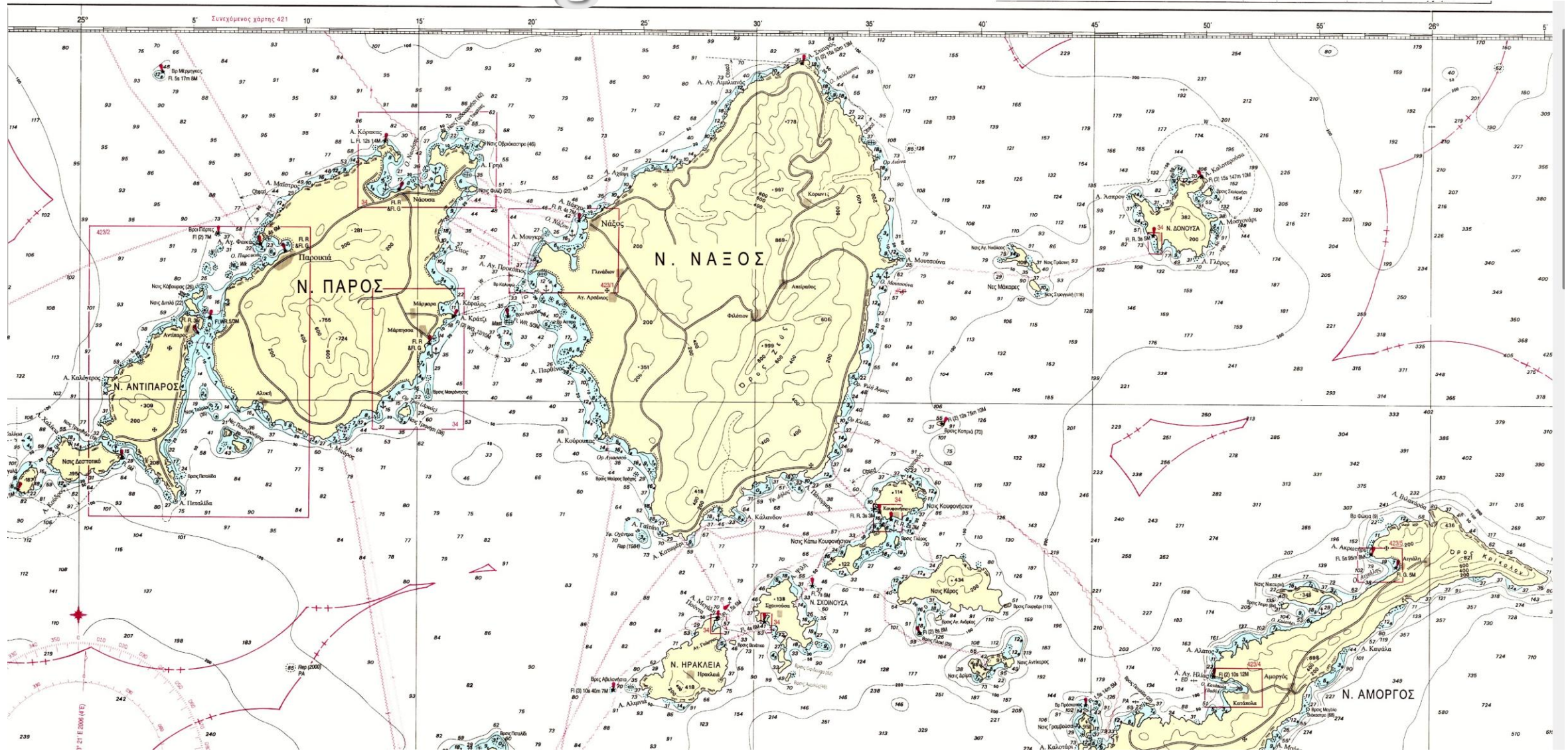


Sea Kayaking Naxos & the Lesser Cyclades

Aegean Paddlers

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Just by looking at any map of the Aegean Sea, any sea kayaker would immediately set his eyes on **Paros - Naxos & the Lesser Cyclades, "Paronaxia"** as it is traditionally called by Greek sailors.

3 major and 10 smaller islands clustered closely together, forming a miniature Archipelago in the very heart of the Aegean Sea.

