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HELLENIC ORGANIZATION OF  
CULTURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

**Greece 2.0**  
NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN



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**Texts**

Thanasis Patsavos, Despina Pavlaki

**Text editing and proofreading**

Thanasis Patsavos

**Archaeological consulting**

Nikoletta Divari-Valakou – Honorary Director of Antiquities of the Ministry of Culture,  
President of O.D.A.P.

**Translations**

Anastasia Leriou (English)

USCS PC (French)

Efthymia Mourgela (German)

Matilda Palla (Spanish)

**Creative Management**

Christos Kentrotis

**Regions' logos design**

Vasilis Andreadis

**Photographs**

Ministry of Culture & O.D.A.P.

We are thankful to the Regional and Special Regional Departments of the Ministry of Culture for providing the photographs.

**Printing**

Dimitriou Kountourini Bros GP

**Work Group**

Angeliki Maragkaki – Head of the Cultural Production, Sales & Promotion Department  
and the Autonomous Department of Monitoring and Development of Resources

Pantelis Karamanis – External Advisor for Marketing & Communication of O.D.A.P.

Dimitra Katsipanou – External Associate of O.D.A.P. for Recovery Fund projects

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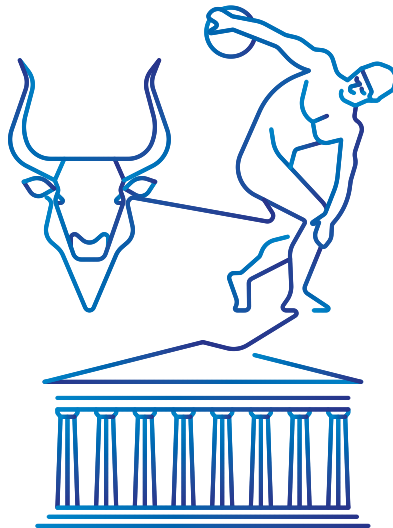
**HELLENIC REPUBLIC**  
Ministry of Culture



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CULTURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT



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The Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development, in the context of the three-part Experience. Culture. Everywhere. theme, which encapsulates the content of this year's Philoxenia 2024 event on Cultural Tourism, has developed, edited and published the present Album for tourism professionals, in five languages, in print and digital format.

It contains short, comprehensive descriptions of more than 300 archaeological sites, museums and monuments in Greece; of course, these descriptions do not aim at serving as detailed scholarly guides to the sights, but rather highlighting their main characteristics in a vivid manner. In addition, information is provided on other points of interest in each region, with emphasis on the elements of intangible cultural heritage, both traditional and contemporary. All this is presented in a neatly designed and attractive volume.

Apart from the popular destinations in our country that boast large numbers of visitors each year, many monuments and museums or collections presented here are rather unknown to the wide public. However, although little known, they are significant for the history and physiognomy of their regions, having evolved over time from prehistory to modern times in every corner of Greece.

I thank all those involved in the project and hope that this edition will achieve its goal, in line with the objectives of O.D.A.P. for the promotion and enhancement of our country's unique cultural heritage, by increasing, among others, its appeal and ensuring optimal service to the visitors.

**Nikoletta Divari-Valakou**

Honorary Director of Antiquities of the Ministry of Culture,  
President of O.D.A.P.

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O.D.A.P., the evolution of the Fund of Archaeological Proceeds, one of the oldest public institutions, which, with the updated statutory framework as it was formed in 2020, aspires to meet the challenges emerging in the global market of cultural industry and creative economy, with innovative actions, competitive products and services, meeting the ever-changing needs of visitors of archaeological sites and museums.

Since its establishment, with publications being a major activity, O.D.A.P. promotes archaeological and architectural heritage and cultural heritage in general, enhances the work of the Ministry of Culture services and research in their fields of authority. Furthermore, it provides for the dissemination of knowledge to the Greek and international academic community and the provision of information to visitors of archaeological sites and museums.

With the present publication, O.D.A.P. seeks to build a new relationship with the providers of services of tourist and cultural interest, as well as with potential visitors to archaeological sites and museums, contributing to the extroversion and promotion of the work carried out in the sector of culture.

**Elias Patsarouchas**

Civil Engineer NTUA MSc in “Protection of Monuments”

General Director of O.D.A.P.

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*August 1993, Central Macedonia*

On one of the unforgettable “road trips” with my parents and my little brother. A map-guide always on my lap, to guide my father on our impromptu routes: sites, monuments, summits with unforgettable views, dips in icy rivers.

*March 2023, Paris*

While walking through an exhibition on Cultural Tourism. In my hands, a special publication by the Centre des Monuments Nationaux. A map-guide to the monuments and museums managed by the corresponding O.D.A.P. of France. A publication with the basic visiting information, all presented in a simple and comprehensible way, arranged geographically and with plentiful photographic material.

At that moment, I experienced a “sweet” envy. Thus, was born the idea: a guide to the Greek cultural heritage, designed exclusively for tourism professionals. A guide that would describe our monuments, museums and historical sites through the eyes of the traveller.

The volume at hand is our first published effort. A Promotion Guide to our cultural assets, created to inform and inspire tourism professionals, combining culture and tourism in a journey of knowledge and experience.

Special thanks are due to our work team, Despina Pavlaki, Thanasis Patsavos, Christos Kentrotis and Pantelis Karamanis, for our countless late nights and laughs, the President of O.D.A.P., Mrs Nikoletta Divari-Valakou for the “archaeological” touches and, of course, the Vice President of O.D.A.P.’s Board of Directors, Ioannis Zirinis, for suggesting that we visited that special exhibition in Paris together.







**Angeliki Maragkaki**

Head of the Autonomous Department of Monitoring and Development of Resources and the Cultural Production, Sales & Promotion  
Department of O.D.A.P., Ministry of Culture

## Intangible Cultural Heritage of Greece

Unique local products and crops characteristic of the Greek land, special dance and music traditions, pagan and Christian customs, ancient yet still alive arts and techniques, engraved on marble, wood and stone or woven in the loom's yards... These are just some of the elements that make up the rich intangible cultural heritage of Greece. In the following pages and the maps that introduce the sections of this publication, one for each region, you will find an indicative selection of these elements, next to the country's archaeological sites and museums. Presented in the form of hashtags, we hope they will provide you with the occasion to discover them and –why not?– add your own. For more information, as well as the detailed National Inventory of all intangible cultural heritage elements of Greece that have been officially inscribed so far, you can visit [ayla.culture.gr](http://ayla.culture.gr) (currently only available in Greek).

### LEGEND

-  Automatic water vending machine
-  Cafe / Bistro / Restaurant
-  Shop
-  Disabled access
-  Parking
-  Culinary events

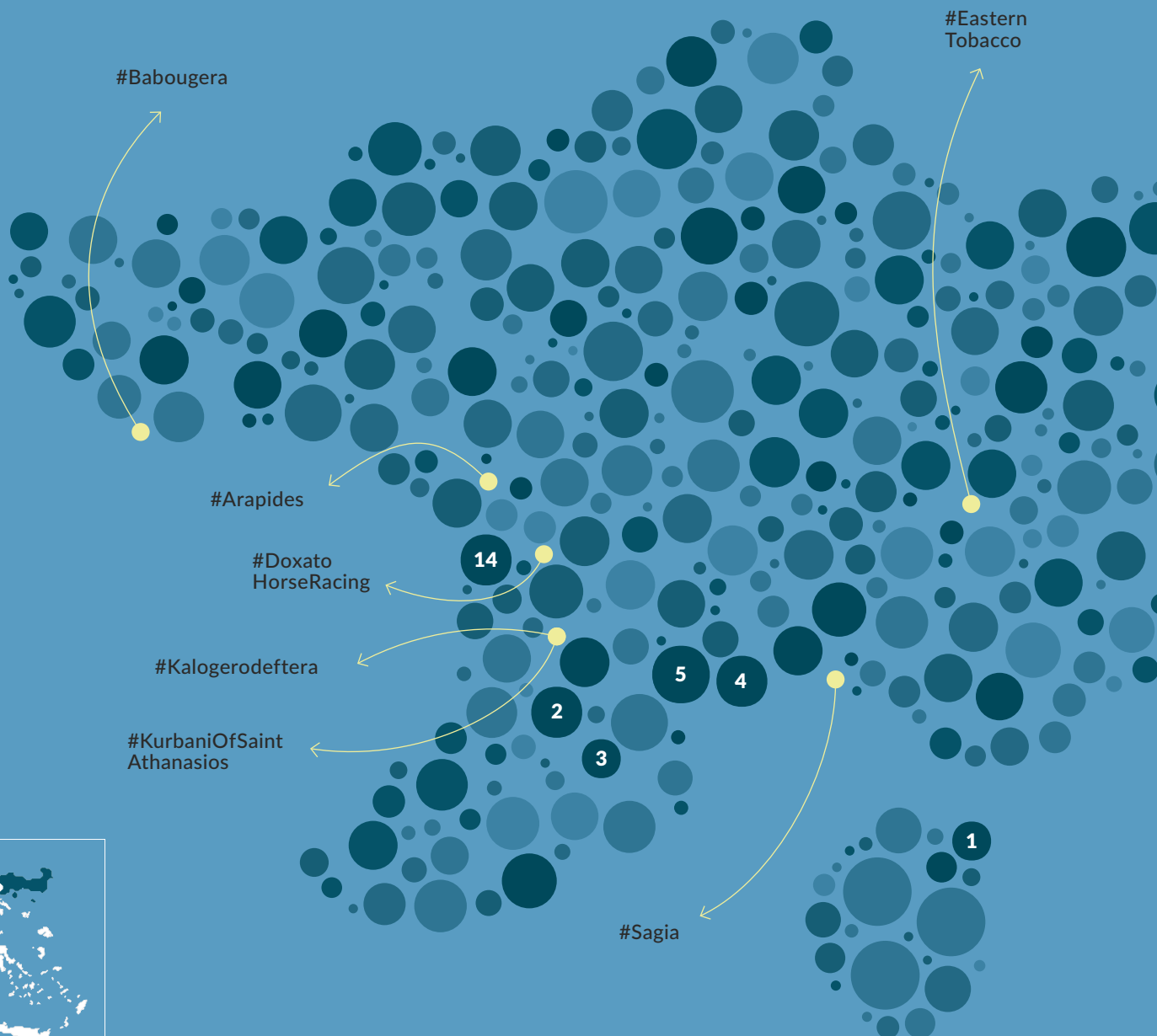
For ticket prices and opening hours of archaeological sites and museums, use your mobile phone to scan the corresponding QR Codes.

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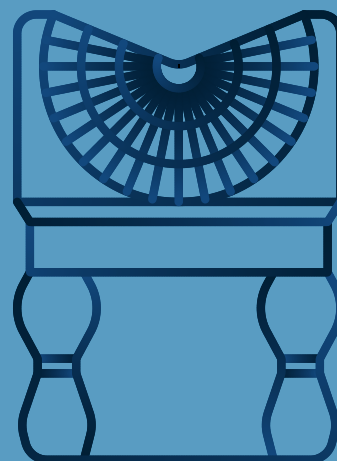
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### Archaeological Museum of Thasos

Although it is difficult to walk away from the lacy shores of Thasos, there are other attractions in the pine-covered heart of the northernmost island of the Aegean that deserve your attention. The Archaeological Museum of Thasos, nestled in a lush garden featuring the area's typical flora, was built in 1935 and is the oldest museum in Northern Greece. Its precinct is adorned with an elaborate mosaic originating from a Roman villa, while the building has been considerably enlarged since its construction, in order to accommodate the island's rich history and culture, from prehistory to the Byzantine era. The new permanent exhibition is an excellent example of a museographic approach skilfully combining the archaeological site outside with the indoor exhibits in a journey through time.

Marble sculpture –one of the most significant traditions of Thasos– is at the centre of this exhibition. Even in the precinct you will find impressive objects, such as sarcophagi, altars and grindstones, chiselled from the material that was loved like no other in ancient Greece. As a matter of fact, the museum's marble exhibits are made of the much sought-after Thasian marble, as well as the exquisite Pentelic and Parian marbles. But if anything dominates the place, is definitely the iconic Thasos Kriophoros, a 3.5m high Archaic kouros (probably Hermes) holding a ram. The kouros of Thasos has its own special place and identity among the votive kouroi found all over Greece, since his hair, arranged in locks, is the only sculpted feature on his head. It has been assumed that the sculptor left him unfinished, when an occasional crack appeared on the marble near the statue's left ear.

If, on the other hand, you are so fascinated by the island's natural treasures that you find it difficult to break their spell, the svelte marble figures of a lion and a panther will transfer you to the wild side of Thasos. These imposing felines once adorned the entrance to the sanctuary of Apollo, and although they are replicas –the originals are in the Louvre– they are enough to excite the imagination, since, according to Herodotus lions, were very common in the Greek world.

What makes the Archaeological Museum of Thasos special, however, is the museum narrative, i.e. the skilful interaction between the museum and the visitors, which manages to get even the youngest involved. A child can literally step into a Bronze Age

house and experience daily life in a local household, from domestic equipment to the production of Thasian wine, which was quite famous throughout the ancient world.

You can stand over a stone-built Iron Age family tomb, explore the town's urban planning and fortification and, also, learn about local cults and the Thasians' most beloved deities. The Early Byzantine churches herald the return to reality, since the Byzantine period is the last stop in the museum's timeline, but before you finally land in the present, it's time to return to nature.

The Ancient Agora, which is right next to the Museum, is covered in lush greenery, encapsulating a huge piece of history, from the 7th century BC to the Middle Ages. The site remains vibrant and fluid, as excavations by the French School of Archaeology





gy –during which most of the exhibits currently in the museum were discovered– continue to the present day.

📍 2 Megalou Alexandrou Street,  
Thasos port,  
Thasos



## Philippoi

There are not many archaeological sites where, within ten minutes, you can come across amazing monuments of the Classical, Roman and Byzantine periods. If there is one town that has enjoyed an age-long glory, it is certainly Philippoi –although it has not always been called that. Acknowledging the area's abundant natural resources, settlers from Thasos, around 360 BC, founded here a town called "Krinides". However, they did not have time to cherish it, as, when they asked the Macedonian king Philip II to protect them from the Thracians, he conquered Krinides himself and gave it his name. The prosperity of the Hellenistic period was followed by even greater growth, when the town became a Roman colony, after the dramatic Philippoi battle, in 42 BC. The last event to determine the historical course of Philippoi was the arrival of Paul the Apostle, who founded here the very first Christian church of Europe, in AD 49/50; thus, through the prevalence of the new religion, Paul made the town glorious once more. The transition from paganism to Christianity is attested in the site's monuments, which have changed use over the centuries: from the ancient theatre that was transformed into a Roman arena for beast fights to the Early Christian basilicas that were erected over the Roman ruins, Philippoi constitute a unique example of synthesis of cultures and eras.




 Drama-Kavala Motorway, Philippoi, Kavala



## Archaeological Museum of Philippoi

Overflowing, like the town that inspired it, the Archaeological Museum of Philippoi houses invaluable exhibits from every time period that affected the region, and, also, related to the figures who defined it: Philip II, Octavian Augustus and Paul the Apostle. In the first section, on the ground floor, finds from prehistoric to Roman times are exhibited. These include a collection of naturalistic figurines from the Neolithic settlement at Dikili Tash, splendid funerary stelae from the Hellenistic period and marble sculptures from the Roman forum and theatre. The second section, located on the museum's first floor, presents Christian Philippoi from its heyday during the Early Christian period to its abandonment after the Turkish occupation at the end of the 14th century. Here, one can marvel at inscriptions on mosaics and architectural members from the majestic Early Christian basilicas.



 Krinides, Philippoi, Kavala





## Archaeological Museum of Kavala

The Archaeological Museum of Kavala –the most important of its kind in Eastern Macedonia– is centred around the cult of Parthenos, a goddess quite rare in Greece, who was considered the patron deity of Neapolis (later Kavala). The Sanctuary of Parthenos, who was probably a version of Artemis or Hera, is the only building of ancient Neapolis that we know of today. It is a magnificent Ionic temple from the early 5th century BC, built of white Thasian marble. The Archaeological Museum of Kavala holds two of the temple's impressive capitals, which have been placed at their original height, while in the sanctuary's deposits –i.e. the material from the pits, where the discarded votive offerings to the goddess were deposited– sculptures, coins and a large collection of vases and figurines were found, as well as a marble model of a temple, which probably depicts an older temple of the goddess.



📍 17 Erythrou Stavrou Street, Kavala



## Archaeological Museum and Archaeological Site of Abdera

According to legend, Abdera, one of the most important ancient towns of northern Aegean, is related to the eighth labour of Hercules, who travelled as far as the land of the Bistonian Thracians, in order to capture the man-eating mares of their king, Diomedes. Abdera was, in fact, founded during the 7th century BC by Greeks from Asia Minor, who had been repeatedly struck down by illness, due to the swamps that existed in the region. Nevertheless, a century later, as a result of agriculture, livestock breeding and fishing, the town grew and got involved with great thinkers, such as Protagoras and Democritus. Telling stories of daily toil and family life through the display of utilitarian objects recovered while excavating the ancient town, the archaeological museum is an ode to ordinary people. Near the modern port, one can visit the western part of the ancient town's southern enclosure, where the so-called "House of the Dolphins", named after the theme on the mosaic floor found in its courtyard, is located.



📍 2 Dimitriou Lazaridi Street, Abdera



## Archaeological Museum of Komotini

The Archaeological Museum of Komotini, the work of Aris Konstantinidis, is following the dictates of the great architect, who treated buildings as “containers of life”, only in this case antiquities come first. Their “lives” extend from the Neolithic to the Byzantine period and relate to human activity in the most important coastal sites of Thrace. The most impressive exhibit is the gold bust of emperor Septimius Severus (AD 193-211), which would be fixed on a pole held by the imaginiferi (emblem bearers) of the Roman army. Before leaving, take a rest in the cool garden with its outdoor exhibits enclosed by a low fence wall, typical of Konstantinidis’ architectural style.



