



Accessible Guide: Historic Heart to Urban Soul of Athens

From ancient citadel to buzzy modern metropolis—experience the evolution of Athens on this landmark-packed exploration.

This itinerary traverses the historic centre of Athens, setting out from the capital's most emblematic central square: Syntagma Square.

With its key location facing Parliament, Syntagma (Greek for “constitution”) is the beating heart of Athens. Many landmark events, both political and cultural, take place here throughout the year: from the patriotic national parade in March to celebrate Greek Independence, to **Athens Pride in June**, and the annual lighting of the city's Christmas tree in December. Fringed with luxury hotels and bustling pavement cafes, Syntagma Square is also your gateway to the most famous shopping street of Athens, Ermou. Ermou dissects the historic centre, and will take you all the way to the hub of Athenian urban culture, **Technopolis**.

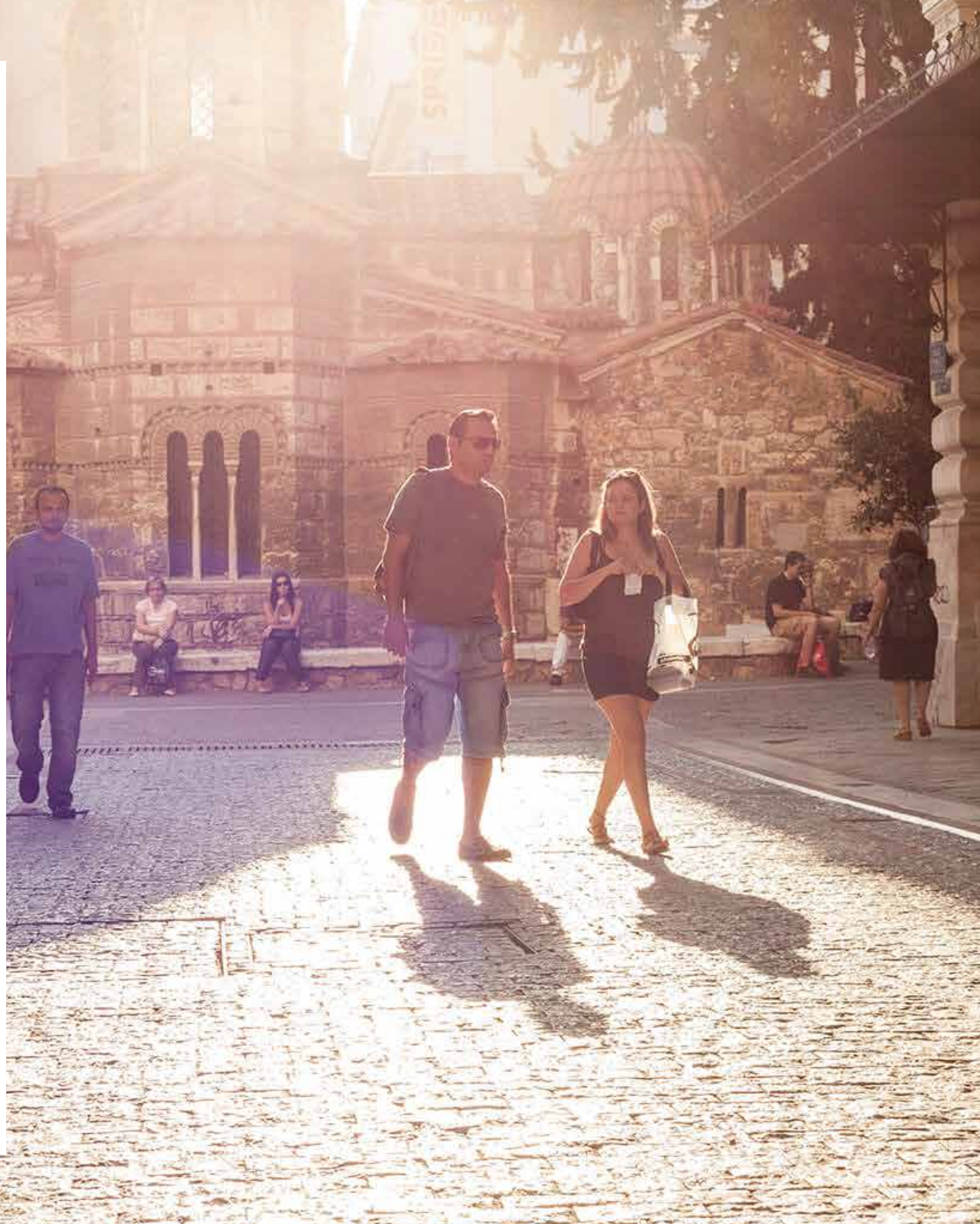
Ermou Street is mostly pedestrianized with flat and easy to navigate paving. The first stretch is packed with global chains and cafeterias. On Ermou, you'll find the **quaint little church of Kapnikarea**, one of the oldest in Athens (it was built around 1052). You're also close to pretty Agia Irini Square, with its flower market and hip hangouts. Ermou Street takes you on to **Monastiraki**, the centre's buzziest square, which teems day and night. From this point, **the Acropolis** comes into glorious view, and you're positioned near a plethora of world-famous archaeological sites (such as **the Ancient Agora** and the archaeological site of Keramikos—**the cemetery of ancient Athens**).