Over 300 nautical miles of coastal paddling and island hopping with the longest open crossing not exceeding 4 nautical miles

A true paradise but make no mistake, only for the able and experienced sea kayaker with solid 3 star abilities. Central Aegean is a rough and windy sea, there will be quieter days and there will be days that even the most competent of us would dare not paddling out.

Rule of thumb : If you cannot handle 16 knot winds (4 Bft) and ever-changing waves, sea kayaking Paronaxia is probably not for you.

The Aegean Paddlers have planned, equipped and executed 25 multi day sea kayaking expeditions to Naxos and the Lesser Cyclades, starting with the first scouting trips back in 2009 and coming back at least once or twice each year.

We have experienced many different weather and sea conditions, have witnessed coastal shape shifts, touristic developments and have marked many pois and pophs (points of potential hazard) in an ever- changing environment.

We are now happy to offer this comprehensive guide to Sea kayaking around Naxos and the Lesser Cyclades, leaving out, for now, Paros Antiparos & Amorgos

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Naxos Port, Airport

There are daily several ferries reaching Naxos from **Piraeus** port.

Launching a kayak from Naxos port is possible without crossing the passenger ship lines as there is a ramp for going S and a tiny beach for going N.

No car necessary which is a BIG advantage as you can finish your trip on any island and take a ferry back to Piraeus or continue your island hopping elsewhere.

The airport is 3 km S of the Port and services domestic flights only. You can fly to Naxos via **Athens** airport.

The west Coast

Consisted mainly of long sandy & pebble beaches in front of bigger planes and the 1000-meter-high central mountain ridge sloping gently to the sea.

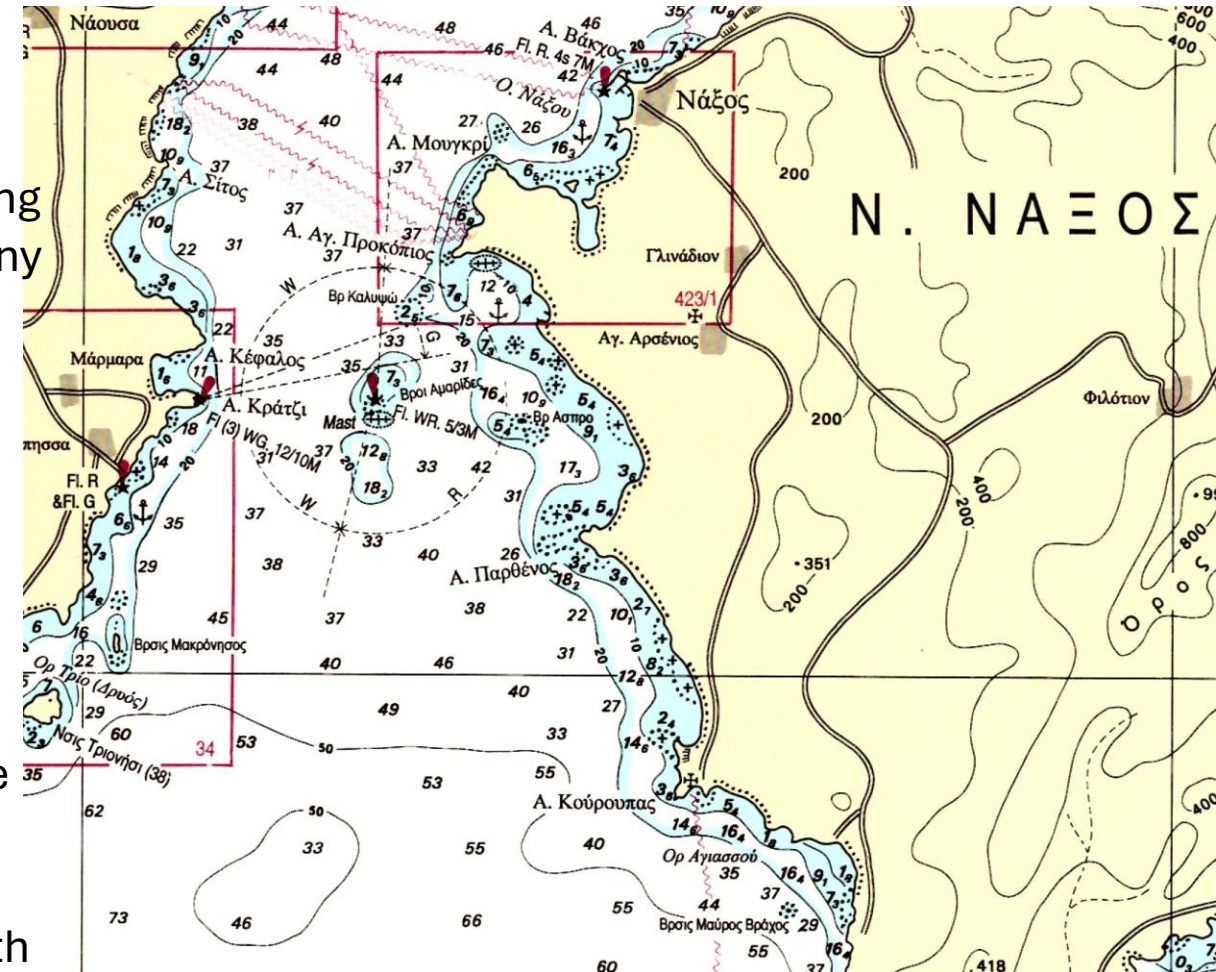
The prominent Northern winds here are perfect for downwind runs. Here a sea kayaker can go really fast, paddling N to S with the island's shape offering protection from bigger waves.