📍 4 Symeonidi Street, Komotini



## Ancient Maroneia

Ancient Maroneia was many things: a rich Thracian town, a place mentioned by Homer and a mythical birthplace of monsters, since –according to local legend– the cave of Maroneia was home to the Cyclops Polyphemus. Although its beginnings are lost in time, Maroneia evolved into a particularly strong local power, with a fortification wall that stretched for more than 10km, enclosing the entire plain of modern Komotini and Mount Ismarus. The town remained flourishing until the arrival of the Romans, who turned the its Hellenistic theatre into an arena for animal fights. The ruins of the ancient town cover a large area and include several marked monuments, while others are scattered among the olive groves and mountainous landscape of Ismarus.

📍 Maroneia, Rodopi



## Tavaniotis Mansion

The town of Maroneia has not always been in its present location. The ancient town was originally built on the coast, but was relocated in the Middle Ages to escape pirate raids. The traditional section of the settlement flourished in the 19th century, when the Maroneians emigrated to trade their tobacco. One of them was Parrasios Tavaniotis, who left behind an excellent two-storey mansion that is now a listed monument. A typical example of Western Thrace residential architecture, it accommodates an exhibition of antiquities entitled “Maroneia and Ismarus from Pre-historic to Modern times”.

📍 Maroneia, Rodopi




## Sanctuary of the Great Gods

Very little is currently known about the Kabeiri Mysteries in Samothrace, due to the absolute secrecy with which they were performed. In ancient times, however, the cult rituals dedicated to the enigmatic Great Gods were performed with magnificence and made Samothrace famous in the far reaches of the then known world. People of all origins and social classes were admitted to the ceremonies, while among the initiates were prominent figures of the time such as Herodotus, Plato and Aristotle.

The ancient town of Palaeopolis retains intact the mystical aura of a unique sacred place, inextricably linked to the otherworldly beauty of an island covered in unspoilt nature and surrounded by crystal clear waters. Here, one can follow the steps of the initiates who participated in the ritual: passing from the Palace, where the first stage of initiation would take place, to the Sanctuary of the Great Gods, where the second stage would be performed, to the Stoa, where the visitors of the Mysteries were accommodated and to the Sacred Circle, from where the spectators would watch the events; or visit the Arsinoeion or Arsinoe Rotunda, an offering to the Great Gods funded by the Queen of Thrace, the largest surviving roofed circular structure of ancient Greek architecture.




 Palaeopolis, Samothrace





## Archaeological Museum of Samothrace

One of the finest examples of ancient Greek art and one of the most renowned sculptures in the world, the famous Nike of Samothrace was probably created by a Rhodian sculptor around 200 BC and shortly afterwards dedicated to the Sanctuary of the Great Gods. It came to light in 1863, during the first excavations carried out on the island by an archaeological mission led by Charles Champoiseau, the French vice-consul in Adrianople, who "smuggled" the winged Nike to Paris. Today, the headless Nike statue, 3.28m in height (5.58m including the marble ship's prow on which it stands), is exhibited in the Louvre Museum, but its replica dominates the Archaeological Museum of Samothrace, forever reminding visitors of its origin. Built by the American School of Classical Studies in 1939-1955, the museum houses a multitude of artefacts from the Sanctuary of the Great Gods and the other monuments of Palaeopolis: jewellery, coins, sculpture, inscriptions, finds from Samothrace's cemeteries and architectural reconstructions that help visitors form a complete picture of the ancient town.

 Palaipoli, Samothrace







### Archaeological Museum of Alexandroupoli

The recently erected Archaeological Museum of Alexandroupoli takes visitors on a journey to ages gone by, from prehistory to the Roman era, focusing on the Evros region. The museum tour starts from the coast and proceeds inland, ending at the burial tumuli of Thrace. One need not go very far. To the south of Alexandroupoli, in the Makri toumba –one of the most important Neolithic settlements in the Balkans– was found an anthropomorphic spherical vase from the second half of the 6th millennium BC, unique in Greece for both its size and style. In the Evros hinterland, to the southeast of Didymoteicho, a woman, Plotina, wife of the Roman emperor Trajan (AD 98-117), gave her name to Plotinopolis, where colourful fragments of mosaics with scenes and decorative motifs, once adorning the region's buildings, were discovered.

Nevertheless, nothing compares to the grave goods from the Thracian tumuli, i.e. the artificial mounds found throughout the territory of Thrace. With a diameter of 15-60m and a height of 1.50-12m, their function was twofold: on the one hand,

they marked the burial site, while on the other they protected the tombs from looting. The oldest one, dating from the Late Bronze Age, was discovered near the village of Kanada, in Trigono. The museum holds a small collection of grave goods from the 4th century BC to the 4th century AD, ranging from robust weapons and jewellery to delicate glass urgumentaria that managed to survive the passage of time.

📍 44 Makris Avenue,  
Alexandroupoli



# REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE

MESIMVRIA-ZONE | BYZANTINE MUSEUM OF DIDYMOTEICHO  
| ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF DRAMA

## Mesimvria-Zone

According to tax records from the 5th century BC, ancient Mesimvria-Zone paid the highest tax of all Samothracian colonies to the Athenian League. The archaeological site, located 20km west of Alexandroupoli, was discovered in the early 20th century by Bulgarian soldiers while digging coastal trenches. It is one of the fortress-towns erected in the late 7th century BC by Greek settlers from Samothrace, which controlled maritime trade and provided urban services and imported goods to the rapidly growing elite of the Thracian kingdom. In the archaeological site one can observe how an ancient Greek town was formed with its walls, temples, houses and workshops. The site is temporarily closed due to works, but is due to reopen soon.



📍 Mesimvria coast, Alexandroupoli



## Byzantine Museum of Didymoteicho

Did you know that Didymoteicho had become capital of the Byzantine Empire, not once but three times? The town's Byzantine Museum illuminates the role –unknown to many– that the Thrace-Didymoteicho dyad played in the history of the Byzantine Empire, while warmly engaging local everyday life and habits in more recent times, highlighting the region's multiculturalism. The illuminated floor map of the Byzantine Via Egnatia in Thrace resembles a knowledge game that encourages interaction with the visitors, who realize that they are parts of this modern and aesthetically superb museum narrative as soon as they pass through the door.

📍 Sophokleous & Plotinoupoleos Streets, Didymoteicho



## Archaeological Museum of Drama

From the nomadic hunters of the Middle Palaeolithic period (50,000 BC) to the first patriarchal societies of the Bronze Age (3000-1050 BC) and the powerful gene of the Early Iron Age (1050-700 BC), life in Drama has always been inextricably connected to the land. The small but well-structured Archaeological Museum of Drama perfectly stages the passage from one era to another, with special reference to the representation of the household of Neolithic farmers and the particularities of their daily life. The close association with the god Dionysus, on whom the inhabitants relied, not only for their prosperity, but also for their protection, is no coincidence.

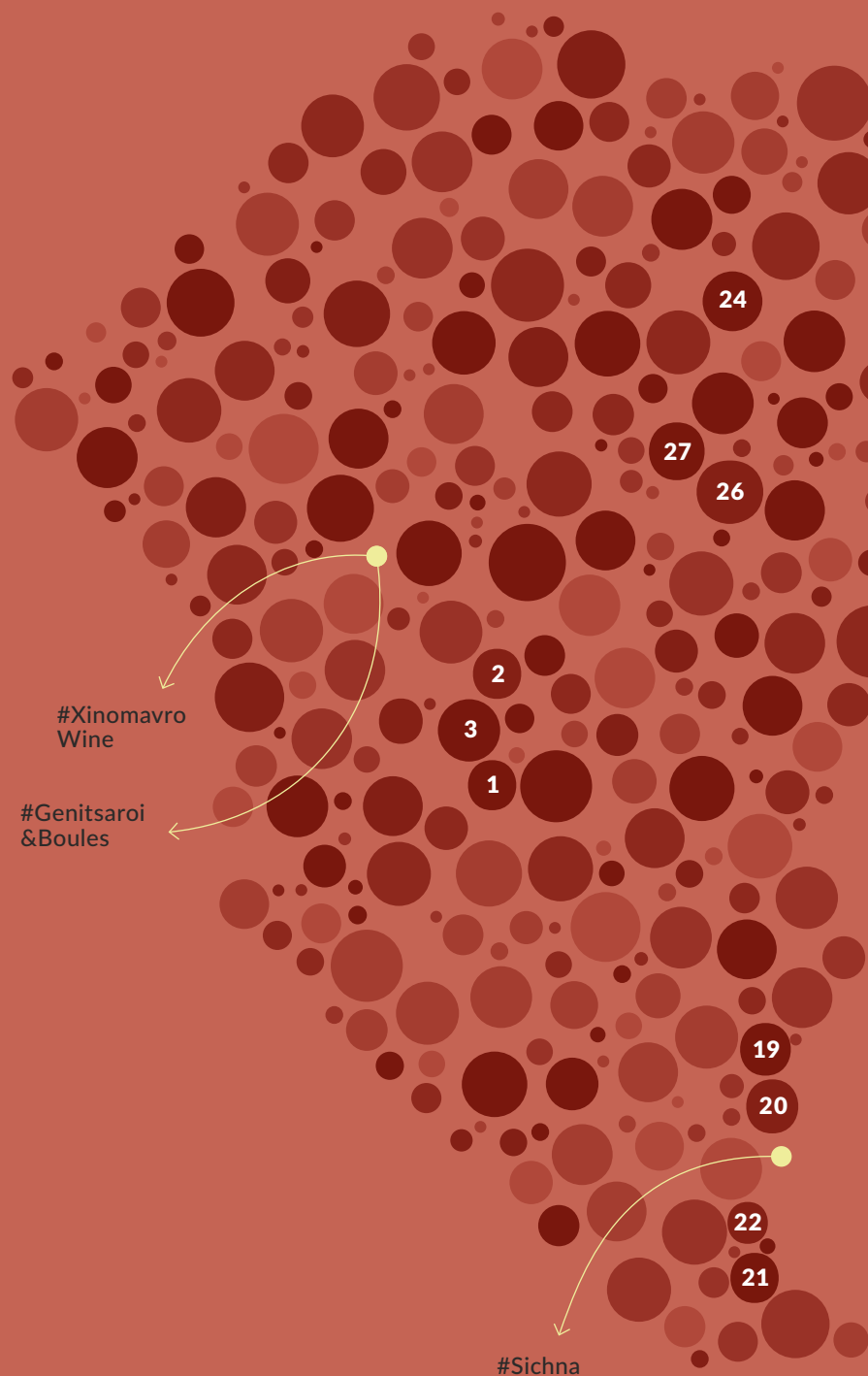
📍 6 Kosta Varnali Street, Drama



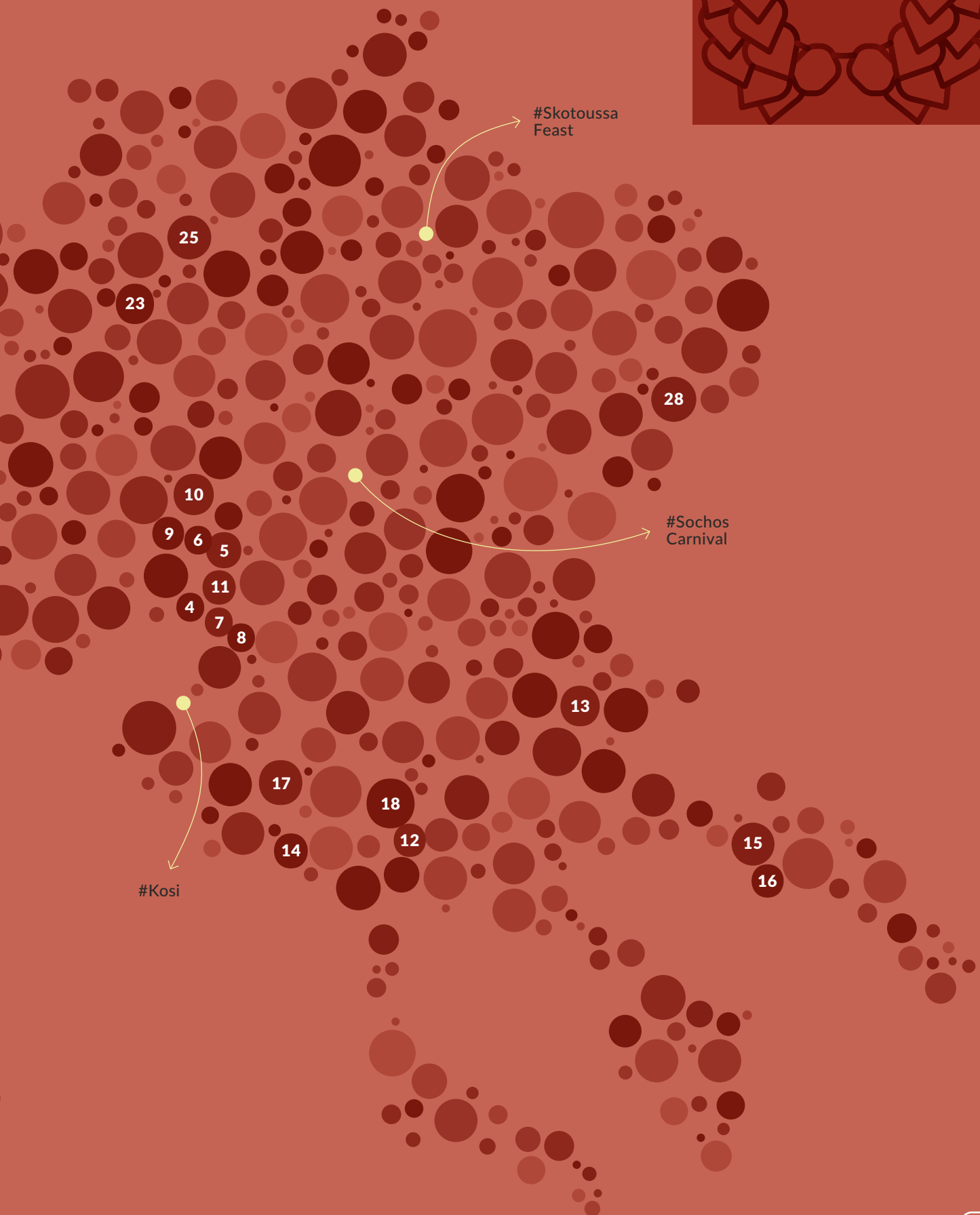
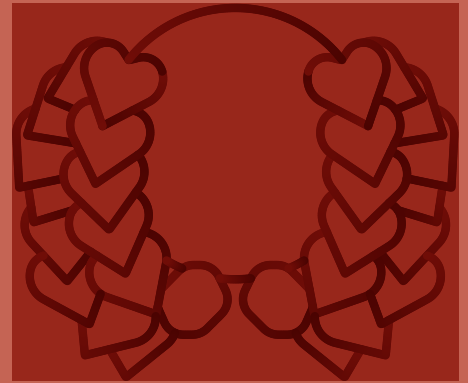
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### Polycentric Museum of Aigai

#### Museum of the Royal Tombs at Aigai

Looking as an earth mount on the outside, the Museum of the Royal Tombs at Aigai holds in its interior the history of the richest funeral rites that the Greek world has ever known.

The imposing stone path leading to the heart of the museum is comparable to a descent into the world of Hades. King Philip II is to be found at the centre of a strategically simple but utterly emotional exhibition that literally physicalises antiquity and is unlike anything you have seen so far.

The bar, of course, is set extremely high, as Philip II was the most powerful and eminent Greek of his time, and everything around him testifies to the great amount of adoration with which he was treated by his contemporaries: from the golden larnax, weighing 11kg and featuring the mythical star of Vergina, to the golden wreath worn by the dead king, with 313 thin leaves and 68 acorns, that had just begun to melt at the pyre.

Next to him, were found the bones of the young royal wife, probably Meda, who had willingly followed him to the funeral pyre, according to the customs of her homeland. The preserved fine cloth that covered her body almost eliminates the distance between the visitor and Macedon, making the past seem more tangible than ever.

But if anything has spread its light through the centuries, it is the stunning miniature of Philip II that revealed his true image to the modern world.

#### Palace of Aigai

Less than 1km from the Royal Tombs, the Palace of the Aigai is where Philip II not only ascended the throne but also breathed his last. Let us, however, take things from the beginning.

The palace, the theatre and the nearby sanctuaries were all components of the greater architectural project of Philip II, who modernized and upgraded Aigai, the royal metropolis of the Macedonians, providing an ideological model for the cities all over the Hellenistic world.

Very soon, the king transformed the Macedonians from peasants to citizens, who participated in civic life and loyally followed him in battle. The Palace of Aigai is the most compelling witness to this two-way relationship, as it was erected not to house the

family and private life of the king, but to serve the city's public life.

The great peristyle of Aigai, with 16 Doric columns on each side, was used for banquets, the tholos was the sanctuary of Heracles Patroos, while the western peristyle, smaller in dimensions, served as a palaestra. Philip met his end in the nearby theatre in 336 BC, during the celebration of his daughter's wedding, when, in a display of power, he appeared unescorted by his private guard and was assassinated by his adjutant, Pausanias.

#### Archaeological Museum of Aigai

What is left behind, when a city is lost and even its name is forgotten? This is the main question to which the Archaeological Museum of Aigai seeks to



answer, in an attempt to recover the memory of a once glorious metropolis from under successive layers of oblivion.

The city of Aigai was the starting point of the great campaign of Alexander, son of Philip II, which would make him world emperor. At the same time, however, it was a city of simple people, and this is exactly what emerges through the pioneering –for Greek standards– arrangement of the museum's exhibits.

By eliminating the intricate individual numbering of exhibits, the visitor is allowed to travel unhindered into the past, into the daily life of a society without slaves, where people tended their own fields, vineyards and herds. Burial customs, farmyard animals, toiletries, building and war materials are all here, masterfully displayed in thematic

groups that open up a new aesthetic chapter in museum design.

If something becomes clear from the very first moment, it is that the Archaeological Museum of Aigai is not addressed to archaeologists, but to ordinary visitors interested in learning the history of Macedonia from the bottom up.

 Vergina, Imathia





## Archaeological Museum of Veroia

If knowledge is hereditary, then the Archaeological Museum of Veroia is at the peak of its communicative powers. With a huge Medusa head dominating the entrance, the building's lush green courtyard piques the interest at first glance, since from 2021 it is itself an imposing open-air exhibition. With free access and a view of the famous Veroia "balcony", this open sculpture gallery includes funerary stelae and honorary altars displayed around the perimeter of the museum, presenting the portraiture, institutions and ideals of ancient city.