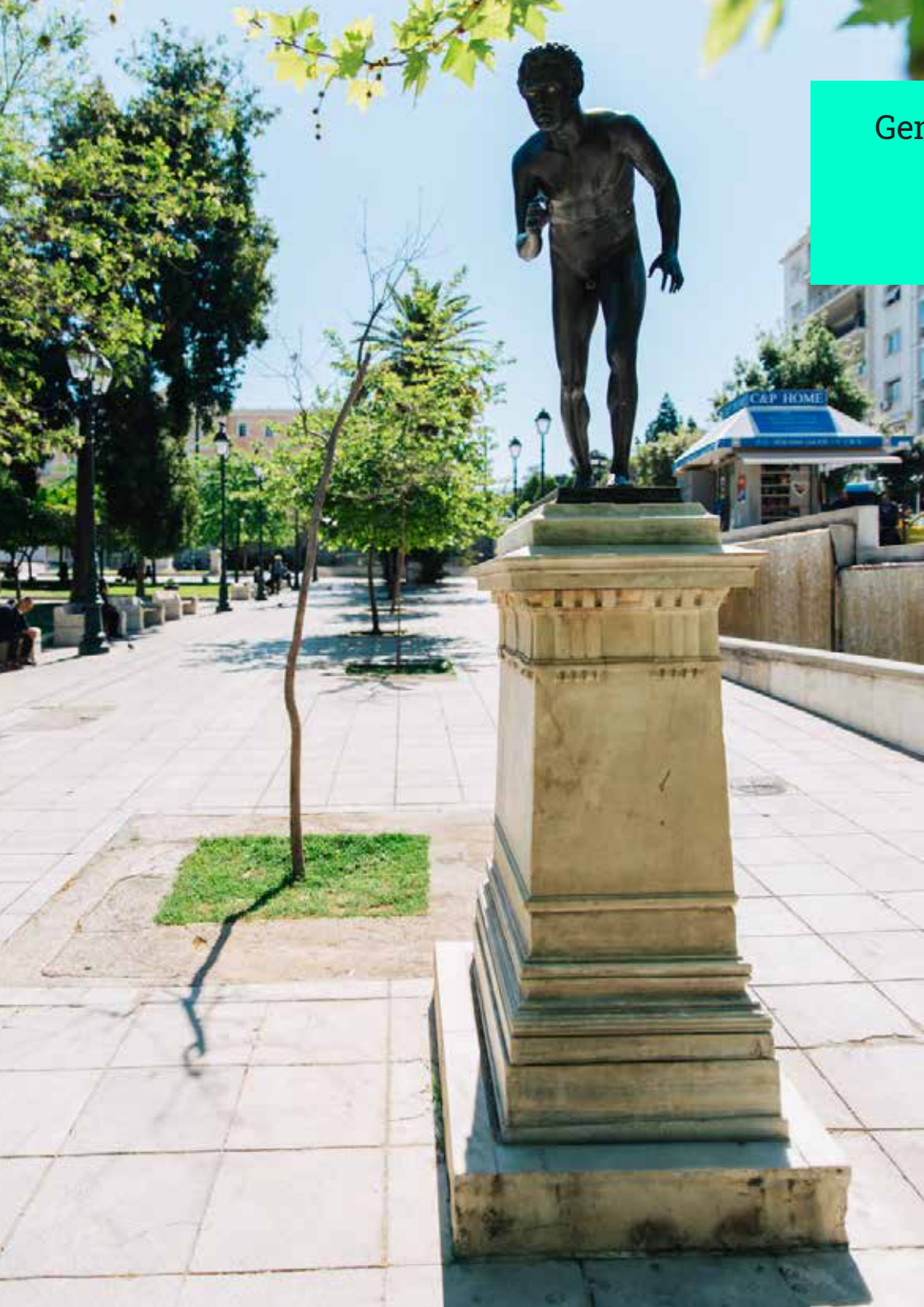
Street stalls, antique shops, tavernas and ethnic food vendors will accompany you until **Thissio**, where we come across Apostolou Pavlou Street, a lovely walkway that leads to the Acropolis. If we continue on Ermou Street, though, we shall reach the thriving urban neighbourhood of **Gazi**. Ermou changes character, becoming a more mellow and pedestrian-friendly route. We will encounter the **Holocaust Memorial**, as well as the archaeological site of Keramikos. At Ermou's end, the Old Depot hosts some of summer's most fun-filled festivals. We now find ourselves on Peiraio Street, one of the busiest streets of Athens, linking the city with **Piraeus and the port**.

