The Lakonian Mani

Journeying south down Mani's west coast from Areopoli, you encounter a barren mountain landscape broken only by semideserted settlements with mighty towers.

**Start** Areopoli
**Distance** 112km
**Duration** Six to eight hours

1 From **Pyrgos Dirou**, packed with ceramics shops, you can detour to the **Diros Caves**.

2 **The picturesque villages of Drialos, Vamvaka, Brika and Mina** have fine examples of Maniot stonework.

3 **Kita** has the lion's share of the west coast's war towers and fortified houses.

4 **The views from Mountainistika** running along the high ridge top are spectacular.

5 **Porto Kagio**, set on a perfect horseshoe bay, is popular with the international yachting set.

6 **Perched some 400m above sea level, Lagia** was once southeastern Mani's chief town.

7 At **Nymfio** a turn-off leads to gorgeous, sheltered **Alipa Beach**, backed by typical tower houses.

**Take a Break...**
**Restaurant Akotainaritis** (Tel 27330 54205; www.akotainaritis.gr; mains €7-12; 7am-midnight) in Gerolimenas serves home-cooked Greek standards, including local goat dishes.