The Medusa head, once placed on the ancient walls of Veroia to repel enemies, has the opposite effect here, attracting visitors to enter the Museum. The well-trained staff will gladly guide you through the new permanent exhibition of finds from the Neolithic to the Hellenistic and Roman periods, with the "Gymnasiarchal Law", the 2nd century BC marble stele describing the rules of operation of the ancient gymnasium of the town in its heart.

📍 47 Anoixeos Avenue, Veroia

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## Byzantine Museum of Veroia

Whatever you might be thinking when you hear the words "Byzantine Museum of Veroia", you are bound to be wrong. Surprisingly housed in an early 20th century water-powered flour mill, it's an exquisitely restored example of local industrial architecture, which is as interesting as the exhibits it holds.

The saints here are not just martyrs, as the concept of sanctity changes with the times and political conditions. Sometimes they live secluded in natural settings and sometimes they are intellectuals, soldiers, prominent person or revolutionaries, even a saint-madman who rejects social conventions and lives on the margins.

Each one of the three storeys of this spectacular building houses a different approach to faith. In the first floor the general spirit of Byzantine culture is highlighted, in the second public and private life in Veroia is presented, whereas the third is dedicated to worship, making a suggestive reconstruction of the interior of a church using completely modern materials, proving once again that this Byzantine museum stands out from the rest.

📍 26 Thomaidi Street, Veroia

📖 | ♿



## White Tower

Probably built around the end of the 15th century, the White Tower was not always a solitary building. In fact, it was one of the three towers that protected Thessaloniki and was left on its own in 1867, when the sea fortifications were demolished. Since then, it seems to have been in constant search of purpose, as it was repeatedly changing uses; this, however, stopped in September 2002, when the new historical exhibition accommodated in the restored White Tower was inaugurated.

In the 19th century it was a prison for long-termers, during World War I it accommodated the Allied Forces communication centre, while in 1916 it was used as a storeroom for antiquities. Later on, it housed the Meteorology Laboratory of the University of Thessaloniki, while the last to use the Tower were the Navy Scouts.

The White Tower was so named after an act of desperation, when, in 1890, one of the convicts whitewashed the tower with lime in exchange for his freedom. Before that, it was known as the "Blood Tower" because of the frequent executions that had stained its facade.



Nikis Avenue, Thessaloniki



## Rotunda (Holy Church of Saint George)

Built during the Roman period, the Rotunda (later Holy Church of Saint George) is perhaps the most fascinating mystery of Thessaloniki. So far, no one has been able to determine its original use. Was it a temple dedicated to Zeus or Kabeirus, or a mausoleum for Caesar Galerius, who was responsible for its construction?

The successive transformations of the Rotunda propelled it to the extremes of human faith, since during the Early Christian period it was transformed into a church, then into a cathedral and later into a mosque. In 1912, with the liberation of Thessaloniki from the Turks, it was named "the Holy Church of Saint George".

The domed roof and the arches above the eight apses of the circular structure hold a magnificent glorificatory mosaic, with distinct iconographic zones. Male figures standing against a golden background or on a lush green ground give way to angels flying, holding the sphere of the universe. In the centre used to stand the honoured figure, which is currently destroyed. The shadow made by charcoal that is left in its place reinforces the unyielding mystery of the Rotunda.



Agiou Georgiou Square, Thessaloniki



### Paradise Baths (Bey Hammam)

The multi-domed structure of the Bey Hammam in the historic centre of Thessaloniki carries the marks of time. Built in 1444 by order of Murat II, it was the first public building constructed in the city by the Ottomans, using building materials from the seven Byzantine churches that surrounded it. Bey Hammam continued to function regularly until 1968 as “Paradise Baths”, a name fully justified, if one considers the magnificent interior and the otherworldly light that flooded the space through the stepped openings on its domes.

The baths had separate rooms for men and women, that did not communicate at all, with the men’s baths clearly superior in luxury and comfort. In the main hall was the traditional marble massage table, while the cavernous interior was divided into hot, lukewarm and cold rooms with correspondingly heated floors. On the upper floor, which remains closed after the modern restoration of the building, were located the changing rooms and, later on, a

canteen. The Sultan had his own, splendidly decorated chamber.

Moreover, Bey Hammam was a place where the locals would meet and socialize, especially women who had limited liberties compared to their husbands. It was there that they exchanged the news of the day, arranged marriages and concluded trade agreements. Not to forget that at that time, many homes did not even have hot water. The Bey Hammam was by no means the only bath complex in Thessaloniki, but it was the largest and one of the most prominent in the Balkans. The site is temporarily closed for works, but is expected to reopen soon as a visitor attraction and a venue for events.

📍 84 Egnatia Street, Thessaloniki

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## Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki

The Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki has adopted a multidimensional approach to the history of Macedonia, starting from the outside in. The museum's outdoor area offers its visitors a pleasant archaeological walk among sarcophagi, burial monuments and a miniature model of a wealthy residence of the Imperial era –and to see all those exhibits one does not even have to buy a ticket. However, it is hard to resist the treasures that await inside the impressive building of the museum, which is a listed monument of modern architectural heritage and one of the most characteristic examples of Greek modernism, designed by Patroklos Karantinos. The museum's six permanent exhibitions, from the dawn of prehistory to late antiquity, contain celebrated exhibits such as the renowned volute crater of Derveni, a unique example of metal working from the 4th century BC, found in cist tomb B of the Derveni necropolis; also, the extravagant relief sarcophagi that have been placed in the entrance, which took a year and four sculptors to make.



📍 6 Manoli Andronikou Street, Thessaloniki



## Thessaloniki Museum of Byzantine Culture

The multi award-winning Museum of Byzantine Culture of Thessaloniki, one of the most modern Greek museums and an outstanding work of public architecture by Giannis Kokkos, provides us with several reasons to visit it. Let's not forget that Thessaloniki was the most important centre of the Byzantine Empire after Constantinople; thus, the museum's collections, spanning over 18 centuries, are characterised by depth and variety. Its 11 exhibition halls are arranged along an internal "street" with a winding upward course, lit by internal courtyards and glass panels. Let your footsteps guide you to the third room, where an extremely rare set of funerary paintings illustrate the changing concept of the afterlife from antiquity to Christianity. If you don't manage to see the entire museum in one day, bear in mind that the museum itself hasn't managed to show us everything it would like to, with only 3,190 of the 46,000 archaeological objects, heirlooms and artworks of its collections on display.



📍 2 Stratou Avenue, Thessaloniki



### Roman Forum of Thessaloniki and Roman Forum Museum

A walk around the centre of Thessaloniki is enough to prove you that the city is a vast open-air museum, which has managed to incorporate every phase of its history into its urban fabric. The Forum, for example, was temporarily in danger of being covered by a new Courthouse, in 1966, but the restoration of a marble column found in the excavation thwarted any future plans for construction in the area. The Forum complex, once a landmark of Roman Thessaloniki, has two chronological phases, one in the mid-2nd century AD and a second in mid-3rd. It consists of a central square, stoas with warehouses and shops, a vaulted stoa, a mint, a bath complex and a odeum, which has been hosting cultural events to this day. Apart from these, however, the Forum hides another ace up its sleeve: the Thessaloniki Roman Forum Museum, housed in a specially designed underground building in the western part of the archaeological site.



📍 75 Olympou Street, Thessaloniki



### Heptapyrgion and Trigonion Tower, Thessaloniki

If there is any building that can rival the battlements of the White Tower, it is certainly the Trigonion Tower, which stands out in the upper quarters of modern Thessaloniki, like a common secret. Having probably been erected in the second half of the 15th century, after the city was captured by the Turks, it was originally used as an armoury and artillery, since it offered an unobstructed view to the sea. At the same time, the White Tower, the Vardari Tower and the central tower at Heptapyrgion, parts of a fortification network for the city's protection, were constructed. The impressive Heptapyrgion Fortress, also known as "Yedikule", i.e. its Ottoman name, is located at the northeastern end of the Thessaloniki walls. In 1890, it went through an identity crisis, having been converted into a penitentiary, protecting the city from inmates inside the walls, rather than defending it from enemies besieging it by land and sea.



📍 Heptapyrgion: 7 Dimitriou Tzacheila Street, Ano Poli, Thessaloniki |  
Trigonion Tower: Agios Pavlos, Ano Poli, Thessaloniki






## Galerian Complex, Thessaloniki

The Roman emperor Galerius knew very well what he was doing, when he chose Thessaloniki as his seat, in AD 299. Fully aware of the city's strategic importance, he decided to implement an ambitious project that would turn it into the administrative capital of the extensive Roman province. One of his most important projects was the Palace Complex in the heart of Roman Thessaloniki, which extended over 150,000m<sup>2</sup> and included the impressive building of the Rotunda, the Triumphal Arch (Kamara), the Palace, the Octagon and the Hippodrome. Today, the archaeological site of the palace, located on Navarinou Square, is open to the public, contributing significantly to the feeling that the entire city is an open-air museum.




 Navarinou Square, Thessaloniki



## Olynthus

The low and perfectly symmetrical ruined walls of Olynthus, with the almost pristine mosaic of Bellerophon looking as if it has fallen from the sky, when everything around it has been obliterated, certainly don't prepare you for the glorious history of the area. In fact, Olynthus was the most important city of Chalcidice and had acquired such power that all the great Greek powers sought either its allegiance or its destruction. In 348 BC, as a result of the Olynthians' refusal to surrender to his brother, Arridaeus, who had taken refuge in their city, king Philip of Macedon launched an attack against Olynthus, razed it to the ground and sold its inhabitants as slaves.




 Olynthus, Chalcidice



## Stageira

If you wish to take a stroll in Aristotle's neighbourhood, you must go as far as Eastern Chalcidice, in a small archaeological park where lush nature competes with antiquities, surrounded by crystal blue beaches. Ancient Stageira stretches along a small mountainous peninsula known as "Liotopi" and features a distinctive acropolis in the shape of a right triangle. In the centre you will find a cistern for collecting rainwater, one of the several ingenious solutions that the inhabitants had implemented to take advantage of the uneven geomorphology of the place. Ancient Stageira suffered the devastating fury of Philip II, who had it rebuilt at the request of Aristotle, the tutor of his son, Alexander.



 Olympiada, Chalcidice



## Nea Flogita Metochi complex

Among the olive groves, on the west coast of Chalcidice emerges the monumental preserved architectural complex of the former metochi of the Athonite monastery of Saint Panteleimon. The earliest references to it date from 1311, although the surviving buildings were erected during 1853-1909. This historic complex, which covers an area of 27 stremmata outside the settlement of Nea Flogita, will soon house a multifunctional Centre of Byzantine Culture. It will consist of the Byzantine Museum of Chalcidice, a building for temporary exhibitions, a conference hall, a cafe, etc. Part of the permanent exhibition, as well as the Open Centre for the Conservation of Antiquities are already open to visitors.



 Nea Flogita, Chalcidice



## Prosforios Tower, Ouranoupoli

The Prosforios Tower is located next to the Ouranoupoli port and is the largest and best preserved tower in Chalcidice. In 1924, it sheltered refugees from Asia Minor after the population exchange, while in 1928 it was inhabited by Sidney and Joyce Locke, the unofficial patrons of Ouranoupoli, who revived the art of textile manufacture, providing the refugees' women with an extra income. The varied structure of the Tower is due to the fact that it was completed in three different phases: Byzantine, Ottoman and modern. On the ground floor you will find an exhibition featuring antiquities from Chalcidice, while the upper floor is dedicated to the Ouranoupoli refugees and the Lockes, who provided humanitarian aid to the inhabitants for 50 years.




 Ouranoupoli, Chalcidice

## Zygos Monastery, Ouranoupoli

The Zygos Monastery is the perfect destination for those women who continue wondering why they cannot visit Mount Athos. It is where Saint Athanasios the Athonite, founder of the Megisti Lavra Monastery, practised and is enclosed by a fortification wall with ten separate towers. During the 11th century, Zygos was one of the most important Athonite monasteries, but was deserted probably due to pirate raids; after the re-definition of the boundaries of Mount Athos, it remained outside its administrative borders, thus currently being open to women too. In this peaceful location, you will have the opportunity to visit the cells, the bakery and the wine press, witnessing a traditional, hard-working lifestyle lost in the depths of time.



 Ouranoupoli, Chalcidice



## Petalona Cave and Museum

At the foot of Mount Katsika, in Chalcidice there is a place holding traces of a world that existed hundreds of thousands years ago. The villagers of Petralona certainly could not have imagined the beasts that had lived here when they accidentally discovered the cave in 1959, while searching for a water spring. The following year, a team of amateur explorers found a human skull in excellent condition that was to become the most important anthropological fossil in Greece, dating from 150,000 to 300,000 years ago.

Our ancestors, however, were not the only ones who found shelter here. Fossils of extinct species of large carnivores have been discovered in the cave, including cave bears, spotted hyenas and felines such as the fearsome smilodon. Covering an area of 10,000m<sup>2</sup> and with an impressive stalagmite and stalagmite decoration, the cave reopened to the public in February 2024, following maintenance and remodelling work. A large number of the finds are on display in the Anthropological Museum of Petralona, which, apart from fossils, features hundreds of stone tools, as well as paintings and sculptures depicting the life and evolution of archanthropes.




 Petralona, Chalcidice



## Archaeological Museum of Polygyros

Chalcidice is not just a place for summer holidays. The homeland of Aristotle, who originated from the village of Stageira, now boasts a brand new museum. Mainly as a result of the addition of the Attic vases collection of Ioannis Lambropoulos, a lawyer and MP of Chalcidice, the museum was enlarged and a new museological horizon for Polygyros was created. For when the museum reopened, after its expansion and complete renovation, Lampropoulos' extensive collection was presented, quite unexpectedly, in a single display case, filling every available surface, thus referring to the abundance of objects the collector kept in his house, i.e. to a personal treasure. Of course, the Polygyros Museum accommodates many more representative finds from all over Chalcidice, such as sections from the roof of Zeus' temple in Kallithea, fishing equipment that underlined the locals' close connection to the sea, as well as a female statue from the 1st century AD, from the sanctuary of a deified hero in Stratoni.

 1 Stadiou Street, Iroon Square, Polygyros



## Archaeological Park of Dion

The Archaeological Park of Dion, at the northern foothills of Mount Olympus, is one of the best kept secrets in the Pieria Prefecture.

With distinct natural habitat characteristics and a rich fauna and flora embracing the archaeological finds scattered in the area in a panoramic way, Dion is constantly changing and deserves multiple visits all year round. Rich in water, elevated observation points and an almost metaphysical silence, it justifiably claims a large share of time from the visitor, who will have the opportunity to walk through successive layers of history, from the 5th century BC to the 5th century AD.

This is where king Philip of Macedon celebrated his great military victories, while Alexander the Great, before his campaign in Asia, performed bloody sacrifices at the sanctuary of Zeus, which still pulsates with the animals' cries. During the Roman period, emperor Octavian established here a colony of wealthy retired officials, which he made sure was equipped with impressive baths, shops, workshops, public toilets, recreation facilities and worship spaces. Under the August moon, the park regains some of the magic of the past, as the Hellenistic theatre that survives at the site accommodates the events of the Olympus Festival and stays open until midnight, something that does not happen at any other time of the year.



Dion, Pieria



## Archaeological Museum of Dion

Although the visitors' interest tends to concentrate on the mosaic from the Dionysus Villa, the most impressive private residence excavated in Dion, which is kept in a specially designed hall, the museum is not lacking in small archaeological wonders.

The mosaic in question, which extends over an area of 100m<sup>2</sup> and covered the floor of a banqueting hall dedicated to the god Dionysus, was moved from the park to the museum in 116 pieces, in order to protect it from decay.

The most peculiar of the Dion finds, however, is the hydraulis, a hydraulic musical instrument, both wind and percussion, which dates from the 1st century BC and required two people to play it. It is the first instrument of its kind found in Greece and the oldest found anywhere in the world so far.




Dion, Pieria



## Byzantine Castle of Platamon

Nestled in the heart of Mount Olympus, on a rocky outcrop that appears to enter the Aegean Sea, the Castle of Platamon claims the title of one of the most beautiful Greek castles. Although it has changed hands many times, its strategic location, controlling the passage between Macedonia, Thessaly and Southern Greece, has made every conqueror preserve it intact, thus surviving in excellent condition. Located at the site of ancient Heraclea, the castle was constructed during the Frankish occupation, between 1204-1222. This was done by order of the Lombard knight Roland Piskia, who had been given the area as a fiefdom by Boniface Mompferaticus, then ruler of Thessaloniki. The castle was to be taken successively by the despot of Epirus, Theodore Comnenus Doukas (1224) and the emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus (1259), until it finally fell, in 1385, into Turkish hands, with brief periods of occupation by the Venetians and the Greek armatoles. Its central octagonal tower alone, 20m in height and perhaps the most impressive turret in Greece, is enough to make you feel like the leading actor in a medieval saga.




 Platamon, Pieria



## Leivithra

The archaeological park of Ancient Levithra, where, according to legend, Orpheus was born and died, is located on the edge of a green ravine. The wild beauty of the area, on the line separating Upper and Lower Olympus, was associated with ominous oracles that were fulfilled when the acropolis collapsed into the ravine and the inhabitants moved to Eleusis.




 Leivithra, Olympus



## Archaeological Museum of Kilkis

The Archaeological Museum of Kilkis has been closely associated with the Kouros of Europos, a statue of colossal dimensions depicting a young man attributed to a Cycladic workshop. The Kouros, which belongs to the late examples of the series and dates from the end of the 6th century BC, was discovered by chance in 1972, the same year the museum was inaugurated, and is its most prominent exhibit. The museum is temporarily closed due to works, but is due to reopen soon.