Over night camp is doable but needs discretion as this is the more touristically developed part of the island.

First POPH is **Stelida**, the headland N of Naxos port, many reefs and bulging waves there, exercise extreme caution. If you can paddle around it, you will have nothing to worry about all the way to the south cape.

Highlights

Beaches, Downwind runs, Turquoise coloured waters, Sunset



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Naxos N

This is where our base camp is located, 2 miles south of the N cape on the east coast on **Apollonas** village.

The most dramatic and impressive coastlines of the island are here with many rocky cliff shores and relatively limited but enough protected exit points for most weather and sea state scenarios.

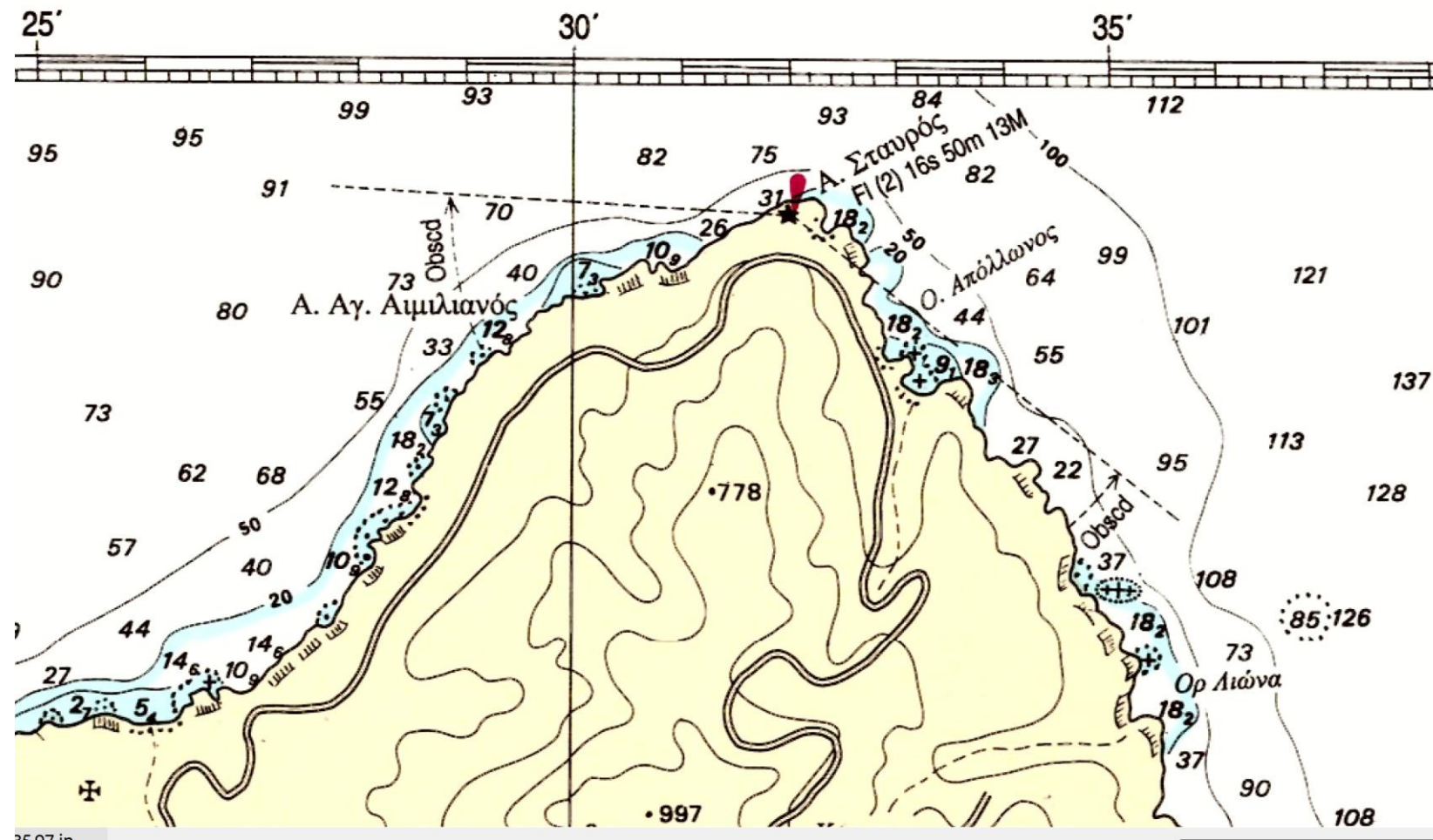
This part of the island is particularly lush and green in the planes between the rocky peaks with many pois inland and along the coastline and no especial pophs as it is rough all-over and mostly on the east coast.