By crossing this street, we will arrive in Gazi, an **LGBTQI+** friendly area pulsing with nightlife, clubs, bars, and many eclectic eating options. Gazi is also home to the **Technopolis of Athens**, the city's former gasworks and these days, a nucleus of contemporary culture. Technopolis is an accessible place to visit, relax and enjoy live concerts, museums and annual festivals (such as the free Technopolis Jazz Festival in May). Our itinerary concludes at Keramikos Square and the Keramikos metro station of Line 3 (the blue line).

Explore the Monastiraki flea market.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis





General Accessibility

- The itinerary is slightly downhill in a total distance of 2,3 km.
- It consists of pedestrian areas for the most part. It crosses with streets of light traffic but also of high traffic.
- It is moderately illuminated at night, with occasional dark spots.
- The ground is often slippery due to frequent use.
- Do not count entirely on the tactile pavings, they are just helping with the orientation. Often, they are crowded or they pass under high obstacles.
- The tactile pavings do not have colour contrast.
- From Monastiraki until Thissio, the itinerary is deemed “tricky” and it has to be carried out with caution.
- At each point of interest, the accessibility is indicated according to the information available on their website (we have not verified this personally).
- The itinerary starts from the Syntagma metro station (line 3, “Airport - Nikaia” and line 2, “Anthoupoli-Elliniko”). Along the road, we will meet the Monastiraki station that belongs to both line 3 and line 1, as well as the Thissio station (line 1). The itinerary ends up at the Keramikos station of line 3. All of the above stations provide an accessible toilet and elevators with voice output. The stations of Monastiraki, Thissio and Keramikos provide access to their interior via tactile pavings.



Points of Interests

Syntagma Metro Station

Lines 2 & 3

At Syntagma metro station, there is only one elevator to exit at the level of the street. We get out of the elevator at Syntagma Square.

Syntagma Square

As soon as we exit the elevator, we will locate the tactile paving and we can follow it across the whole square. The tactile paving leads us to Ermou Street.

At the first junction on the tactile paving, the choice towards the right will lead us to the entrance-exit stairs of Syntagma metro station. We choose to follow the tactile paving towards the left to continue the itinerary.

[In case we get out of the exit stairs of the Syntagma station, then we simply get the tactile paving—located at the far left point of the stair as we ascend—and we follow it straight ahead, crossing the Syntagma Square in the direction of Ermou Street.]

At the next junction of the tactile paving, with options left and right, we turn right. Next junction with options left and straight, we continue straight ahead. Next junction with options straight and left, we turn left and we follow the tactile paving until the pedestrian crossing for Ermou Street.

The canal at the Stavros Niarchos Cultural Centre.

Photo: Amalia Kovaïou

Tourist Info Point

Before the pedestrian crossing, to our right there is a kiosk that provides information and maps for tourists.

- There is no content in Braille or large print.
- There are no tactile maps.
- There is an assistant who can inform us about the sites we want to visit.

Just before we reach the pedestrian crossing, the last junction of the tactile paving intervenes, with options right, left and straight. We continue straight.

To reach Ermou Street, we will vertically cross Filellinon Street from the pedestrian crossing to which the tactile paving leads us.

Grab some delicious Thai food at Tuk Tuk.

Photo: Amalia Kovaïou





Pedestrian crossing

- Approaching the crossing, on our right hand we will detect and hear the traffic light with the auditory signal.
- This traffic light features additional colour contrast for people with partial loss of vision.
- It also features embossed marking at the top of the auditory signal device, with an arrow that indicates the direction of the course you are on.
- At the bottom of the auditory signal device, there is a circular button for a voice confirmation regarding our current location and the direction towards which we are about to cross the road.
- The auditory signal device is on the pole of the traffic light, approximately one metre above the ground.
- For as long as we hear the slow sound of the traffic light, we are not allowed to cross the road. As soon as the sound becomes fast, this means a green light for the pedestrians and we can safely cross.

Passing to the opposite side, at the same spot and height respectively, we will locate another traffic light with an auditory signal. Using the exact same method of confirmation, it will announce the opposite course, meaning that we are now at the junction of Ermou and Filellinon Streets, having left Syntagma square behind us.