 Outskouni & Regkoulou Streets, Kilkis





## Europos

The Europeans' town, inextricably linked to the ancient myth of beautiful Europa, who fell victim to Zeus' erotic frenzy and gave her name to an entire continent, is located in the heart of the Macedonian Kingdom, between the River Axios and the picturesque town of Goumenissa. Ancient Europos, built in a strategic location with rich natural resources and full control of the Balkan hinterland as a result of its altitude, flourished in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. The tombs with the vaulted tile roofs, visible from afar and reserved for prominent members of the local aristocratic class, have been particularly revealing regarding life in the town; the amounts, quality and elegance of the grave goods provided plenty of information about the commercial activities and lifestyle of Europeans. It is no coincidence that it was in this archaeological site that the only kouros in the whole of Macedonia was found; the statue is kept in the Archaeological Museum of Kilkis.



📍 Europos, Kilkis



## Palatiano

Arriving in the Roman town of Palatiano, we are unexpectedly greeted by a marble family of four from the 2nd century AD. It is Patraos, his wife Ammia and two of their three sons, Alexander and Medes. Preserved in excellent condition and awaiting a fifth statue, that of Zoilos, which may have never been added, they are the patrons of a lush archaeological site that retains all the essential features of a perfectly functional town. The sculptured family is situated inside Heroon I and was clearly worshipped as superhuman or heroic, as the altar and the remains of rituals demonstrate. In contrast to their heroic nature, the rest of the settlement seems almost chthonic, although one can easily wander through the clearly defined streets and study the layout of the once prosperous town, the economy of which was based mainly on metallurgy, as well as agriculture and everything that the fertile Macedonian land offered.



📍 Palatiano, Kilkis



## Pella

Fully associated with the birth of Alexander the Great, Pella became one of the most important political, economic and cultural centres of ancient Greece. Despite the strategic importance attributed to it by king Archelaus, who moved the capital of Macedon from Aigai to Pella at the end of the 5th century BC, the city actually developed as a result of the ambitious economic programme of king Philip II. It acquired spacious streets and exemplary town planning, as well as the largest square agora in the ancient Greek world, while attracting travellers, poets and artists. The latter, in fact, left a strong mark on the mosaic floors and walls of the wealthy houses of Pella, where rare examples of Greek painting of the first Pompeian style, made with coloured mortars, have been discovered. Excavations have revealed only part of the ancient city, which measured 4,000 stremmata in total; this is where one can marvel at courtyards with peristyles and elaborate mosaics, and also a section of the agora's foundations.



 Thessaloniki-Edessa Old National Road, Pella



## Archaeological Museum of Pella

The recently erected Archaeological Museum of Pella is designed to be in a continuous dialogue with the archaeological site in front of it, elaborating on the first impressions that visitors have just gained. The first thing one encounters upon entering the museum is a roof tile marked "Pellis", which identified the excavated remains with the ancient Macedonian city, sparking international interest. Advancing inwards, the marble bust of Alexander the Great welcomes us to his birthplace, a rather modest introduction to the explosion of treasures that will follow. Just above the ground floor, a balcony offers a panoramic view of the mosaic floors, as well as the reconstruction of a 5m wall with coloured plasterwork –all from wealthy houses in Pella. The museum is divided into five thematic sections, with the grave offerings standing out, while the information about the palace –which no longer exists– evokes images of past grandeur.

 Thessaloniki-Edessa Old National Road, Pella





## Archaeological Museum of Amphipolis

The Archaeological Museum of Amphipolis is linked to a sense of discovery. In 1976, and while work on the construction of the museum was well under way, workers unearthed an unlooted cist tomb made of poros blocks, carved into the natural rock. Besides the remains of a cremation, a silver larnax and a golden olive wreath were discovered; they belonged to the honoured Spartan general Brasidas, who died in the battle of Amphipolis, around 422 BC. The museum's permanent exhibition, which developed around these early finds, follows the course of local history, from prehistory to the Byzantine era.

Although Amphipolis belongs, of course, in Eastern Macedonia, it was founded by the Athenians in 437 BC, to control the natural wealth of Thrace, and soon became the apple of discord between them and the Spartans. The intense private and public life of the city, as well as

its idiosyncratic cults centred on local deities such as the Nymph, the muse Clio and the hero Risos, are reflected in the museum's exhibits, along with other impressive finds, such as the Amyntas' stele and the golden stater of Alexander the Great.

In 2014, the Archaeological Museum of Amphipolis was found in the eye of a journalistic storm, as a result of the discovery of the Kasta Tumulus, the famous funerary monument of Amphipolis that overwhelmed the public. The museum is currently housing the hauntingly beautiful head of the sphinx found in the third chamber of the burial monument until it is restored to its original position.



Amphipolis, Serres

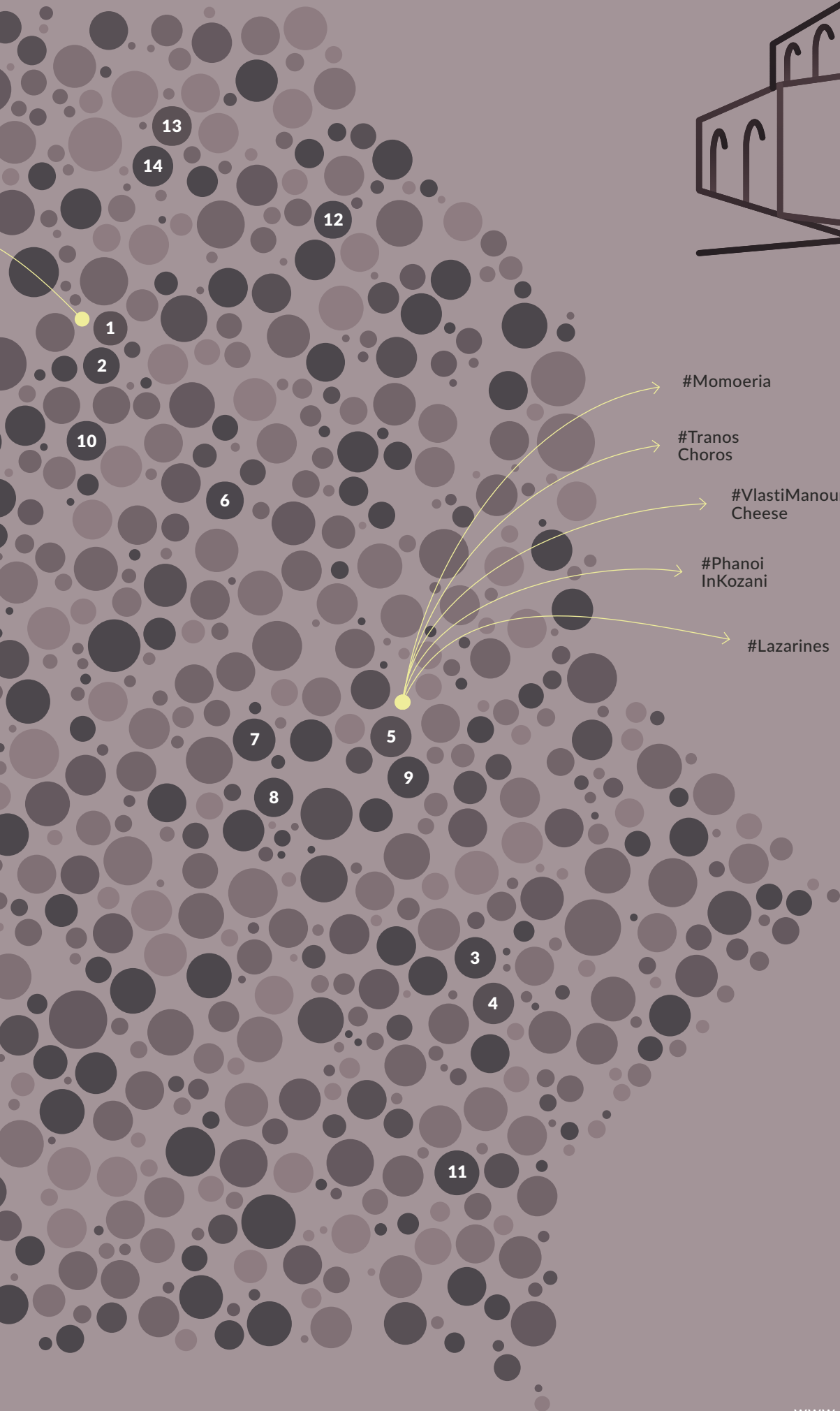
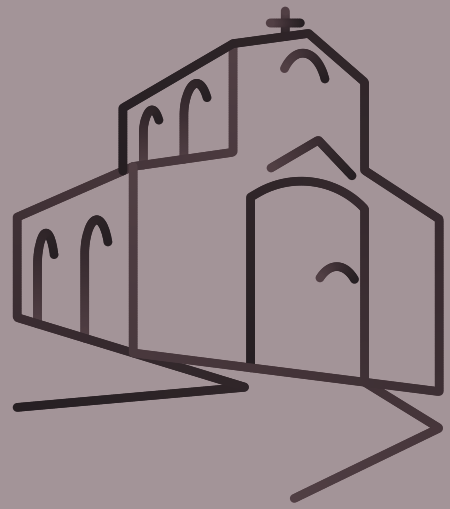


## REGION OF WESTERN MACEDONIA

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#Argoutsia





### Tsiatsiapas Mansion

In the picturesque district of Apozari in Kastoria, on the lakefront, rises the Tsiatsiapas Mansion –the sole surviving three-storey building of its kind, which, thanks to a restoration project completed in 2013, appears to give new meaning to the term “mansion”! As attested by the relief inscription on a corner stone in its southwest corner, the building was erected in 1754 on behalf of lord Moralis, and then passed to the hands of the lord and benefactor D. Tsiatsiapas, after whom it was named.

Although its architecture follows the standards of 18th century Macedonian mansions, the building never ceases to impress with its harmonious blend of stone and wood, its lofty bay windows and the outstanding functionality of its spaces. The ground and mezzanine floors, built entirely of unworked stone, accommodate storage and utility rooms respectively, while the first and second floors the comfortable living quarters, where timber-framed structure predominates. In the last floor, the visitor is in for a great surprise, as it is here that the largest part of the original rich decoration from 1798 has been preserved: carved and painted surfaces adorn almost every inch of the interior, walls, ceilings and

doors, with colourful symbolic and floral representations that combine local tradition and oriental art elements with western Baroque and Rococo influences.

If the Tsiatsiapas Mansion has whetted your appetite to delve deeper into this special Kastoria tradition, in the ground floor there is an exhibition featuring wonderful models of the several Kastorian mansions, which will provide you with a complete picture of the town's architectural history. If you go out, into the mansion's spacious garden, and close your eyes for a while, you may be able to hear the music from the banquets that used to take place here and often lasted for weeks.

📍 114 Nikis Street, Kastoria





## Byzantine Museum of Kastoria


The small yet remarkable Byzantine Museum of Kastoria was founded in 1989 and renovated in 2013, highlighting the diachronic prestige of Kastoria in the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine times through a new museum narrative. The particularity of this collection is its complementary role, since not only does it include 75 icons, 50 miniature artefacts and four sections of detached murals, but it also invites the visitor to wander around the town's many churches, thus enhancing the character of Kastoria as an open-air museum. Only thus will you discover that the local community has held a special affection for icons of female saints depicted full-length, usually placed in the narthex of the Middle Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Kastoria churches. The saints are commonly depicted as martyrs holding a cross in their hand, with the exception of Saint Marina, who is shown killing the demon with a hammer, and Saint Photini, who is portrayed praying with her hands open.

 Dexamenis Square, Kastoria



## Archaeological Museum of Aiani

What could be more human than a household pot accidentally slipping through your hands? This small, common 'accident' led to the unexpected discovery of a pottery collection in a public building in ancient Aiani, which featured a large circular cistern. The pots were recovered from the bottom of the cistern, where they had fallen while the locals were trying to draw water for their daily needs. These and other tales of everyday toil, as well as as grandeur, can be found in the Archaeological Museum of Aiani. One of them is undoubtedly the discovery of the marble statue of Nike at Megali Rachi, which bears striking similarities to the Nike of Samothrace. Mycenaean finds and matte-painted pottery, on the other hand, demonstrate that flourishing towns existed in Upper Macedonia long before the unification of Macedonian Hellenism by Philip II.

 Aiani, Kozani





## Aiani

Perched on the slopes of Megali Rachi, a lush hill in the Prefecture of Kozani, the archaeological site of Aiani is a town dragging its dead behind it. To the north and east of the hill, clusters of tombs and organized cemeteries have been uncovered in an imposing assemblage, with the royal necropolis surpassing in splendour even the domain of the living. Aiani was a centre of production of the so-called “Macedonian matt-painted” pottery and flourished from the end of the 6th to the beginning of the 4th century BC. It had a mint, as well as ceramic, metalworking, sculpture and terracotta figurine workshops, with trade linking the region with the rest of Greece.



 Aiani, Megali Rachi, Kozani



## Archaeological Collection of Kozani


The Panagiotideion Mansion, which started operating again in 2016 as the official home of the Archaeological Collection of Kozani, is nothing less than a pleasant surprise. On the two floors of this well-preserved neoclassical building you will find models of Neolithic dwellings and flutes made of bone, testifying to the development of architecture and music in Kozani since the 6th millennium BC. The group of stone anthropomorphic stelae found in Kryovrysi, Kranidia is a unique find, as they are the earliest statues in Greece and the Balkans. Vases, figurines and jewellery from historical times – products of trade or local workshops– attest to the locals' high standard of living, as well as the region's Greek culture.

 8 Dimokratias Street, Kozani



## Sisanio episcopal church

Although the Middle Byzantine church at Sisanio, Kozani is preserved only at foundation level, the Holy Metropolis of Sisanion and Siatista performs an annual supplication ritual there, a fact proving that the memory of sanctity is not lost in time. The ruins belong to a domed basilica, the past splendour of which is evidenced by the lower parts of the wall-paintings, and also by the scene after which it was named: the Virgin Mary with the bishop kneeling before her, indicating that the church was episcopal and, indeed, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. What no one has been able to discover so far is the urban, centre the existence of which a church of this size indicates, most probably somewhere quite near. The site is temporarily closed due to works, but is due to reopen soon.

 Sisanio, Kozani



## Maliogas-Argyriadis Mansion

The painted mansions of Siatista constitute a Macedonian tradition that looks like something out of a fairy tale. The Maliogas-Argyriadis mansion was built in 1759, i.e. during the period of the town's commercial prosperity, although no one knows who was its first owner. The only thing that is known for sure is that in 1844 the house passed into the hands of Dimitrios Argyriadis, one of the most important 19th century scholars and educators, who was responsible for the organization of its rich decoration. Geometric patterns, flowers, plants, animals, hunting scenes and even entire towns unfold before the visitor's astonished eyes, like pages from a forgotten book.



📍 30 Mitropoleos Street, Siatista, Kozani

## Poulko Mansion

Painted in the rosy shades of dawn, with deep green details and colourful representations, the Poulkidis mansion, known in Siatista as the "mansion of Poulko", is one of the best preserved examples of Macedonian traditional painting. The house's wooden decoration competes in richness and imagination with the labyrinthine spaces where the members of the owner's large household lived. From the elaborate plaster decoration on the fireplace to the summer "upper room" with stained glass windows from Venice, the specially created space for an orchestra, and the rare wall-painting depicting Constantinople, it is obvious that this beautiful mansion experienced glorious times, imprinted in every corner of the building.



📍 Geraneia, Siatista, Kozani



## Grigorios Vourkas Mansion

Once upon a time, Kozani had more than 100 mansions, of which very few have been preserved, whereas the Mansion of Grigorios Vourkas is currently the only 18th century monument in the entire town that is open to visitors. Erected in 1743, it took three whole years to complete the elaborate decoration of the house, which is organized around an inner courtyard known as "embati". The upper floor, traditionally used during the summer months, has preserved murals in the familiar Ottoman style, with ceilings filled with arabesques, although the Christian element is omnipresent, in the form of small crosses and a church.

📍 10 Dimogerontias Street, Kozani





## Archaeological Museum of Argos Orestiko

Ordinary people are at the heart of the Archaeological Museum of Argos Orestiko. The exhibits originate from chance discoveries by the locals, as well as recent excavations, such as that of the Krep- eni necropolis. One of the “bronze noblewomen”, as the two female burials with the largest number of grave goods have been named, wore 72 bracelets on her hands and feet. Among its most significant exhibits, the museum lists the Vattynaean’s Decree, the sole inscription of political content in Western Macedonia.

9 Eleftheriou Venizelou Street, Argos Orestiko



## Holy Monastery of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary in Torniki

In 2011, the Monastery of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary in Torniki was placed on rails and moved 140m downhill, in order to be protected from the flooding of the third artificial lake of the River Halia- mon. Although the monument itself, built in the 12th century, is considered to be relatively light (weighing around 260 tonnes), it bears great historical and artistic ‘weight’. This exceptionally elegant stone monastery is currently located on a slope with a 25% gradient and enjoys a magnificent view, comparable to its unique murals, dating from 1481 and 1730. Its oldest murals are considered the early work of a very distinctive group of artists from Kas- toria, who influenced the entire Balkans during the Post-Byzantine period.

Panagia, Torniki,  
Deskati, Grevena



## Petres

The great king of Macedon, Philip II, built the town of Petres as an observation post, as it was located on a 720m high hill and constituted the perfect location for supervising the border between Upper and Lower Macedonia. The town flourished after the mid-2nd century BC, with Via Egnatia passing nearby, and was destroyed a century later, when Caesar and Pompey reduced Western Macedonia to a battlefield. Having regained its former peacefulness, the town is perfectly embedded in the lush Macedonian nature, letting its foundations narrate its rich history.

Petres, Amyntaio, Florina





## Archaeological Museum of Florina

With huge ceramic jars adorning its entrance, the Archaeological Museum of Florina presents the region's history from its earliest habitation, around 5800 BC, to the Byzantine era. Our journey into the past begins with prehistoric finds from the settlement of Armenochori, as well as the jaws of a 200,000-500,000 years-old giant mammoth found in the village of Sotira. The ground floor, however, is dominated by an impressive collection of Roman sculpture, while an entire hall is occupied by a mosaic with geometric and floral motifs that decorated the floor of a Roman house at Kato Kleines. On the first floor, on the other hand, domestic objects reveal the secrets of life in the Hellenistic towns of Agios Panteleimon and Petra. Our tour through time ends with the Byzantine Collection, which contains objects from the Byzantine monuments in the Prespa Lakes region dating from the 10th to the 18th century; the most significant are the wall paintings from the basilica of Saint Achilleios.