Beach camp overnights are possible although beach terrain here is limited and rougher.

Highlights

- Rock and marble formations.
- All-natural environment with minimum or none human intervention.
- Secluded bays with limited or no land access
- Exciting sea conditions for experienced sea kayakers.

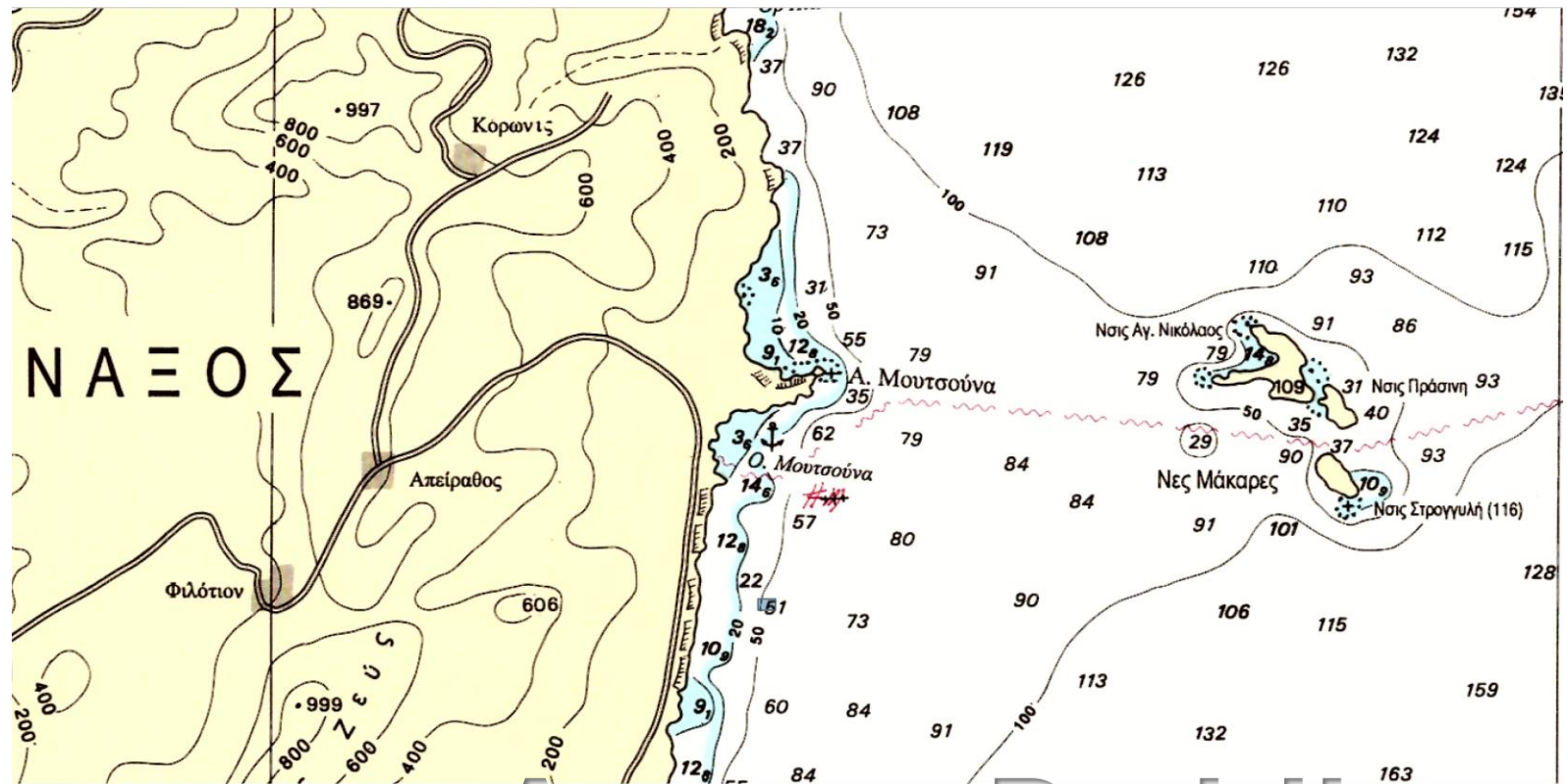
Apollonas and **Lionas** villages, **Kouros** statue.