Sample a glass or two of Greek wine at Alexandrino.

Photo: Orestis Seferoglou

Ermou Pedestrian Area

Pedestrianised Ermou Street is the crown jewel of Athens' retail activity; lined with global brands, local emporia and some great places to eat.

We leave the traffic light to our right and we continue straight, until we find the interior part of the pavement we are on. As soon as we locate it we turn left, letting go of the interior wall to our right. This interior side of the pavement will be used to guide ourselves at this point of the itinerary.

The first perpendicular street we are going to meet in front of us is Nikis, a street of light traffic. At this corner, Ermou Street and Nikis Street, there is a kiosk to our left. We cross Nikis Street vertically and we continue straight along the Ermou pedestrian area.

Up until the next perpendicular street (Voulis Street) we will be cautious, since there are two arcades to our right. As we use the interior part of the pavement to guide ourselves, we must be careful not to accidentally enter them. We then meet Voulis Street, which is a street of light traffic, and we cross it vertically, continuing straight on the Ermou pedestrian area. We hold the wall to our right once again.

Take a leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis



Until the next perpendicular street, the Diomeias pedestrian street, there is a nook and an arcade to our right, which we will have to simply bypass continuing straight ahead. We cross Diomeias Street and we continue straight, remaining on the Ermou pedestrian area.

There is another nook to our right and then we reach the Kornarou pedestrian area. We cross it vertically continuing straight on the Ermou pedestrianised area, until the next perpendicular street, the Fokionos pedestrian street.

Crossing the Fokionos pedestrian street, we continue straight along Ermou, always following the interior right side of it. There is an arcade on 36 Ermou Street, whose entrance we bypass.

We cross vertically the next pedestrian street, Evangelistrias, and we continue straight along Ermou Street until Kapnikarea Square. This square is depicted as circular on the map. The Church of Panagia Kapnikarea is located at its middle, lower than the level of the pedestrian area.

Take a leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis



Church of Panagia Kapnikarea

Panagia Kapnikarea is one of the oldest Greek Orthodox churches in town (thought to date from 1052) and survived being firebombed by the Ottoman Empire in 1689. Its pole position in the middle of the city's busiest commercial street makes it a popular meet-up spot for locals and visitors.

The buildings framing the square practically give it a square shape. While still having the buildings to our right, we will cross the square. At first, we cross the Kalamiotou pedestrian street vertically and at the next corner—having walked half of the square—we get back on Ermou and we turn right to continue on the pedestrian area.

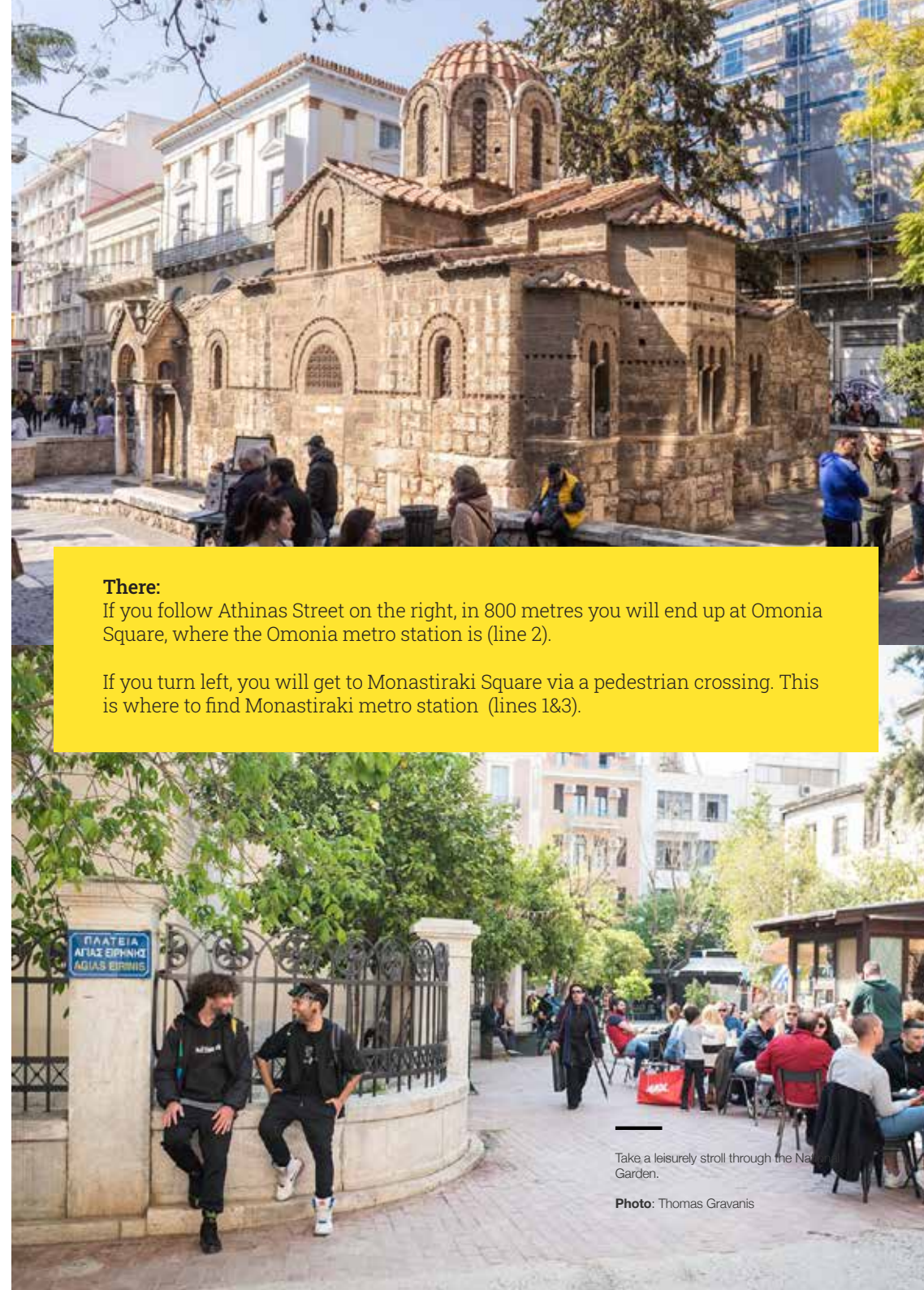
Continuing on the Ermou pedestrianised section, we will skip a nook to our right. At the next corner, we will meet the Aioulou pedestrian area which we vertically cross. Aioulou Street is a pedestrian street on the right, full of spots for coffee, desserts, food and drinks, and it leads to the vivid square of Agia Irini.