📍 8 Sidirodromikou Stathmou Street, Florina



## Agios Panteleimon, Florina

On the hill of Agios Panteleimon, overlooking the town of Florina, archaeological excavations unearthed, in 1930-1934, part of a Hellenistic town. However, it would take several years, namely until the 1980s excavations, to confirm their hypotheses, whereas the original remains were destroyed in the 1950s, during the construction of a hotel. Although its name has been lost in the depths of time, the town was founded during the reign of Philip II, in the 4th century BC, and was abruptly abandoned in the early 1st century BC, due to fire or enemy invasion. Excavations have so far brought to light an area of 8 stremmata containing houses organized in four blocks separated by streets. And if the absence of public and religious buildings robs us of some of the town's glamour, the rich finds from the houses offer valuable information concerning its inhabitants' daily life.



📍 Agios Panteleimon, Florina



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#Polyphonic  
SongOfEpirus



#Sacred  
Forests

#Dekapentavgoustos  
Feast

#Syrrako  
Festival

#Ioannina  
Silversmithing

#TheVirgin's  
Lament

#Kykles

#Bandidoi  
&Gaitanaki

#Kangelari

### Dodona

The oracle of Dodona, dedicated to the worship of Zeus and his wife Dione and always associated with the forces of nature, is nestled in the lush valley along the foot of Mount Tomaros. According to the myth recounted by Herodotus, the oracle owes its foundation to two winged 'prophets', i.e. two black doves that flew from Thebes in Egypt; one of them landed in Libya, where the sanctuary of Zeus Ammon was founded, and the other in Dodona, where it sat on an oak tree and pointed out the oracle's precise location with human voice. For centuries, the sanctuary was open-air, with the sacred tree being the focus of worship and divination. To have direct contact with Mother Earth, the priests walked barefoot and slept on the ground, while oracles were given on the basis of natural sounds, such as the rustling of leaves and the flight of birds on the branches of the sacred tree.

The first, small temple of Zeus was built in the early 4th century BC, but Dodona flourished most in the following century, thanks to king Pyrrhus, who implemented a grandiose building programme that gave the sanctuary its monumental character. He ex-

panded the pre-existing temples and had new ones, dedicated to Themis, Aphrodite and Hercules, as well as a series of impressive public buildings erected: the largest theatre of the time, with a capacity of 18,000 spectators, the bouleuterion, the prytaneion and the stadium, where the Naia, games in honour of Zeus, were being held.

Although the sacred oak tree was cut down during Byzantine times, with the prevalence of Christianity and the establishment of a three-aisled basilica over the ruins of the sanctuary, the ancient site remains vibrant, with the restored theatre now hosting the events of the Dodona Festival.

 Dodona





## Byzantine Museum of Ioannina

The Byzantine Museum of Ioannina is located in one of the most beautiful archaeological parks in the world, the lush Castle Acropolis, also known as "Itch Kale". It is housed in the first floor of the Royal Pavilion that was erected in 1958 by the Greek Army to accommodate Paul I and his family when he would visit Ioannina. In the reception hall, the impressive mural of Constantine the Great's victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge, measuring 2.30×4.54m, sets the special tone of the museum, balancing between religious art and folklore. The silverware exhibition in the nearby Treasury bridges these two worlds even more clearly. It is amazing how a "secular" art that flourished in Epirus was put at the service of Christianity, producing masterpieces of meticulous craftsmanship. The last historic building belonging to the Byzantine Museum is the Fethiye Mosque, just across the street, where visitors can see the preserved aniconic murals, as well as the two Late Byzantine colonettes built into the mosque's mihrab.




 Ioannina Castle, Ioannina



## Archaeological Museum of Ioannina

How does one justify the need to establish a museum? Ioannina and Epirus were popular destinations for European travellers during the 18th and 19th centuries, who often engaged in excavations and collection of antiquities, taking their finds abroad with them. The effort to rescue local antiquities began when Epirus was liberated from the Ottoman rule in 1913 and lasted until 2003, when the refurbishment of the museum was completed and its exhibits finalized, starting from the earliest appearance of man in Epirus (Lower Palaeolithic period) to the Late Roman era. The finds from the Sanctuary of Dodona occupy a particularly prominent position, with a hall dedicated exclusively to the oldest and most significant oracle of early antiquity. As for the building itself, not only does it enjoy the best view of the city, but it is also the work of the architect Aris Konstantinidis, who had incorporated the use of atriums in museum design, alluding to the basic type of ancient Greek house.



 Eikostis Pemptis Martiou Square, Ioannina



## Nicopolis

The violent past and natural beauty of Nicopolis, the plentiful waters, the fertile land's smooth altitude fluctuation and the connection with the Ionian Sea, make this Roman jewel particularly remarkable. The largest archaeological site in Greece, Nicopolis was established as a symbol of Octavian's triumphant victory over the most fascinating couple of the ancient world, Mark Anthony and Cleopatra, in 31 BC. The city was built on the blood of the defeated in order to establish the Roman rule in western Greece, merging pre-existing settlements and moving their inhabitants into the newly established city by force. Its privileged location gave Nicopolis a rare continuity, as it has neither fallen victim to on-going construction nor to the reuse of its building material. Thus, the Roman odeum, the monument of Augustus, the magnificent aqueduct, the nymphaeum, the city walls, the funerary monuments and the Early Christian basilicas need no imagination to shine before the eyes of the modern visitor, as their splendour remains visible to this day.



## Archaeological Museum of Nicopolis

The Archaeological Museum of Nicopolis focuses on a unique archaeological site, since Octavian Augustus' victory at the Battle of Actium not only provided the impetus for the foundation of the city, but also had a decisive influence on the shape of the Roman Empire and the course of history. The exhibits include marble funerary sculptures, busts, architectural members, jewellery, ceramics and tools, but there is one object that represents the philosophy of the museum more than any other: a marble cylindrical statue base featuring, in bas-relief, an Amazonomachy scene. This small sculptured masterpiece was found supporting a pulpit in a church, with part of it overlaid by a mosaic featuring motifs of religious character, demonstrating the importance of Nicopolis as a cultural crossroads; for not only was it an important Roman city with Greek inhabitants, but it later made space for Christianity, before it was finally abandoned in the 10th-11th centuries AD.








## Necromanteion of Acheron

Enveloped in a cloak of mysticism, the Necromanteion of Acheron was one of the most famous ancient oracles. Here, however, worshippers were not just seeking predictions of the future, but to communicate with the souls of their departed loved ones. When he recounts Ulysses' descent to the realm of Hades to obtain an oracle from the blind seer Tiresias for his return home, it is with remarkable accuracy that Homer records the location of the Necromanteion, where the River Acheron merges with its tributaries, Kokytos and Pyriphlegethon, on the bank of Lake Acherousia. According to legend, Lake Acherousia was the entrance to the Underworld; although it no longer exists, as it was drained during the 1950s, the place retains its mystical aura intact.

The Necromanteion was built during the Hellenistic period (late 4th-early 3rd century BC) and was later expanded to accommodate the ever-increasing number of pilgrims, operating continuously until it was burned down by the Romans in 167 BC. The complex layout of the site, with warehouses for the offerings and multiple rooms for accommodation and

preparation leading to the main sanctuary, served perfectly the ritual, a series of tests intended to put the worshippers into a vulnerable state that would facilitate hallucinations: physical and mental purification, a strict diet, the consumption of special herbs and sacrifices were combined with the priests' chanting, the darkness and the suggestive atmosphere of the endless corridors. The priests, however, left nothing to chance. In order to ensure the effectiveness of their rituals, they would present human effigies –“idols” of souls– to the worshippers, with the help of mechanisms similar to those used in ancient theatre! Even without this special set-up, it is certain that the Necromanteion will give you pleasant chills, especially when you visit the underground crypt carved into the rock, where the dark palace of Persephone and Hades was located.

 Mesopotamos, Preveza



## Kassopi

Ancient Kassopi is not just another mainland town. It is a rare example of architectural harmony, with evenly spaced and technologically advanced houses, with a sewage system, a water supply network and exceptional public buildings, which reveal high levels of living and aesthetics. Situated on a natural 'balcony', at an altitude of 650m, on the slopes of Zalongo, with a healthy climate and excellent vistas of the Ambracian Gulf and the Ionian Sea, it boasts a unique location. The theatre of Kassopi, with its impressive polygonal masonry, is ideally oriented, thus demonstrating that ancient Greek theatres were not only places for watching a performance, but also spaces for mental and physical exaltation in direct visual contact with the lifegiving sea. The geometric perfection of the Katagogion, the town's market, rivals all other public buildings; finally, we should mention that the sole example of a Macedonian-type tomb in Epirus is to be found at the southwestern end of the Kassopi town.



 Kamarina, Preveza



## Castle of Parga

As from a painting, the castle of Parga hangs from the rocks above the waves, making the hill look like a ghost emerging from the mist. The Normans constructed the first fortifications in the 14th century, but the Venetians perfected them when they became rulers of Parga in 1401, taking full advantage of its naturally fortified location on a rocky peninsula surrounded by the sea on three sides and facing the town on the fourth.

The castle changed owners several times and was destroyed almost as many. It was demolished three times by the Turks during the Venetian rule, with the Venetians rebuilding it, before it passed successively to the French and the British. The latter sold the town in 1819 for 150,000 liras to Ali Pasha, who had major additions made to the castle. Walking around the castle and its alleyways takes some attention, as there are some rough spots, but nothing compares to the unique atmosphere and the view of the Parga port, the beach of Valtos and the Panagia islet.

 Parga





## Archaeological Museum of Igoumenitsa

There are two things one should know before visiting the Archaeological Museum of Igoumenitsa: a) as Thesprotia is one of the most mountainous and isolated prefectures in the northwestern end of Greece, its archaeological treasures remain relatively unknown, and b) before 2009, the region didn't even have its own archaeological museum. The meticulously designed permanent exhibition comes to fill this huge gap, focusing on the four impressive ancient settlements of the region (Gitana, Elea, Doliani-Phanoti and Early Christian Ladochori), weaving a narrative that includes public and private life, as well as burial customs, to which the upper floor of the museum is dedicated.




 2 Eikostis Ogdois Oktovriou Street, Igoumenitsa



## Elea


Ancient Elea, where the unknown Acropolis of Thesprotia is hidden, was founded in the mid-4th century BC, almost two centuries before the establishment of the famous Epirote League. The Acropolis of Elea was located at the highest point of the settlement, protected by a massive fortification. The fact that some of the walls reached a thickness of 3.5m has obviously contributed to them surviving to this day, while around 3,000 Eleans once lived within these walls. The remains of the lavish houses, the odea, the schools, the agora, the underground stoas and a theatre with a capacity of 3-4,000 spectators have much to reveal about the inhabitants' standard of living, while the area's impressive landscape will reward you.

 Elea,  
Chrysavgi, Thesprotia



## Ragio Tower

If you are wondering why an 1850s Ottoman tower ("koules") is of particular archaeological interest, the answer is simple: because it was built on a fortification wall dating from the 5th century BC. The surrounding hill, 85m in height, is lush and fairy-tale-like, and in the Ottoman period it was inhabited and systematically cultivated. But don't let your imagination run wild. This is not an old mansion, but a military watchtower, where the garrison of Chadji Gravas, the Agha of Igoumenitsa, resided. Precisely for this reason, it has not only battlements, but also a murder-hole, i.e. a special opening through which the guards could drench the enemy with hot oil or water.

 Ragio,  
Igoumenitsa, Thesprotia



## Gitana

Gitana is a grassy place. Surrounded by the River Kalamas, it features extensive archaeological remains and a diverse natural landscape, although it is more or less unknown to the general public. The ancient town was founded during 336-330 BC and succeeded Elea as seat of the Thesprotian League, a fact that granted it special importance in antiquity. The main function of the Gitana theatre, situated on the green river bank, was to host the meetings of this continental alliance. If one observes carefully the rows of stone seats one can still discern inscriptions of names such as Menedomos, Pausanias and Charopis, although we do not know exactly to which historical figures they correspond. The most important of the public buildings that have survived the passage of time is the Prytaneion, which also served as the town's Archive, covering an area of about 1500m<sup>2</sup>. In the building's centre was a courtyard, around which there were workshops, storerooms and banqueting rooms with mosaic floors preserved to this day.



 Kalamas Dam, Philiates



## Archaeological Museum of Arta

The exhibition of the Archaeological Museum of Arta, housed in a spacious, brand new building next to the River Arachthos and near Arta's historic bridge, exceeds all expectations. The history of archaeological research goes back to 1897, when the discovery of two impressive cemeteries in the ancient town of Ambracia and the Koudounotrypa cave in 1916, where the Nymphs and all the associated deities (Hermes, Pan, Silens and Satyrs) were worshipped, led to an excavation frenzy. Although the museum narrative covers the typical triptych of Public Life, Cemeteries and Private Life, nothing can prepare you for the life-size reconstruction of a lordly house, where you have the opportunity to even attend an ancient banquet, combining a thoroughly modern approach with the rich finds from the area.



 1 Arachthou Street, Arta



## Doliani

The fortified settlement of Doliani, identified with ancient Phanoti, was completely unknown until recently. Perched on an 85m high hill, right next to River Kalamas, Doliani was for many years drowned in bushes and completely inaccessible to the public and researchers, a place with stones, and bricks, and tiles, and timber, thrown together at random. Under the vegetation, however, was hidden a unique example of a diachronic Thesprotian settlement, which was inhabited from the second half of the 4th century BC until modern times, as clearing and remodelling revealed.



📍 Geroplatanos, Parapotamos



## Dymokastro

The fortified settlement of Dymokastro (Twin Castle), which according to researchers is identified with ancient Elina, boasts the best view of the Ionian Sea than any other archaeological site in Greece. Although the settlement –preserved at foundation level– flourished during the Hellenistic period, it is hard to believe that the locals once started each day with an unobstructed view of Corfu, Paxos, Antipaxos and Lefkas.



📍 Dymokastro, Perdika



## Church of the Virgin Mary Parigoritissa, Arta

The church of the Virgin Mary Parigoritissa represents the Platonic ideal of a religious structure, since the central dome rests on eight marble colonettes that do not extend all the way down to the floor, thus creating the heavenly impression that the dome is floating in the air! The Parigoritissa church, also known as “Lady of Arta”, took its current, somewhat extraordinary form during the 13th century, as a result of the intervention of emperor Nicephorus I and his wife Anna Palaeologina Kantakouzene, who changed its plan to create a sturdy square church with five mudbrick domes.

📍 3 Parigoritrias Street, Arta

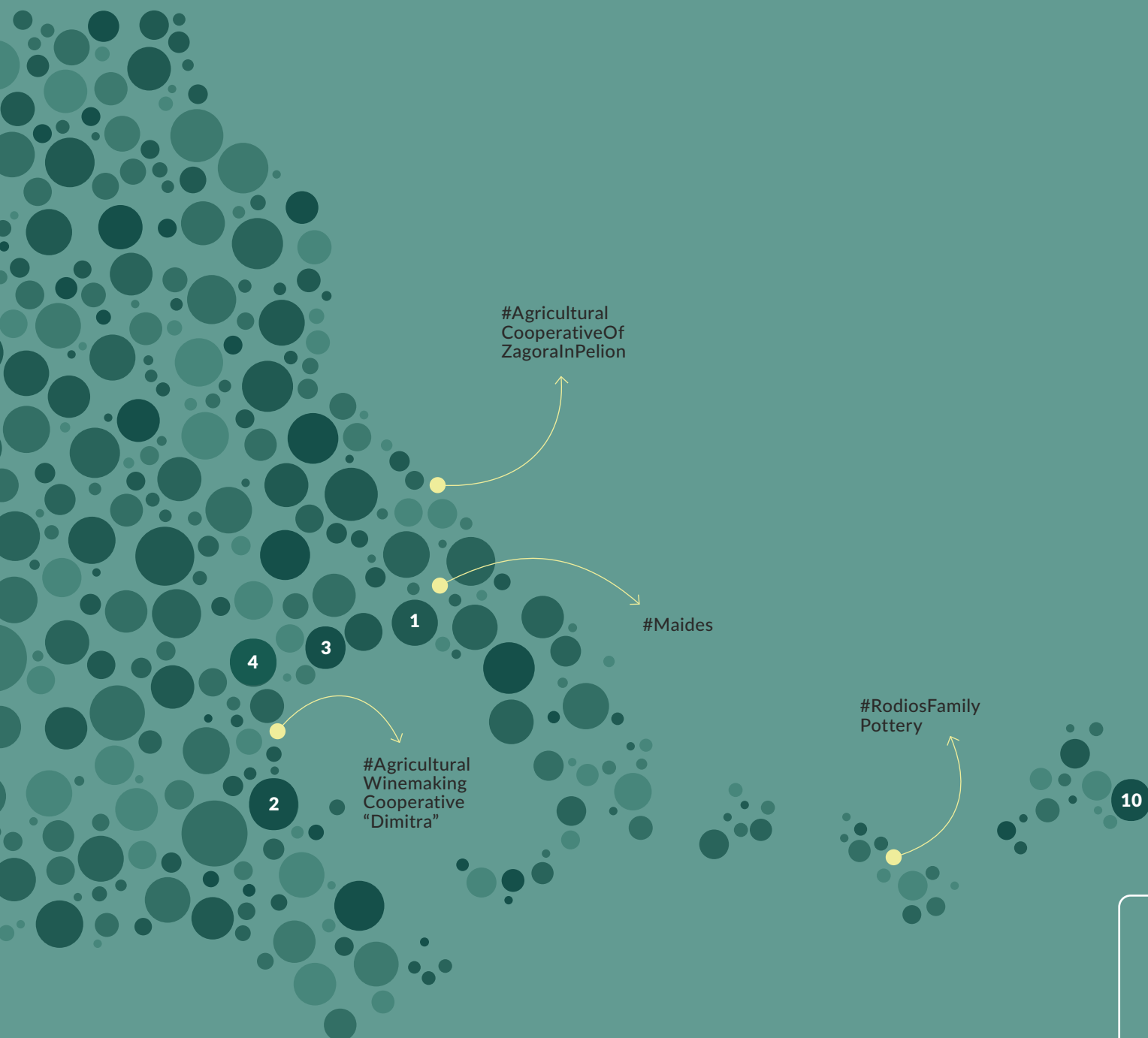






## REGION OF THESSALY

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### Athanasakeion Archaeological Museum of Volos

The Archaeological Museum of Volos is a tangible tribute to, primarily, three people. Alexios Athanasakis, who provided the funds for the construction of the museum, the archaeologist Apostolos S. Arvanitopoulos, a controversial and passionate character who excavated key sites in Thessaly, and Professor Giorgos Ch. Chourmouziadis, who adopted a pioneering approach to the organization of the exhibits, linking the ancient objects with the history of mankind.