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Naxos East Coast

Generally gentler than the N, with beaches getting wider and human presence more noticeable. The village behind **Moutsouna** peninsula is a safe heaven from N winds and the long but rough and rocky beach of **Azalas** from S. Paddling past Moutsouna headland is the one most important **poph** of this coastline with reefs, currents, braking waves and clapotis all happening at once. Here again, like in **Stelida** on the West coast, once you're passed Moutsouna no worries till the south Cape of **Kalados**.



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Moutsouna is also the closest crossing point to **Makares** islets to the East, still one of the longest and most difficult in this Archipelago and one that's only destined to be followed by another, equally if not even more difficult crossing to **Schinoussa** island.

Overnight camp on Makares, whenever possible is a MUST that will be cheered accordingly by a night bird orchestra.

Highlights

Moutsouna, Azalas, Makares

Naxos South Coast

These coastlines offer many different landscapes and sea conditions varying greatly from E to W. The south tip of the island is rocky and barren with no exit points for 6 nautical miles from **Agiassos**, the last beach to the W and **Kalados**, the port at the opposite side looking to the south.

Sea conditions here are milder and one can take advantage of the twists in the wind and currents, following them along the lacy coastlines.

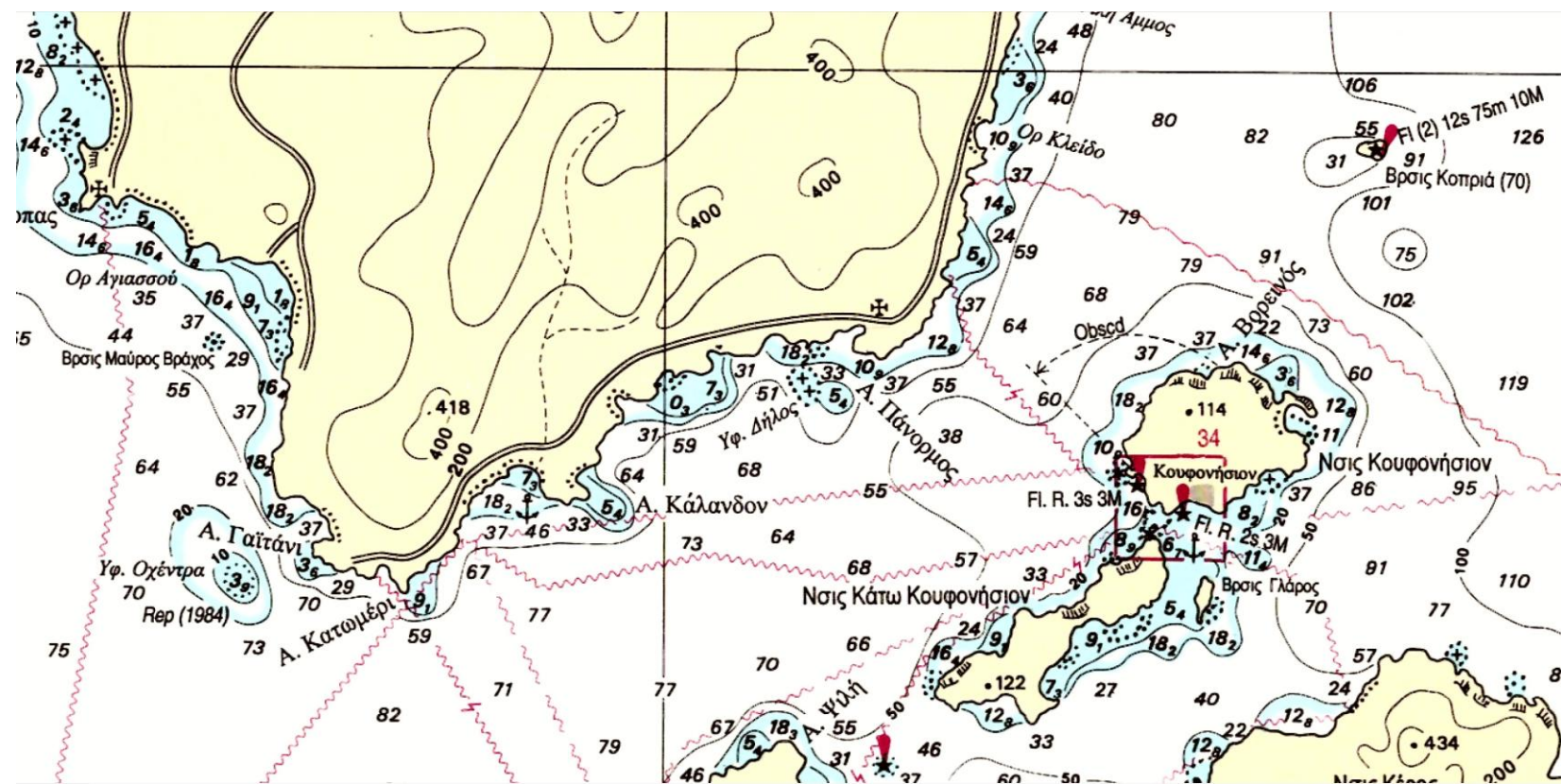
No amenities available along this part of the coastline for the bigger part of the year, especially on the E with Agiassos being your best choice.

Long and sandy Agiassos is a good surfing spot with S winds

Naxos SE coast is also the crossing point to the lesser Cyclades, either from Kalados to **Iraklia** or from **Panermos** to **upper Koufonissi**.

Both crossings are around 3 n.m. long and can be very challenging even with moderate N winds. The first is affected by 2 streams creating turbulence and breaking waves while the latter is like a bottle neck that funnels the waves through creating up to 2-meter, fast flowing wave crests in 4 Bft.

Highlights : Agiassos, Kalados caves, South cape, Panermos bay, Sandy beaches protected from the N