Agia Irini Square

Framing graceful Agia Irini church, Agia Irini Square is one of Athens' most LGBTQI+ friendly hotspots and a fashionable haunt for pavement dining, drinking cocktails and people-watching.

At the exact point where we vertically cross Aioulou Street, Ermou turns from a pedestrian area into a medium traffic street. That is why we stay on the right pavement of Ermou Street.

The traffic of the vehicles on Ermou Street is parallel to our course and it has the same direction. As we keep walking, we find Athinas Street vertically in front of us. It is a main two-way street with a wide pavement, full of wonderful exotic scents, thanks to the many spice shops lining the whole street.



There:

If you follow Athinas Street on the right, in 800 metres you will end up at Omonia Square, where the Omonia metro station is (line 2).

If you turn left, you will get to Monastiraki Square via a pedestrian crossing. This is where to find Monastiraki metro station (lines 1&3).

Take a leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis

Monastiraki Square

One of the liveliest squares in Athens, historic Monastiraki Square rarely sleeps. Day or night, people flock to its flea markets, fruit stalls, souvlaki joints and rooftop cocktail bars (to drink in giddy Acropolis views). All of Athenian history is at your feet—from Classical Athens and Roman; to Ottoman and modern day.

We continue straight, locate the pedestrian crossing and cross Athinas Street with caution, because there is no auditory signal on the spot for people with visual impairment. Then, we continue on Ermou Street.