But let's take things from the beginning. The elegant neoclassical building we see today, surrounded by a lush green grove, was inaugurated in 1909, to house the painted funerary stelae –a wonderful example of Hellenistic painting– discovered by Arvanitopoulos in ancient Demetrias. Since then, seven more halls have been added to the museum, containing finds representing the entire spectrum of

Thessalian excavations, from the Neolithic to the Roman period.

The Neolithic settlements are perhaps the ones to attract most of the attention, not only because of the abundance of objects, but also due to the fact that nothing is confined in display cases. Chourmouziadis, who designed the exhibition in 1975-1976, placed the exhibits on niches or shelves made of materials analogous to those used in the Neolithic period (wood, reed, stone, flax), with no barrier between the visitor and the ancient object. In this extremely simple way, a relationship of familiarity with the public has developed, aiming at education, aesthetic cultivation and information, which the museum maintains alive to this day.

📍 1 Athanasaki Street, Volos



## Giannopouleion Archaeological Museum of Almyros

The small, elegant neoclassical building housing the Almyros Museum is perhaps the only archaeological museum in Greece that was founded after the intervention of local social groups. Their mission was clear: to preserve the history of Fthiotic Achaea, Fthiotic Thebes and Alos. More than a century later, the mythological characters that emerged in this region –Frixos and Elli, Achilles and the Myrmidons, etc.– surround the exhibits, which take us back to daily life in these three ancient towns.



📍 50 Athinon Street, Almyros

## Dimini

Dimini is the oldest and most special Neolithic settlement in Europe. Its high walls –still surviving to the present day– form six concentric circles that surround the entire hill in pairs. The houses were arranged around the central courtyard or in the gap between the pairs of enclosures and had shared courtyards. The site was excavated with perseverance and patience during 1886-2011, until the discovery of two imposing Mycenaean tholos tombs marked this titanic effort as a complete success.

📍 Dimini, Magnesia



## Sesklo

What does a Neolithic settlement need to ensure its longevity? Fresh water, arable land and close proximity to the sea. Sesklo, the most prominent Neolithic settlement of Thessaly, had all three. It was built on deep seasonal streams, near a flat and fertile plain, and had access to local trade. And yes, according to the legendary Thracian archaeologist Christos Tsountas, Sesklo owes its name to the humble chards (seskoulo in Greek), that still surround the archaeological site in their wild version.

📍 Sesklo, Magnesia





### Diachronic Museum of Larisa

If there is something to know about the Larisa Diachronic Museum, is that size does matter. Built on the Mezourlo hill, on the southern outskirts of the city, on an area of 54 stremmata, it contains almost 2,000 exhibits, a number rivalling some of the most important museums in Greece. And the Thessalian plain is to blame for it all. From the Palaeolithic to the Ottoman period, the museum follows the inhabitants' evolutionary trajectory that was based on the land, the waters and the mountain. The Thessalians were mainly nomadic pastoralists, adapting to the area's changing landscape in order to create a truly immense amount of wealth.

Among the 11 sections of the exhibition, one of the few menhirs that have been found in Greece occupies a prominent place. Menhirs are prehistoric monuments alluding to the impressive megalithic monuments of Carnac in Brittany, which inspired the famous comic strip *Asterix & Obelix*. The Greek menhir, however, found at Magoula in Larissa, has features in low relief, suggesting that it represents the first attempt of Bronze

Age man to render the human form on a monumental scale.

Some evolutionary stages later, during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, we encounter objects made of green Thessalian stone, a rare material that originated from the quarries of Chasambali. Its extraction was permanently discontinued in 1985. Elements made of this rare material can be found in the church of Saint Sophia in Constantinople, Saint Mark's basilica in Venice, the Westminster cathedral in London and the great mosque at Kairouan in Tunisia, among others. In other words, we are talking about a stone with a long-lasting presence in some of the most important monuments of the world's cultural heritage. At the Larisa Diachronic Museum you will have the opportunity to marvel at a fragmentary statue of a male youth made of this much sought-after green granite, one of the only two created all over the world.



Larisa Peripheral Road,  
Mezourlo, Larisa





## Archaeological Museum of Karditsa

If the archaeological treasures of Karditsa have remained unknown for quite some time, it is because they were hidden away in the storerooms of the Archaeological Museum of Volos until recently. Opening its doors in 2010, the Archaeological Museum of Karditsa came to remedy this injustice, displaying the archaeological wealth of the region as it deserves. With exhibits from the Palaeolithic period to late antiquity, the exhibition is organized chronologically and according to thematic sections, approaching the past in a completely anthropocentric way, with references to private and public life. One of the museum's most fascinating narratives, a Delphic inscription from the 2nd century BC offers the occasion to unravel the unknown history of the ancient towns of Kierion, Orthi, Metropolis, Gomphoi and Argitheia; all of them boast impressive finds, such as the almost life-size terracotta horse head and the cult statue of Apollo Hoplite from the temple of Metropolis, or the marble larnax from Gomphoi featuring a depiction of Persephone's abduction.

📍 1 Lachana & Tzella Streets, Karditsa



## Archaic temple of Apollo in Metropolis, Karditsa

Like the legendary Phoenix, the Archaic Temple of Apollo in ancient Metropolis literally rose from its ashes, as it was unexpectedly discovered in 1994, under a 2m high mound that had been formed by the charred fragments of its roof. This is the dramatic story of the once magnificent, Doric peripteral hekatompedos temple (31×13.75m), built in the mid-6th century BC from local soft sandstone, only to be abandoned shortly after its collapse by fire in the mid-2nd century BC. Even so, it remains the best-preserved ancient monumental temple in Thessaly. The fact that no temple was built over it meant that all its stone architectural members were found buried exactly as they had been left after the disaster, trapped like insects in amber, until their eventual discovery. Among them was the cult statue of Apollo in a rare depiction as a hoplite in full armour.

📍 Lianokokkala, Metropolis Karditsa



## Byzantine Castle of Phanari, Karditsa

It may now sound incredible, but the Byzantine castle of Phanari in Karditsa, on the eastern side of Agrapha –now one of the best preserved medieval castles in Greece– had deteriorated to such an extent that its excellent raw materials (hewn stone and bricks) was taken and used in the construction of the stone building that accommodates the National Bank of Karditsa, as well as in local residences. This miniature castle, erected on a 350m high hill, controlled the passage from Epirus to Thessaly, so it was systematically claimed by invaders, until it was finally liberated by Georgios Karaiskakis' son, Spyridon, and an army of 7,000 men, on August 18, 1881.



📍 Phanari, Karditsa



## Theopetra Cave

Right across from the majestic Meteora, over the village of Theopetra, a rocky limestone mass hides the first cave excavated in Thessaly, offering the visitor an eerie experience of descending into another, wet world. Thanks to this enchanting cave with its continuous anthropogenic deposits and remains of human activity, it was possible to study the transition from the Palaeolithic to the Neolithic way of life, and the human evolution from Homo Neanderthalensis to Homo Sapiens. It is in this site, that the oldest human footprints ever discovered in Greece were also found; two of them belong to children aged 4-5 years-old and date from 130,000 years BCE.



📍 Theopetra, Trikala







## Peristera, Alonnisos

In this small island of the Northern Sporades, where the few locals still manage to survive without electricity and water supply, the fisherman and diver Dimitrios Mavrikis discovered, in 1985, the wreck of a merchant ship from the Classical period –the largest in size and capacity that has been found to date. Its discovery off Peristera, at a depth of about 25-30m, was particularly important from a historical and archaeological point of view, as it significantly changed the prevailing perceptions regarding the sizes of merchant ships from that time.

Measuring 30m in length and 10m in width, the ship dates from around 425-420 BC and is believed to have been carrying amphoras filled with the famous wines of Mendi (ancient city of Chalcidice) and Peparithos (modern Skopelos). It is most likely that it belonged to an Athenian merchant and it sank because either it was caught in a storm or a fire broke out on deck. Despite the destruction that sent it forever underwater, more than 3,000 amphorae survived almost intact, an archaeological find of tre-

mendous importance that earned the Peristera shipwreck the characterisation “The Parthenon of Shipwrecks”.

This impressive shipwreck is now open to visitors and offers a first class underwater experience. Thanks to the Alonissos Underwater Museum, the first of its kind to operate in Greece, you have the opportunity to explore it under the supervision of experienced professional divers. And what do you know, if you are lucky enough to win Neptune’s favour, you might even meet one of the rare Mediterranean monk seals (*Monachus monachus*) that take shelter in the area, which is part of the beautiful National Marine Park of Alonissos North Sporades.

 Peristera, Alonnisos



#T'Agiau  
Pancakes

#Corfu  
Philharmonics

#Patounis  
SoapFactory

#Karsaniko  
Embroidery

#Egklouvli  
Lentils

#Porsaniko  
Knife

#Lefkadian  
Ladopita  
(OliveOilPie)







## REGION OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS

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### Old Fortress of Corfu

Arguably the most iconic monument of Corfu, the Old Fortress or Fortezza, is a true masterpiece of defensive architecture. The first fortifications in the area were constructed during the 6th century AD, when the Byzantine town of Corfu was established on this naturally fortified peninsula with its two hills by the remaining inhabitants of the ancient town that had been destroyed by the Goths. The two peaks were to give the town its name, "Koryfo" ("koryfi" in Greek means peak), from which "Corfu" derives.

The Byzantines would fortify the eastern hill (Sea Tower or Old Castle), but the most important fortifications would be erected after the 15th century by the Venetians, for whom Corfu gained enormous commercial and strategic importance, especially in terms of defence against the Ottomans. It was them who would construct the famous Contrafossa, the moat that would essentially turn the former Byzantine town into an artificial island, and fortify the western hill (Land Tower or New Castle), while they would reinforce the entire fortress later, in order to protect themselves from a new threat, i.e. the cannons.

The effectiveness of the Venetian fortifications was amply demonstrated when the Fortress withstood three relentless Ottoman sieges that had disastrous consequences for the entire island. Tragically, the greatest destruction that the Fortress suffered was not caused by the Ottomans, but by an explosion in the powder magazine of the Old Castle, in 1718, which caused hundreds of deaths and the destruction of most of the buildings.

The history of the Old Fortress does not, of course, end here. Although it was never captured, it passed successively in the hands of the French, the Russians, the British, the Italians and the Germans, each time resulting in new modifications and additions to its architectural components. Accordingly, its premises were used for various purposes: following the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the population exchange, many refugee families settled here, while during World War II the Nazis used the castles to imprison the Jews of Corfu.

But this is what makes a tour of the Old Fortress irresistible today – a sense that everyone who has been here has left their own mark on history. Completing one's walk in the imposing Spianada square, and before entering the Fortress, one cannot help

but stand in front of the robust statue of Count Von Der Schulenburg, the work of the Italian sculptor Antonio Corradini, who heroically defended Corfu in 1716, the final victory against the Ottomans.


Crossing the bridge across the sea moat and passing through the main gate of the Fortress seem to mark the transition to an independent world surrounded by the sea, where it is easy to forget about the present and the mundane reality. Inside the Fortress, stand out the British barracks and the Venetian prisons, the Latin Chapel of Our Lady of the Carmelites, erected at the beginning of the 17th century, and especially the beautiful church of Saint George, built in



imitation of the Doric style in 1840, during the British occupation. After the British left, the church was made Catholic and decorated with icons from the church of Saint Spyridon in the old town of Corfu. Of course, one should not miss to climb to the highest point of the Fortress, where a magnificent panoramic view awaits, on one side towards the deep blue Ionian sea and on the other the aristocratic old town.

If at any time you think you are listening to strange music, don't worry, you are not imagining things. Its played by students of the Ionian University, as the old Venetian hospital accommodates the Music Studies Department of the Ionian University. Other build-

ings accommodate the Historical Archive of Corfu, the Public Library and the Corfu Byzantine Collection, which are also worth visiting.

 Old town of Corfu, Corfu





### New Fortress of Corfu

The fact that the Old Fortress of Corfu is the main tourist attraction on the island of the Phaeacians, does not mean that the New Fortress, which dominates the Agios Markos hill, at the northwestern end of the town, is not in itself an excellent example of late Renaissance defensive architecture.

The New Fortress was constructed by the Venetians in the 16th century, following a protest by the Corfiots to the Republic of Venice for the lack of fortifications outside the walls of the old Acropolis. The Venetians agreed to the demand, acknowledging that the Old Fortress was no longer sufficient for the town's protection, and thus, work on the New Fortress began around 1576. Tradition has it that over 10,000 workers worked in the projects on a daily basis, whereas the Venetian architect Ferrante Vitelli had to have some 2,000 houses and churches demolished, in order to acquire the necessary building materials. Although the project was not completed before 1645, the sacrifices were not in vain, as the New Fortress played an important role in 1716, i.e. in the last Ottoman siege.

During the British Protection period (1814-1864), several interventions were carried out in the New Fortress. In the past, the two fortresses were con-

nected by walls that completely enclosed the town, but after the end of the British rule over the Ionian Islands and the Union with Greece in 1864, the British were forced by the Great Powers to demolish them.

Nevertheless, the Venetian legacy remains very much alive in the fortress, with the eastern gate still decorated with the relief of the Saint Mark's winged lion, the emblem of Venice, dating from 1728. From the Bastion of the Seven Winds one can enjoy perhaps the best panoramic view of the town and the open sea, while on the ground floor you might catch some of the cultural events that are hosted from time to time in the stone British barracks, which also houses the Museum of Ceramic Art.

📍 Old town of Corfu, Corfu







## Corfu Museum of Asian Art

The last thing one would expect to find in Corfu is a museum dedicated exclusively to the cultures of exotic Asia! And yet, the Museum of Asian Art is not only the island's most extraordinary museum, but also the only one of its kind throughout Greece, with a collection of 15,000 objects promising to transport the visitor to the farthest corners of the Far East. It is housed in the dazzling Palace of Archangel Michael and Saint George, the largest and most important building of the British rule in the Ionian Islands, which was erected during 1818-1823 and was used as, among others, the residence of the High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands and the headquarters of the equestrian order of Saint Michael and Saint George.

The museum is due to the art lover Grigorios Manos, ambassador of Greece to Austria, who invested his entire property to the acquisition of thousands of works of Chinese, Korean and Japanese art at auctions in Vienna and Paris during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In 1919, he donated his collection to the Greek state for the purpose of creating a museum, which was finally inaugurated in 1928, with him as director; shortly afterwards, however, he would breathe his last in the very museum he had been dreaming of for so long. Subsequent donations

of items from Nepal, Tibet, Gandhara (ancient Pakistan), India, Siam (present-day Thailand), Cambodia, and the nomadic peoples of Central Asia resulted in the museum being renamed from "Museum of Sino-Japanese Art" to "Museum of Asian Art".

The permanent exhibition spreads over the two wings of the first floor, with the Chinese collection, covering almost 30 centuries, and the Japanese collection (14th-19th century) standing out. Among exhibits of unmatched craftsmanship, such as the famous Chinese porcelains and masterpieces of Japanese painting and printmaking, you can marvel at the impressive armour of Samurai warriors, ornate screens and gold-embroidered kimonos, a room dedicated to the Japanese tea ritual and eerie masks of the Noh theatre.

📍 Palace of Archangel Michael and Saint George (Old Palace), Corfu



### Museum of Palaiopolis - Mon Repos

A rare experience awaits the visitor of the Palaiopolis Museum - Mon Repos, where the beauty of nature converses with the ancient world and modern history, meeting at a magnificent mansion. Two kilometres from the Corfu town, in the lush park of the former royal estate of Mon Repos, is located the homonymous mansion, a lavish two-storey building and excellent example of neoclassical architecture of the Regency period. Built during the British rule (1828-1831) to designs by the British architect George Whitmore (architect of the iconic Palaces of Saint Michael and Saint George), the mansion was originally constructed as a summer residence for the High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, Frederick Adams and his wife, Diamantina Palatianou, to serve other purposes later on; among others, it housed the School of Fine Arts and the Seminary, accommodated important visitors from Europe, and was used by the royal family of Greece during 1864-1967.

The permanent exhibition of the museum, inaugurated in 2001, is divided into two sections and spreads across fourteen halls. On the ground floor, time has stopped in the 19th century: a photograph

exhibition takes us back to the time of British rule, while the decoration and original objects from this period, namely rare documents, portraits, furniture, works of art and personal effects, illustrate the history of the building and the lives of the Adams family and other prominent residents. The atmosphere changes on the second floor, which is dedicated to ancient Corfu and features finds from the excavations in Palaiopolis, from the Archaic to the Roman era, with particular emphasis on the ancient agora, the Roman baths and the sanctuaries.

The captivating air of the past accompanies the visitor on his walk in the idyllic gardens of the park, where, next to rare plant species, monuments of different ages are to be found: the sanctuaries of Hera Akraia and Apollo Corcyrean and the Doric temple in Kardaki (the best preserved ancient temple in Corfu), as well as the Post-Byzantine church of the Saviour and the monastery of Saint Euphemia.

📍 Mon Repos Estate, Corfu



## Antivouniotissa Museum

In the heart of the historic centre of Corfu, you will find the Holy Church of the Virgin Mary, one of the town's oldest Christian monuments. Built at the end of the 15th century, the single-aisled, timber-roofed basilica combines a plain exterior with a rich decoration in the nave: high pews, a painted 'wallpaper' on the walls and the "ourania" (ceiling) with gilded wood-carvings, all distinctive elements of the Ionian type basilica.