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The Lesser Cyclades

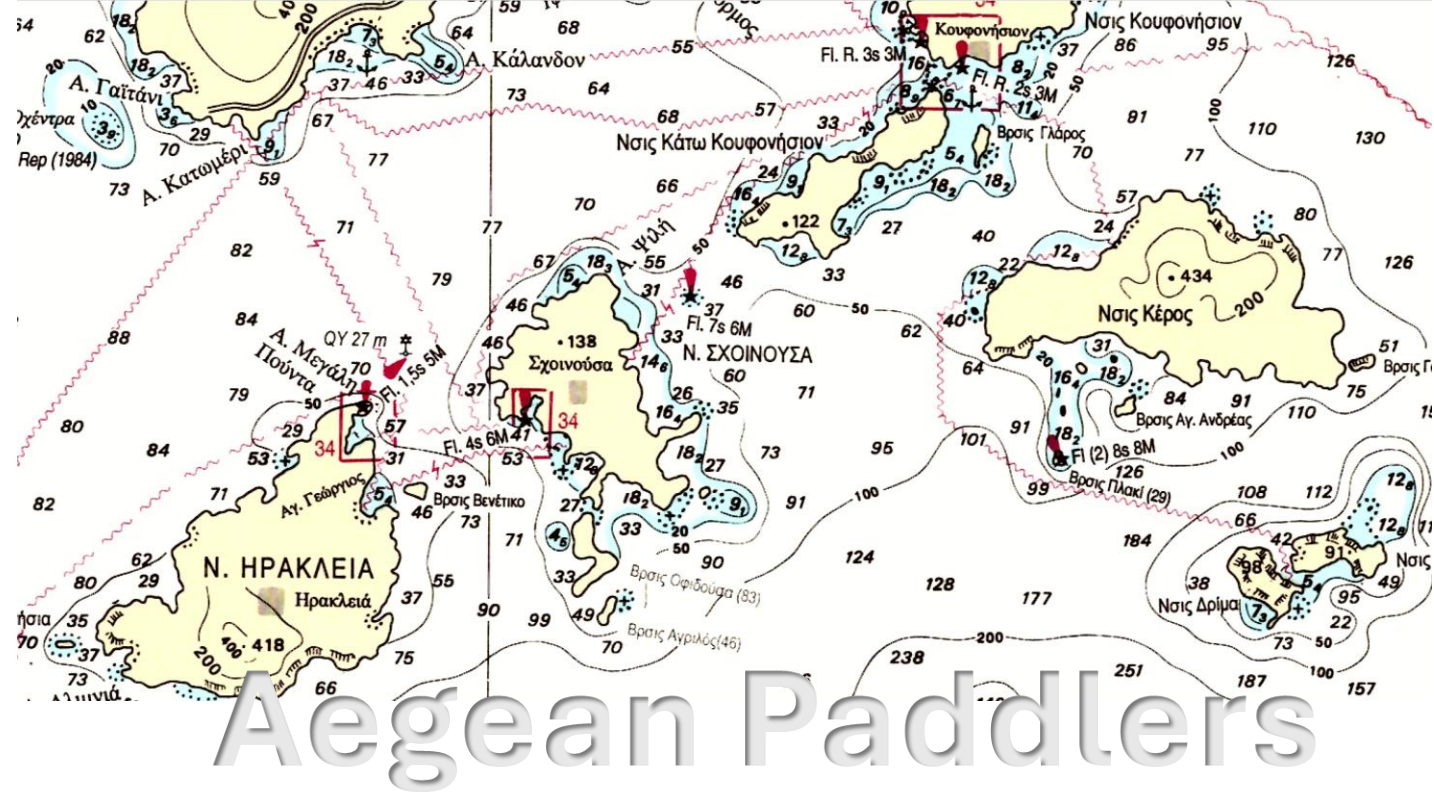
These are from S to N Iraklia, Schinoussa, lower and upper Koufonissia, Donoussa, Keros and Amorgos to the east along with the smaller islets like Glaronissia, Antikeria and Makares. I have dedicated a page to Donoussa and Amorgos will come up shortly.

You don't have to paddle to the lesser Cyclades, there's also the passenger ferry and the local ferry that can take you and your gear to and from each of these islands, except Keros daily.

Once you are there, you will find the sea conditions milder than those at the N part of Naxos.

Keros is the roughest of the 5, has very few exit points, an ongoing archaeological project with a relevant restricted area and is very impressive, especially around its eastern coastlines. Schinoussa and lower (S) Koufonissi are the most protected while NW Iraklia and N upper Koufonissi are the most exposed in the prevailing N winds. Beach overnight camp here, again possible but with discretion. Best choices on lower Koufonissi and Iraklia S. Biggest poph is the ferry traffic, you need to be really careful and always consult marine traffic as it is difficult not to course a ferry line while island hopping the lesser Cyclades, another one is the reefs and rocky shores of N upper Koufonissi, any incident here could lead to injurie and/or damage and a third are the katabatic winds that funnel through the hills on S Iraklia.

Highlights By the sea villages, Turquoise waters, Caves and Arches, Secluded beaches, Natural environment, Sunrise/ Sunset, downwind runs, variety of sea and wind conditions, rock formations and more. One of the richest in natural futures coastlines in Greece.