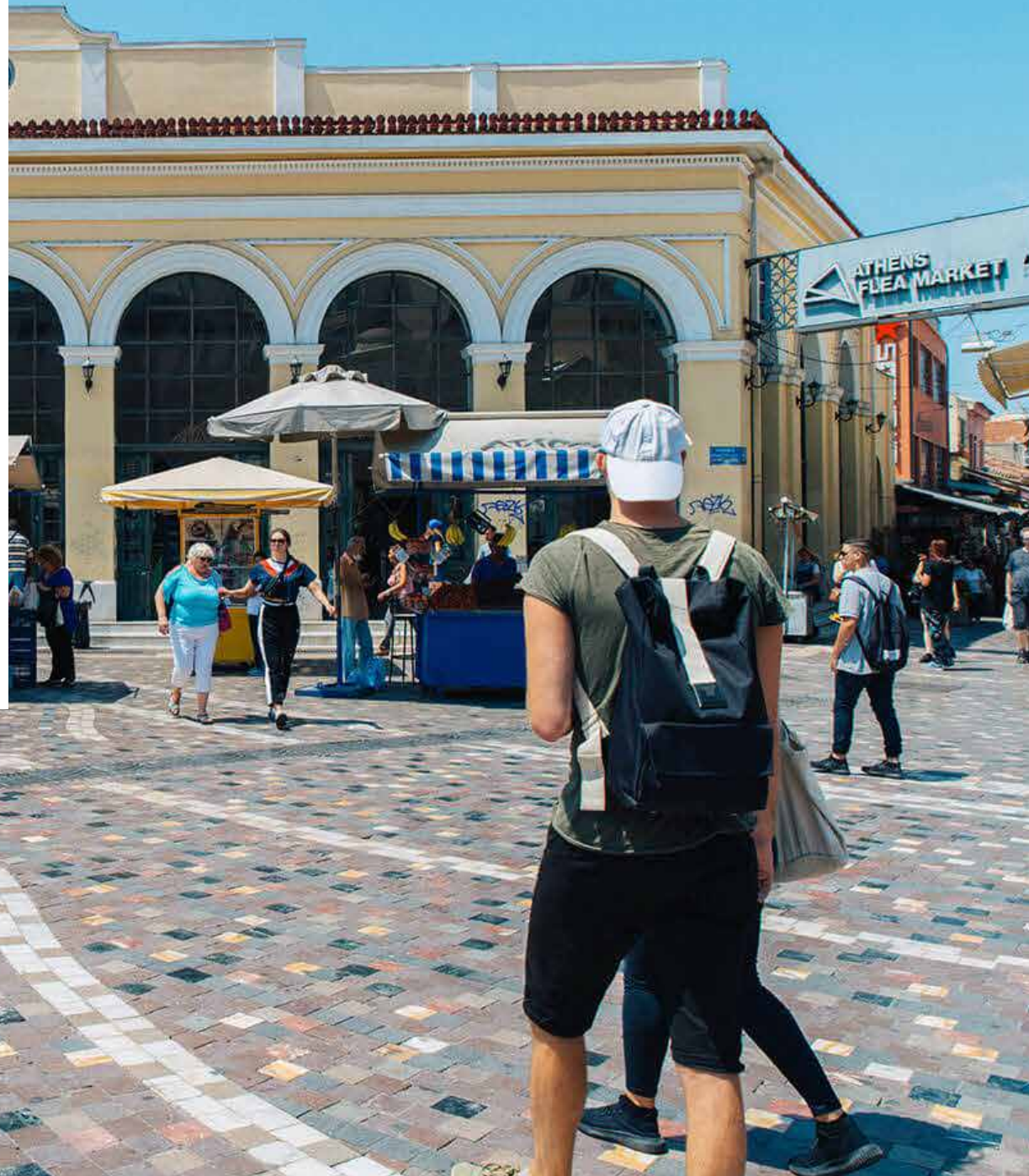
From where we are, the sacred rock of the Acropolis begins to appear on our left.

On our left hand, Ermou has now become a two-way street. Remaining on the right pavement of Ermou, we locate the tactile paving. From this point on, our itinerary will throw quite a few challenges at us, regarding the accessibility of the pavements.

Going straight ahead, remaining on Ermou Street, we meet Miaouli Street in front of us, which we vertically cross. Continuing on Ermou Street, the tactile paving is now on the exterior side of the right pavement that we are on. We meet the Agias Theklas pedestrian street in front of us, which we vertically cross. We continue straight and we meet the Pittaki pedestrian street in front of us, which we vertically cross.

Take a leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis



Psirri

With lampshades strung between buildings, Pittaki Street in Psirri is an Instagram favourite and the starting point for this exciting neighbourhood of leather merchants, street art and bohemian café bars.

We continue on Ermou Street and vertically cross Artemidos Street. Now, the tactile paving continues in the middle of the right pavement that we are on.

Walking straight, we vertically cross Karaiskaki Street. As soon as we cross it, we do not get on the right pavement of Ermou Street, but instead we walk parallel to it and exactly beside it. There is a protected lane right there on the street and a demarcation fence on our left that separates it from the street.

At the next corner we vertically cross Arionos Street and we get on the right pavement of Ermou Street, locating the tactile paving.

Staying on this path, we find Avliton Street which we vertically cross.

We keep walking, vertically crossing the single street created by the end of the streets Navarchou Apostoli and Leokoriou, while staying on Ermou Street. Here, the right pavement of Ermou has tapered and we suggest slower steps and attention to high obstacles, e.g. street signs.

At the next corner, Ermou Street and Asomaton Street, we will turn left and cross Ermou Street to reach its left pavement. At this point, there is a pedestrian crossing. Afterwards, while remaining on the left side of Ermou Street, we will vertically cross Asomaton Street which is directly in front of us.

Getting on the pavement, we locate the tactile paving and turn left. This means that we now have the street on our left. We follow the tactile paving as it goes, no matter what junctions it may have.