No better place could therefore exist to accommodate an impressive collection of religious icons dating from the 15th to the 19th century. Works by renowned painters, the 90 or so icons housed here are proof of the important role Corfu played in the development of Greek religious painting. Among them are works by several Cretan painters, such as the famous Michael Damaskinos, for whom Corfu was a regular stop on their way to Venice.

If you find yourself in Corfu on December 26 or August 23, don't miss the opportunity to have a truly solemn experience, as it is only on these two days each year that services are held in the church.



 25 Arseniou Street, Mouragia, Corfu



## Archaeological Collection of Stavros, Ithaca


The Stavros Collection, to be found in the village of the same name, consists of archaeological finds from northern Ithaca dating from the Early Bronze Age to the Roman period. Among the numerous exhibits alluding to Homer's *Odyssey*, stands out a fragment of a terracotta female mask from the 2nd century BC from the Loizos cave; inscribed with "EYCHIN ODYSSEI" (prayer for Odysseus), the masks confirms that the legendary hero was worshipped there.

 Pilikata, Stavris, Ithaca



## Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Ithaca

More than 1000 intact pots adorn the showcases of the Archaeological Museum of Vathy, where mainly finds from the southern part of the island, dating from the Geometric to the Roman period, are exhibited. The collection includes a bronze bust of Odysseus and offerings of gold, ivory and semi-precious stones found in the sanctuaries of the ancient town.

 Kallinikou & Gerasimou  
Stathatou Streets,  
Vathy, Ithaca





### Byzantine Castle of Angelokastro

Equip yourself with courage and your most comfortable shoes! The Angelokastro Castle will not surrender its wild beauty to the visitor effortlessly, as it hangs on the edge of a cliff, elusive and lonely, at the highest point of the northwestern coast of Corfu, at an altitude of 300m. Its strategic and impregnable position (the western side did not even have walls, as the cliffs there are almost vertical), overlooking the southern Adriatic Sea, makes it one of the most important Byzantine castles in Greece, but also one of the oldest, since the earliest fortifications probably date from the 5th-6th century, as evidenced by two Early Christian graves discovered near the acropolis.

Angelokastro was named after the despot of Epirus, Michael I Comnenos, known as “Michael Angelos”, who had conquered Corfu in 1214; after his death, his son, Michael II Comnenos, fortified the area and named the castle after his father. In 1272, the castle passed into the hands of the Angevins, but its heyday would come under the Venetians, who occupied it in 1386, turning it into the capital of the island and the

seat of the local governor. The Venetians completed the fortifications of the castle, which was central in Corfu's protection from the frequent Turkish sieges. However, it would gradually lose its splendour after 1550, when the Old and New Fortress of Corfu would come into prominence.

At the highest point of the cliff, visitors can still see the acropolis and next to it the church of Archangel Michael, with an inscription on the lintel letting them know that it was reconstructed in 1734 by the castellan Aloysius Regginis. Continuing your walk, you will find, almost carved into the rock, the picturesque chapel of Saint Kyriaki, with 18th century murals. The spectacular view encompasses the entire island: before you leave, let your eyes gaze into the deep blue of the Adriatic and take a deep breath –you are now ready for the descent!



Krini, Palaiokastritsa,  
Corfu







### Archaeological Museum of Corfu

A true emblem of the long history of the Phaeacians' island, the Archaeological Museum of Corfu was inaugurated in 1967 with the primary purpose of displaying the finds from the Archaic temple of Artemis. Housed in a two-storey modernist building in the ex-industrial suburb of Garitsa, it is rightfully enjoying a new period of bloom, as it reopened its doors to the public in 2018, fully renovated.

The museum presents the history of Corfu from pre-historic to Roman times, through approximately 1,600 exhibits arranged in two sections: on the ground floor, the prehistoric collection takes us to the distant past, from the Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age, to then illustrate the chronicle of the ancient town's foundation at the end of the 8th century BC. On the first floor, on the other hand, the history of Corfu from the 7th century BC to the 4th century AD is unfolded.

A prevalent deity in the island's cult, Artemis makes her presence felt also in the museum; the discovery in the Kanoni peninsula of thousands of terracotta figurines representing the goddess, some of which are now on display here, is quite indicative. Nothing, however, compares to the breathtaking, apotropaic depiction of her on the pediment from the sanctuary of Artemis Gorgo (580 BC), located in the area of Agioi Theodoroi. In this monumental sculpture (17×3.18 m), the oldest surviving stone pediment of ancient Greek architecture, the goddess is represent-

ed as the huge demonic Gorgo, accompanied by her children, Pegasus and Chrysaor, and flanked by two ferocious panthers.

If you manage to escape her fearsome gaze, the next halls hold many more archaeological treasures. Another impressive stone pediment, this time from the temple of Dionysus (500 BC) at Figareto, featuring a scene from a Dionysian banquet, and the robust stone lion (7th century BC) from the burial monument of Menekrates stand out.

📍 1 Armeni Vraila Street, Corfu

🍴 | 📱 | ♿




### Castle of Zakynthos

Plagued by repeated earthquakes and successive conquerors, it is almost a miracle that the Castle of Zakynthos has survived to this day to tell its story. On top of a pine-clad hill, 2km from the island's modern town, the "Castle of Bochali", as it is generally known, was constructed on the ruins of the ancient Acropolis (Psophis), while it is believed that there had been Byzantine fortifications as well.

As was usually the case in the Ionian Islands, however, the basic fortification –parts of which are still preserved today– was mainly due to the Venetians, who reconstructed the fortress at the end of the 15th century, after its complete destruction by the Turks in 1479. The walls were completed by 1646, enclosing the island's capital, while the cobbled road that reached the seashore, the famous Strada Giustiniana or Sartzada, was also laid, leading to the site of the present-day town of Zakynthos. The Venetian legacy remains very much alive on the third gateway, where the walls are embellished with the legendary lion of Saint Mark. After the fall of the Venetian Republic in 1797, and until the union of the Ionian Islands with Greece in 1864, the French,

the Russo-Turks, the British and other conquerors would stay in the long-suffering castle, leaving their marks on it.

The visitor can trace these marks in the surviving monuments: the stone vaulted prisons and the Venetian powder magazine, the command post, the barracks and the football pitch from the British rule, while excavations have so far unearthed the ruins of six churches from the 12th to the 17th century, the most important being the 12th century Byzantine church of the Saviour (San Salvatore). The impressive fortification walls remain in many places almost intact despite the devastating earthquakes that have struck them mercilessly over the centuries, with the central bastion offering a unique view of the Zakynthos countryside.

 Bochali, Zakynthos





## Museum of Zakynthos

While admiring the imposing neoclassical building in the historic Dionysiou Solomou Square, one can hardly suspect the tragic history behind it. Perhaps more than any other museum in Greece, the Museum of Zakynthos is an “ark” preserving the history and culture of its land, as it is here that all the works of art that survived the terrible earthquakes which struck the Ionian Islands in 1953, flattening Zakynthos, Ithaca and Cephalonia, as well as the fires that followed, completely destroying the town of Zakynthos, have been gathered.

The earthquake-resistant building was inaugurated in 1960 and in its seven halls are presently on display the most important collections of paintings from the Post-Byzantine period. Among them are icons of the Cretan and Ionian Schools dating from the 15th to the 19th century, as well as detached murals, ornate wooden carved iconostases, ecclesiastical objects and sculptures from the hundreds of destroyed churches on the island. Alongside these precious objects, a model of the town before the earthquakes, as well as a selection of photographs of that time, stand witness to life before and after the devastation.

 3 Solomou Square, Zakynthos



## Castle of Agia Mavra, Lefkas

A coveted marriage was the reason for the foundation of the Agia Mavra Castle; it was the Frankish ruler Giovanni Orsini who had it erected in 1300, after he received Lefkas as dowry for his marriage to the daughter of the Despot of Epirus, Nicephorus I. The originally small fortification, which controlled the passage from mainland Greece to the island, became the object of passionate claim by all kinds of conquerors, passing successively into the hands of the Angevins, the French, the Ottomans, the Venetians, the Russo-Turks and the British. Suffice it to say that during its seven centuries of life the castle has been under siege twelve times in total!

The most extensive interventions were made by the Ottomans, who reinforced the castle with nine bastions and a moat, giving it an irregular heptagonal plan. A model of coastal fortification of the time, this ‘floating’ castle-town occupied 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> and was for many years the capital of the island, with important settlements inside and outside the walls. Located on the bastions, the museum, which was inaugurated in 2024, takes you on a journey through the castle’s eventful history, while the restored Venetian gunpowder magazine has been converted into a screening room. Dating from 1883, the small church of Saint Mavra, patron saint of Lefkas, occupies a special location within the castle.

 Agia Mavra Castle, Lefkas





# EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF LEFKAS | ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTION OF SAMI  
| ROMAN VILLA IN SKALA, CEPHALONIA

## Archaeological Museum of Lefkas

The Archaeological Museum of Lefkas will soon acquire its own place, but for now it is accommodated in the hospitable Municipal Cultural Centre, where you can marvel at exhibits from the Palaeolithic to the Late Roman period, originating from Lefkas and the surrounding islets. The exhibition is organized in four thematic galleries: public and private life, the deities of Lefkas, funerary customs and prehistoric Lefkas. The latter is dedicated to the German archaeologist Wilhelm Dörpfeld, who, in search of Homeric Ithaca, excavated important sites all over the island in the early 20th century.

Angelou Sikelianou  
& Nikou Svoronou Streets,  
Lefkas



## Archaeological Collection of Sami

Dedicated to the long history of Sami, a city-state of the Classical and Hellenistic period, and of ancient Panormos (Phiskardo), the Archaeological Collection of Sami presents in its thematically structured exhibition a multitude of objects testifying to the area's uninterrupted habitation from the Bronze Age to the Early Byzantine period. In addition to the collection of rare glass objects, one can marvel at the reconstructions of a bathhouse and a Roman mausoleum. At the end of the museum tour, multimedia applications using a virtual reality headset transport the visitor back to antiquity.

Ioanni Metaxa Avenue,  
Sami, Cephalonia



## Roman villa in Skala, Cephalonia

Following the path from the seaside village of Skala, your steps will bring you to a small olive grove. Here, in 1957, were discovered the ruins of a rural villa dating from the 2nd century AD, which was to become the most important Roman monument of Cephalonia. But don't be fooled by the term "rural", since the villa belonged to a wealthy Roman landowner, as its rich decoration suggests. Despite the passing of time, the fire that destroyed it in the 4th century AD, and the two Christian churches that were successively built over it, the luxurious house has stubbornly survived, displaying stunning mosaic floors that have been preserved to this day in an unexpectedly good condition.

Agios Athanasios (Miambeli)  
Eleiou-Pronnon,  
Skala, Cephalonia






### Saint George Castle, Cephalonia

More than a mere fortress, the Castle of Saint George was for centuries the capital of the entire Cephalonia. It was originally built by the Byzantines in the 12th century, on top of a 320m high hill, where a chapel dedicated to Saint George (after whom the castle was named) had already been standing for a long time; established before the settlement and fortification, its chronology is lost in time, interwoven with atmospheric legends and beliefs about ethereal fairies and cunning demons.

After a brief occupation by the Ottomans, who had seized Cephalonia in 1484, the Christian forces of the Venetians and the Spaniards took back the island and recaptured the castle in 1500. The three-month siege caused considerable damage, imposing the castle's reconstruction, which began in 1504 and was completed in 1594. The Venetians improved the fortification, reinforcing the walls with three bastions that extended over 600m, enclosing an area of 16 stremmata, where a prosperous settlement developed, with noblemen's residences and

administrative buildings, Orthodox and Catholic churches, food and ammunition warehouses, barracks, schools, hospitals, prisons and cisterns, while a settlement (exoburgo) was gradually created outside the walls. However, when the Venetians transferred the administration headquarters to Argostoli in 1757, the castle was abandoned, only to be returned to its old inhabitants, the local fairies and wild nature.

Despite the relentless passing of time and intense seismic activity, the castle has stood firm and is today one of the most charming sights of Cephalonia. A stroll is all it takes for the visitor to imagine its former glory, as the Venetian walls and other buildings still stand undisturbed; the Annunciation church, a typical example of Ionian Baroque, stands out, surviving in excellent condition and housing significant Post-Byzantine icons from the other ruined churches of the castle.

 Peratata, Cephalonia









## REGION OF WESTERN GREECE

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### Ancient Olympia

The best time of the year to visit ancient Olympia is in the spring, when the Peloponnesian land conspires with the ancient remains to revive the spirit of an era inextricably linked to the natural world.

It is no coincidence that the sanctuary of Zeus, the most glorified in ancient Greece, flourished in a grove. Altis, at the southern foot of the Cronios hill, was overgrown with wild olive trees, pines, plane trees, poplars and oaks, and was separated from the surrounding area by an enclosure erected by Hercules himself.

Initially, there were no buildings in the ancient forest, only altars and the prehistoric mound of the hero Pelops, allowing the spirituality of the area to flow freely from the ground. The worshippers placed their offerings, however precious, in the openness of the countryside, on altars or on tree branches.

The first Olympic Games, which symbolized the unification of ancient Greek tribes, were organized in 776 BC in honour of Zeus and were repeated on a four-year basis, according to the Olympic truce, which stipulated the cessation of all military hostilities during the Games.

The magnificent temple of Zeus, which dominates the archaeological site today, was erected sometime during 470-456 BC, while all other buildings, such as the Prytaneion, the elegant circular Philippion, the Echo hall, the Metroon and the Nymphaeum, were later additions, due to the popularity of the sanctuary. The only pre-existing temple was that of Hera (1096 BC), one of the oldest examples of monumental temple architecture in Greece.

Outside the boundaries of the sacred grove, one can see the training grounds, baths and guest-houses, as well as the workshop of Pheidias, where the colossal chryselephantine statue of Zeus, renowned as being among the seven wonders of the world, was created.

To the east of the Altis stretches the stadium where the Olympic Games were held, drawing a straight line from yesterday to today, since –according to UNESCO– no other archaeological site is so directly linked to modern reality and the Olympic ideal.




 Ancient Olympia, Olympia





## Archaeological Museum of Olympia

Although Olympia, on the western coast of the Peloponnese, was relatively isolated, the worship of Zeus made it the most eminent religious and sports centre of ancient Greece. The number of votive offerings that were unearthed in site of the Altis, the sacred forest that enclosed all of Olympia's religious buildings, is difficult to describe with words. The Archaeological Museum of Olympia boasts a renowned collection of sculptures, including the breathtaking sculptures from the pediments of the temple of Zeus, the Nike of Paionios and Hermes of Praxiteles, while you will have the opportunity to see the richest collection of bronze objects in the world. The 12m high chrysephphantine statue of Zeus may have been lost to history, but in the workshop of Pheidias, who had stayed in the Olympia for some time in order to make it, were found moulds, tools, pottery and everything the human imagination required to reconstruct this priceless creation that had dominated the ancient world for eight centuries.

 Olympic Truce Grove,  
Ancient Olympia, Olympia



## Museum of the History of the Olympic Games of Antiquity

The Museum of the History of the Olympic Games of Antiquity is, in every respect, the earthly expression of the Olympic ideal. Its prominent location, next to the monuments where the Olympic Games were held, influences both the philosophy and the exhibits of the museum. Starting with the first cases of sport activity in the prehistoric Aegean, but also with examples of sports from Minoan Crete and Mycenaean Greece, the museum's narrative dives into the myth associated with the origins of the games, while paying the history of the Heraia –the women's games of Olympia– the attention they deserve. A satisfactory answer may never be found to the question of why women were forbidden to participate in the Olympic Games in antiquity, except as horse owners. Nevertheless, Cyniska, daughter of the Spartan king Archidamus and the first woman to raise horses, so as to compete herself in the games, winning on the tethrippon race, will always inspire us.

 Ancient Olympia, Olympia





### Temple of Apollo Epicurius

Part of the history of the temple of Apollo Epicurius is contained in the etymology of its name, which was explained by Pausanias himself. The name is not derived from the philosopher Epicurus (hence Epicurean), but from “epikouria” (assistance in Greek) that Apollo offered to the Phigaleians. Stricken by a plague epidemic, they took refuge in a 7th century BC temple, pinning their hopes on Apollo’s xoanon, i.e. a crude wooden statue that nevertheless worked a miracle. Exposing their battered bodies to the sun, the Phigaleians were healed and decided to dedicate a larger temple to their benefactor. The architect of their gratitude was none other than Ictinus, who not only designed one of the architectural masterpieces of antiquity, but also innovated by combining Archaic, Classical and traditional Arcadian elements.

In contrast to the usual east-west orientation of other cult buildings, the temple of Apollo Epicurius faces north. Most importantly, however, although it

is primarily Doric, it features Ionic semi-columns in its interior and a Corinthian column in the centre. It is the first and only time that three different styles have been combined in a single temple. Finally, the entrance to the temple was made so that on the day of Apollo’s birthday the very first ray of sunlight would shine on the cult statue that was then kept inside the temple. Today, although the temple of Apollo Epicurius is covered by a protective shelter, it will be able to receive the first light of day again in the future, once the restoration work has been completed and the problems with its foundations have been resolved.

📍 Phigaleia, Eleia





## Chlemoutsi Castle

Subject of much intrigue during its turbulent history, the Chlemoutsi Castle (or Clermont, according to its Frankish founders) dominates the top of Chelonata hill, at an altitude of 220m; from its position on the westernmost cape of the Peloponnese, it overlooks both the Ionian Sea and the fertile plain of Eleia. Its construction, during 1220-1223, to protect the unfortified capital of the Principality of Achaia, Andravida, and its port, Glarentza, caused the Frankish prince of Achaia, Geoffrey I Villehardouin, to clash with the local Catholic clergy and confiscate their property, which led to his excommunication by the Pope.

The castle flourished under the Villehardouins, but then chaos ensued; an entire novel would not suffice to describe the intricate chronicle of intrigue, treachery and marriages of convenience as Angevin, Catalan and Frankish rulers vied for its control. The succession saga ended in 1427, with the principality being granted to Constantine Palaeologus, the last Byzantine emperor, to whom it would remain until the Ottomans invaded the Peloponnese, in 1460. Since then, the castle's control alternated between Turkish and Venetian conquerors, until 1825, when Ibrahim Pasha demolished part of

the walls to prevent its use by the Greek revolution fighters.