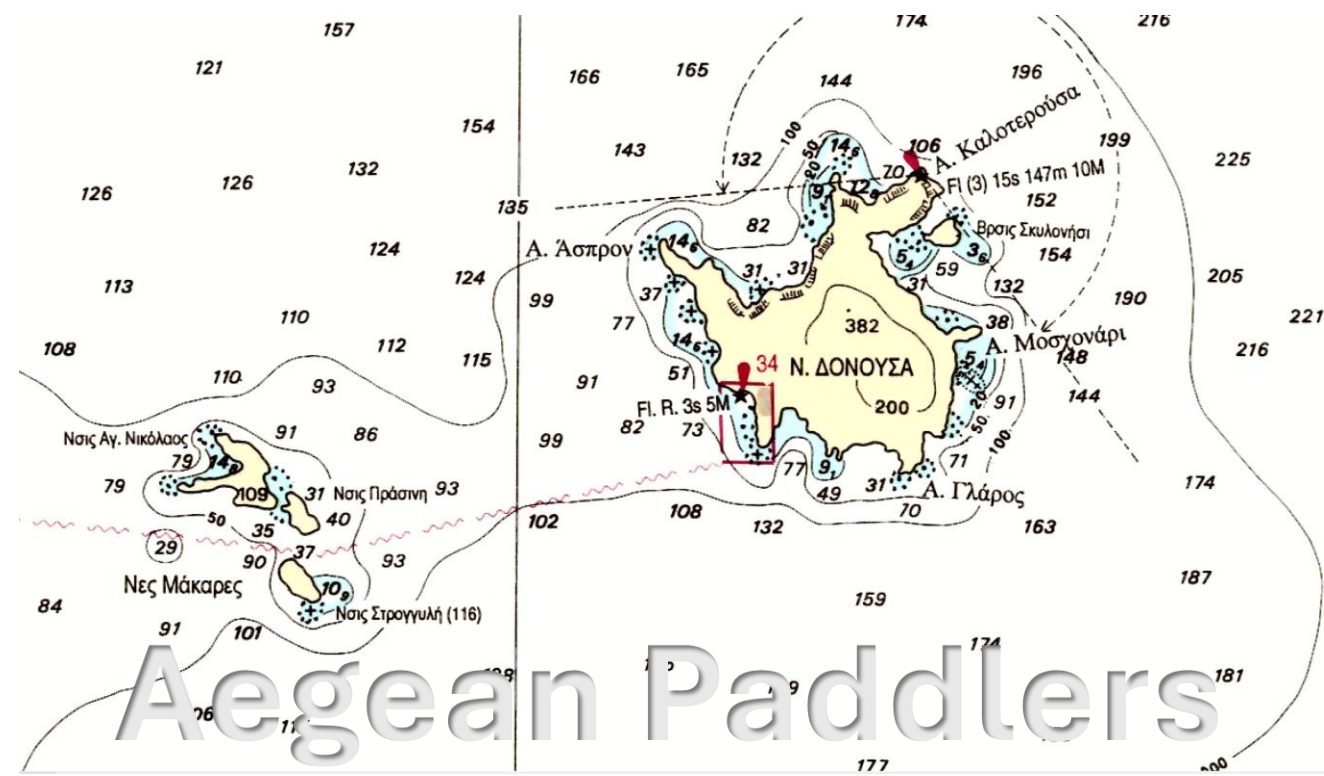


Donoussa & Makares.

People in Donoussa have a saying, it goes like “If you lost the wind, come to Donoussa to find it”, Makares is uninhabited.

These 2 islands, crowning the Archipelago to the North are like Holy Grail of Sea Kayaking in the Lesser Cyclades. Hard to reach and exposed from all over, it takes either solid 4 star abilities or sheer luck to paddle to, around and from Donoussa and Makares.

There are of course ferries that can make our lives much easier and safer.



However there will be beauty lost because the crossing to and from Donoussa are exhilarating to say the least but only to those that can handle it. Donoussa has several sandy beaches on it's S coast and almost no exit points to the very impressive N coast that is practically a **poph** end to end. By the sea there's only the very small main village and a tiny establishment at **Kalotaritissa** bay in the NE. Makares form one of the most beautiful and pristine bays in the whole Aegean sea. We have spotted the super rare and endangered monque seals more than once here.

Highlights, Exciting sea kayaking routes, all natural environment, beaches good for overnight camp, caves, wildlife,



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We hope you found this short presentation
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