Take a leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis

Thissio Metro Station

We now have the Thissio metro station (line 1) on our left. This is where the major pedestrian zone of Apostolou Pavlou begins, which leads to the Acropolis (check the related itinerary here).

We proceed on the tactile pavement of Ermou Street, which is now a pedestrian area again. At the junction of the tactile pavement, with options left and right, we turn left and stay on Ermou Street, heading towards Piraeus Street and Gazi.

The Holocaust Memorial in Athens

A few metres after that, on our right, is the city's Holocaust Memorial: a composition of marble sculpted stones on the ground, surrounded by trees.

Athens' memorial to the victims of the Holocaust takes the shape of a broken Star of David, hewn from Egyptian marble. The creation of Greek-American sculptor Deanna Maganias, it points to the villages and cities across Greece where hundreds of thousands of Jews were gathered and deported under Nazi German occupation.

Continuing on the tactile paving of Ermou Street, a few metres afterwards, on our right, lies the fenced archaeological site of Keramikos. At some point, the tactile paving we have followed so far will branch to the right and the left. We continue straight. Then, the tactile paving splits into a left, a right and a straight junction. Following the tactile paving to the right, we will reach the entrance of the archaeological site of Keramikos.



Take a leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis

Archaeological Site of Keramikos

With its monumental tombstones and astonishing statues, the ancient necropolis of Keramikos is an extraordinary (and surprisingly below-radar) sight. There's also a small museum housing ancient jugs, perfume bottles and plates excavated from the 4th to 5th century BC graves.

Accessibility of the site according to the website.

- Disabled people upon presentation of their ID card or passport and Disability Certificate are admitted free of charge. In case of 67% disability or more, one escort is also entitled to free entrance.
- This site is included in the combined 5-day ticket of Acropolis & Slopes, Ancient Agora, Roman Agora, Hadrian's Library, Olympieion, Keramikos, Aristotle's School with a cost of €30.
- A WC for disabled people is provided.
- At the site information desk, at the entrance, tactile site plans and brochures in Braille in Greek and English are available for visually impaired visitors.
- Audio presentation of Keramikos archaeological site.



We keep straight on the tactile paving of Ermou Street, having the archaeological site of Keramikos on our right, without paying attention to the junctions to the left of the tactile paving that we will meet along the road. Just before we meet Piraeus Street vertically in front of us, we have the venue of the Old Depot on our right.

Take a leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis

The Old Depot

This retired bus depot is now a vibrant stage for a range of cool cultural events—from food and dance festivals to live gigs and temporary exhibitions.

At the end of the tactile paving which is now simply a pavement, we turn right and we follow the right interior side of the pavement. Further down, we locate steps on our right, to which we walk in parallel. As soon as the steps end, there is a pedestrian crossing which we will use to cross Piraeus Street.

Piraeus Street is a main road with a median strip in the middle. Crossing—very carefully—both ways of the street, we get onto the pavement, locate the wall on its interior side and turn left, having the wall on our right and the street on our left. The wall on our right is the fencing of Technopolis. We now walk on the pavement of Piraeus Street, heading in the direction from Omonia to Piraeus.

We follow the fencing of Technopolis for some metres, just the way it goes, still having it on our right hand. This course is on a narrow pavement and we must pay attention to the plants that poke out of the fencing.



Take a leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis

Technopolis

A former gas factory that powered Athens for over a century, Technopolis is now one of the city's most jumping cultural venues—as well as a museum. From free live jazz to street markets, cafe society and international art exhibitions, there's always something brewing at Technopolis.

Accessibility of the site:

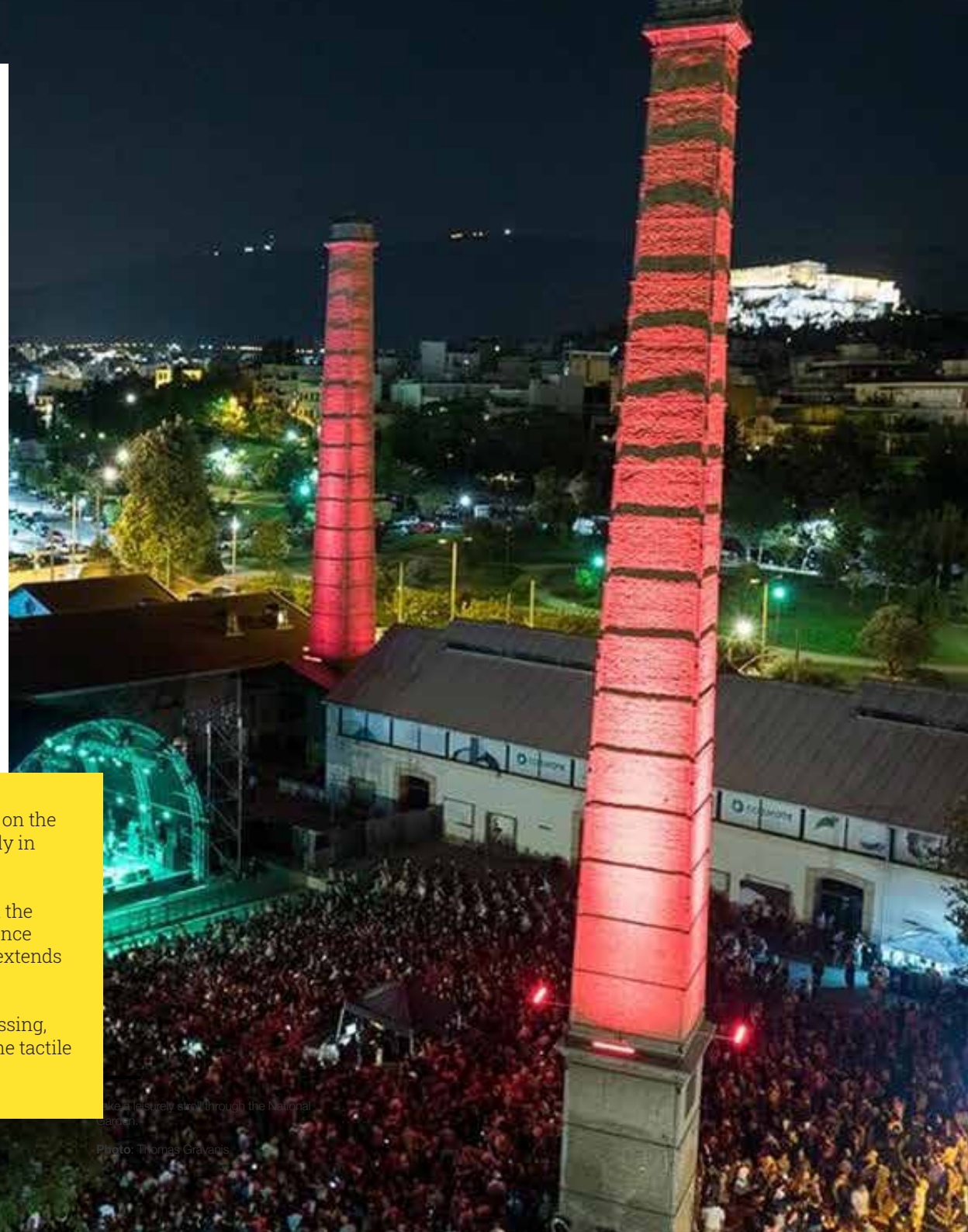
- Flat space with stone paving.
- Accessible WC open to the public.

If we do not enter Technopolis from the entrance/exit, while being on Persefonis Street, we locate an interior side searching for the pavement. We now have Persefonis Street on our left and on its right pavement, we can find and follow the tactile paving. On our right side, Technopolis keeps extending and we walk in parallel with its fencing. We find and follow the tactile paving just as it goes. At some point, we will vertically cross a parking entrance for Technopolis, which interrupts the tactile paving for a few steps.

When we pass this entrance, we reach again for the tactile paving on the pavement and as we go straight, we locate Iakchou Street, vertically in front of us.

We vertically cross Iakchou Street and continue straight ahead, on the right pavement of Persefonis Street, finding the tactile pavement once again. The central square of Keramikos, called Persefonis Square, extends on our right.

At some point, the tactile paving will branch onto a pedestrian crossing, creating a right and a straight junction. We turn right and follow the tactile paving, being now in the square.



We leisurely stroll through the National Garden.

Photo: Thomas Gravanis

Keramikos Metro Station

Line 3

In a few metres, the tactile paving changes texture on the ground and it branches, creating a left and a straight junction. We follow it to the left and it leads us to the exit escalators of the Keramikos metro station (line 3).

Staying straight on the tactile paving, we will soon find again a new junction towards the left, which leads us to the entrance escalators of the station. Between the entrance and the exit escalators, there are also fixed stairs.

We keep walking straight along the tactile paving and we will soon meet another junction that goes to the left or continues straight. We take the left turn and that way we reach the elevator of the Keramikos metro station.

Gazi

Head to Gazi to taste Athens' post-industrial urban culture and some of the city's best nights out. Gritty Gazi is known for its LGBTQI+ friendly scene (although most venues have no accessibility standards), hip bars, edgy galleries and outdoor dining, especially on and around the Keramikos metro and main square.



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Photo: Thomas Gravanis