A stroll around the castle and its museum suffices to understand why it was so desired. Its construction was the largest building project carried out by the Franks in the Balkans and one of the rare cases where they were not based on a pre-existing Byzantine fortification. As it has undergone very few later interventions, it retains the strong Frankish character and architectural elements of the 13th century, which make it one of the most important and best preserved of its kind in Greece. The hexagonal princely palace in its centre alone, with its enormous reception hall, vaulted galleries/ halls and huge fireplaces, following the models of the great medieval castles of France, is enough to bring cinematic scenes to the visitor's mind.



Kastro, Eleia,  
Andravida - Kyllini





## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

MYCENAEAN CEMETERY OF VOUNTENI | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF PYRGOS  
| ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF ELIS

### Mycenaean cemetery of Vounteni

Surrounded by fertile land, with access to the sea and the mountains, the Mycenaean settlement of Vounteni was for 500 years (1500-1000 BC) the privileged nucleus of a number of smaller settlements in the wider region, the inhabitants of which could find ideal refuge here in times of danger. Despite the panoramic view of the Patraikos Gulf, the most impressive attraction of this Mycenaean Park of Patras, which stretches over a total of 180 stremmata at an altitude of 220m, is the cemetery that was discovered in 1923; the excavations brought to light 78 chamber tombs, the grave goods of which tell much about the prosperity and trade connections of the inhabitants, even with places as distant as Crete and Italy. Most of them are currently on display in the Archaeological Museum of Patras. Equally revealing is the diversity of the tombs themselves: of circular, square, or horseshoe-shaped plan, rectangular with a tholos, or even irregular, they seem to reflect both the architectural skill of their builders and the special preferences of their owners.



📍 Bortzi, Sychaina, Patras



### Archaeological Museum of Pyrgos

One of the city's gems, this neoclassical building from 1890 attributed to Ernst Ziller once housed the Municipal Market. The museum was inaugurated in 2013 to reveal around 1,700 finds from the Eleian land, dating from prehistory to the Post-Byzantine era and classified in thematic sections associated with Settlements, Religion and People-Ideas.

📍 10 Karaiskaki Street, Pyrgos



### Archaeological Museum of Elis

In harmony with its natural surroundings, the modern museum designed by the architect Anastasios Biris accommodates significant finds from the ancient town of Elis, host of the Olympic Games in the neighbouring Olympia, and the surrounding areas. Notable are the mosaic floor that depicts the symbols of the Muses and Heracles' labours and dates from the 3rd century AD and the marble statue of Hermes, comparable to that of Praxiteles.

📍 Elis, Eleia








## Xenokrateion Archaeological Museum of the Sacred City of Messolongi

Lord Acheloos, the second largest river in Greece, who, according to Homer, occupied an equal position with the Oceanus and Zeus, is one of the most powerful natural elements that influenced life in Aetoloacarnania. This great life-giver is the starting point of the fascinating narrative of the Xenokrateion Archaeological Museum, which was inaugurated only in 2023.

Besides tracing human activity in a land constantly threatened by water, the Xenokrateion Museum is a repository of finds unearthed during major public and private works in the area. One of the most important and rarest exhibits, a burial assemblage that once again brings Homer to the visitor's imagination, came from the cemetery of Stamna to the north of the Aetoliko lagoon. It consists of three bronze cauldrons dating from the Proto-Geometric period (1050-900 BC), which contained burials wrapped in cloth. The use of fabrics in funerary rit-

uals is featured prominently in the *Iliad*, but very few remains of textiles have survived to the present day. On the coastal zone of Aetolia, are located the five oldest towns to have participated in the Trojan campaign, with the corresponding finds displayed according to the Homeric course of the museum narrative.

It should be mentioned that the majority of the collection's 1,200 objects are displayed for the first time in the seven halls of the former Primary School for Girls, a listed 19th century building that has been remodelled to meet the role of the keeper of a diachronic cultural treasure.

 2 Asimaki Photila Street,  
Messolongi



### Nafpaktos Castle

Starting from a tiny Venetian harbour and passing through traditional neighbourhoods with tiled roofs and flower-filled courtyards, the best way to get to know the town of Nafpaktos is to wander along its cobbled streets. Continuously inhabited since prehistory, Nafpaktos is crowned with one of the best preserved examples of defensive architecture in Greece. Its fortification dates from antiquity, although it was reinforced during the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine periods. The wall starts from the hill to the northwest of the town and ends in the harbour, which is the smallest in the Mediterranean. But don't let its size mislead you. In the 15th century it was an important commercial centre and its narrow entrance was blocked by a chain linking the two bastions. Inevitably, as time passed, ships grew in size and soon the use of the harbour was reduced, probably because ships could no longer fit in it.

But let's get back to the Castle, which is perched within a lush forest and remains in very good condition –at least up to the height of the battlements, flanked by circular and square towers. The familiar Mediterranean cypresses with their pyramidal shape find their ideal place here, since they originate from Italy. The castle's strategic location tempted many peoples to conquer it: the Turks, the British, even pirates who used it as a base for their raids. Its current form is the result of the intervention by the Venetians, who erected new structures on the ancient fortification. The emblem of Venice, the lion of Saint Mark, which was mounted in several places all over the castle, has been preserved on the western tower of the harbour and on the bastion of the eastern gate.

With one section on the mountain and the other along the sea, the fortification extends from the top of the hill to the harbour, where two arms –one on the left and the other on the right– encircle the entire area in between. Four transverse walls join these two arms, thus forming five divisions. Walking up the cobbled streets of the town, one can walk vertically through the divisions, walking hand in hand with the town's history. On the way, you will find the Botsaris Tower, an impressive 15th century building, where Governor Ioannis Kapodistrias housed the Notis Botsaris family in 1829, when Nafpaktos was finally liberated from the Turks, as a reward for their contribution to the Greek Struggle. The residence now functions as a museum.

Continuing the ascent, the church of Prophet Elijah marks the area with the greatest archaeological interest; this is where you will find the foundations of a three-aisled Middle Byzantine basilica with a narthex, which was once the seat of the Metropolis of Nafpaktos. The view from the top of the hill is breathtaking, as it embraces the entire Gulf of Patras, with the Rio-Antirrio bridge dominating the background. Wooden benches, in perfect harmony with the character of the castle, offer the opportuni-





ty to enjoy the view in peace and quiet, which at night is enhanced by strategic lighting in various parts of the area.

 Nafpaktos





## Vonitsa Castle

Although all castles are in alliance with nature, since –no coincidence– they have always been built in strategic locations ensuring control of the surrounding area, the castle of Vonitsa stands out. Not only is it perched on a 60m high hill alongside the Ambracian Gulf, but the Venetians had the foresight to plant rows of thorny prickly pear cacti all around it, to make access even more difficult, thus creating another line of defence. The Venetians erected the castle in 1070, following an agreement with the Comnenian dynasty that granted them commercial control of the port. Besides the well-preserved fortification walls and the square and circular towers that reinforced them, visitors can marvel at the almost circular chapel of Saint Sophia, as well as the stone House of Ali Pasha, which now houses a digital exhibition presenting the castle's history.



## Archaeological Museum and Archaeological Site of Thermos

Thermos, the Aetolians' religious centre, could only be located in the heart of Aetolia, near Lake Trichonis, the largest and purest Greek lake. It is one of the most important archaeological sites in western Greece, still being studied to this day; it started as a prehistoric settlement and evolved into a renowned Pan-Aetolian sanctuary and, later, the Centre of the Aetolian League. The Temple of Apollo Thermios 'emerged' in the 7th century BC from the ruins of Megaron B, the most significant building of the early historical period, dating from the Mycenaean era, which belonged to a local ruler. The ceramic painted metopes –the earliest examples of monumental painting in Greece– are kept in the Archaeological Museum of Thermos, along with lion-shaped waterspouts, busts of korai smiling faintly and an impressive seated Sphinx; all these elements originate from the roof of the second temple of Apollo dating from 470-460 BC.



## REGION OF WESTERN GREECE

OINIADES | NEA PLEVRONA | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF THYRREIO  
| ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF AGRINIO | FORTRESS OF ANTIRRIO

### Oiniades

Oiniades, one of the most important and strategically located fortified Acarnanian towns, holds a great secret: the only ancient shipyard in the world (and the best preserved of its kind), carved directly onto the bedrock. This ancient shipyard counts 3,000 years of life and was used for the maintenance and repair of ships at the mouth of River Acheloos.

📍 Ancient Oiniades, Messolongi



### Nea Plevrona

There are not many Hellenistic fortifications that have their own nickname. Some 5km from Messolongi, on the edge of Mount Arakynthos, proudly stands "Castle of Lady Rini", that is the fortification of Nea Plevrona, one of the five Aetolian towns that took part in the campaign against Troy.

📍 Nea Plevrona, Messolongi



### Archaeological Museum of Thyreio

Ancient Thyrrheio appears in the political scene during the course of the 4th century BC as the occasional seat of the Acarnanian League. Perched on the slopes of the Acarnanian mountains, the forests and caves of the region provided fertile ground for the development of a cult of the Nymphs, which is reflected in a votive relief kept in this small local archaeological museum.

📍 Thyreio, Vonitsa



### Archaeological Museum of Agrinio

The pride of the Archaeological Museum of Agrinio, one of the oldest in Acarnania and with a refurbished permanent exhibition since 2002, is the ornate funerary stele of Kritolaos (2nd century BC), featuring a relief of the legendary Scylla, a Triton killing a seahorse and a bull being devoured by two lions.

📍 1 Diamanti & Kazantzaki Streets, Agrinio



### Fortress of Antirrio

Also known as "Castelli of Roumeli", the Fortress of Antirrio with its hexagonal fortification is one of the region's most distinctive monuments. Erected in 1500 by the Ottomans in record time, it once contained within its walls 80 houses, a mosque and a hammam, now lost in the depths of history.

📍 Antirrio



## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

PALAEROS | CALYDON | ROMAN BATHS AT AGIOS THOMAS, MESSOLONGI  
FORTRESS OF RIO | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF AIGIO

### Palaeros

Palaeros is located in the northwestern section of the Plagia peninsula, which, according to some theories, was an island in antiquity and it could be identified with Homeric Ithaca. The remains of ancient Palaeros are protected by one of the most well-preserved fortifications in Aetoloacarnania, which in places reaches a height of 10m.

📍 Ancient Palaeros, Vonitsa



### Calydon

When driving on the Antirrio-Ioannina Motorway, let your curiosity take over as you pass by the theatre of ancient Calydon, located outside the town's fortification and presumed to have hosted a mystical cult, due to its unusual square shape. Lafrio, a renowned local sanctuary dedicated to Artemis, is located on a nearby hill.

📍 Ancient Calydon, Evinochori



### Roman baths at Agios Thomas, Messolongi

This most impressive bath complex, built of successive rows of elegant bricks, stands at a height of 7m, claiming its status as one of the best preserved monuments in Aetoloacarnania. Each circular tub could take two people and was probably later used as a Christian baptistery.

📍 Agios Thomas, Messolongi



### Fortress of Rio

Twin 'brother' of the Antirrio fortress, this Ottoman fortification with Venetian accents was erected during the rule of Sultan Bayezid II in 1499, on the ruins of the ancient temple of Poseidon, in just three months. Together with the fortress of Antirrio across the sea and due to their firepower they controlled this maritime passage, thus acquiring the characterisation "Little Dardanelles".

📍 Rio, Patras



### Archaeological Museum of Aigio

The building of the old Municipal Market of Aigio, designed by Ernst Ziller in 1890, is a good reason to visit the Archaeological Museum, which is further enhanced by the exhibits in its interior. The central atrium, originally surrounded by shops, is where a statue of the Little Heracleiotissa type is to be found now.

📍 2 Despotopoulou Street, Aigio







### Archaeological Museum of Patras

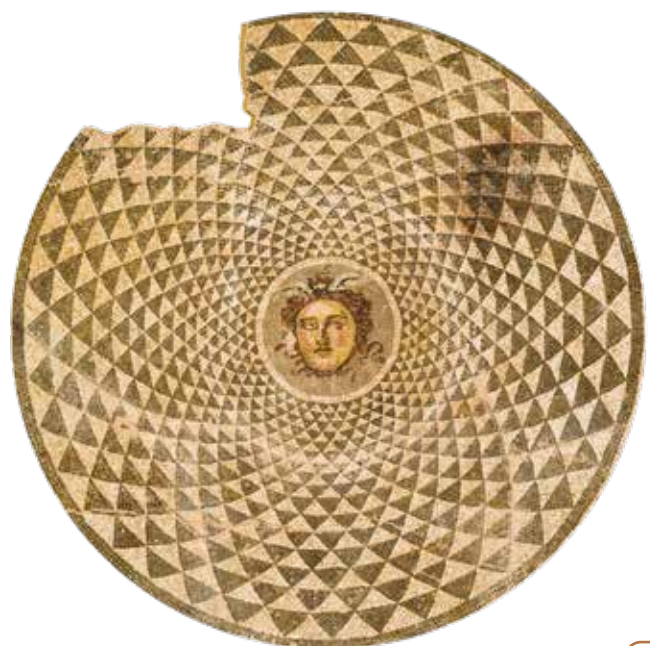
The Archaeological Museum of Patras unquestionably belongs to its inhabitants. It stands for their life through the centuries, and it brings their history to the limelight, for those who happen not to know all its aspects. Passing through the gate of this spacious building located at the northern entrance to the city, every visitor becomes part of the family.

Each of the three large halls accommodating the permanent exhibition features a particular theme: In the Private Life Hall, the mosaic floors provide a pleasant surprise even to the locals themselves, since very few know that their ancestors walked on scenes inspired by mythology and nature on a daily basis, as this was how they decorated their homes. Scenes depicting the Calydonian boar hunt from the famous myth of Meleager and Atalanta, a Triton riding a seahorse and grape treading by Pan are just a few of the merry mosaics that stretched under the feet of the locals in Late Roman times.

However, the most photographed exhibit of the museum is, by far, one of the funerary wreaths found among the grave goods of a 2nd century BC female burial and is on display in the Necropoleis Hall. This particular wreath, discovered together with gold jewellery, silver and glassware, is made up of clay flowers that have preserved their spring freshness thanks to their resistant pigments that are opposed

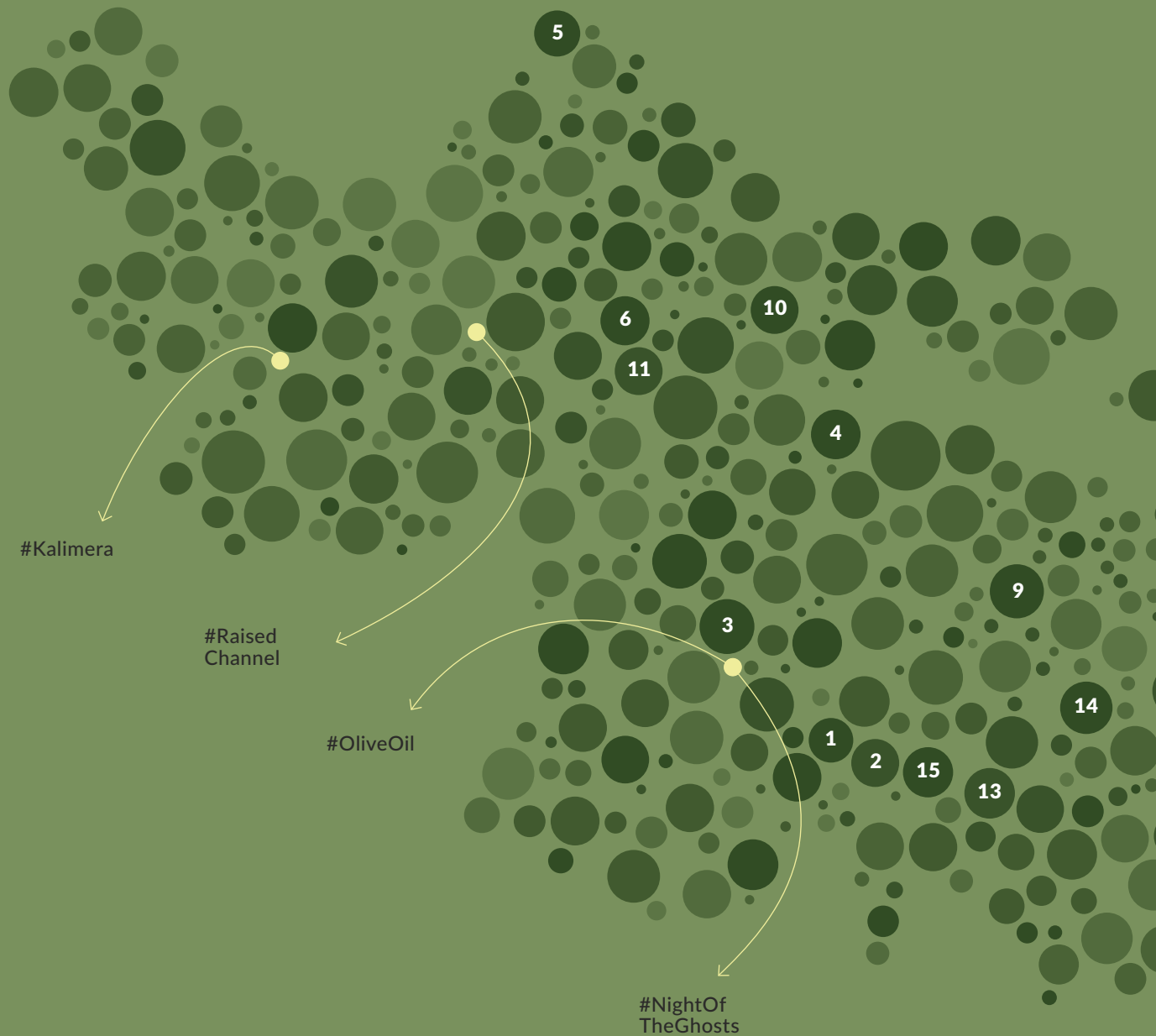
to the glittering whiteness of the surviving monuments, with which we have mistakenly associated ancient Greece.

38-40 New Patras-Athens  
Athens Motorway,  
Patras

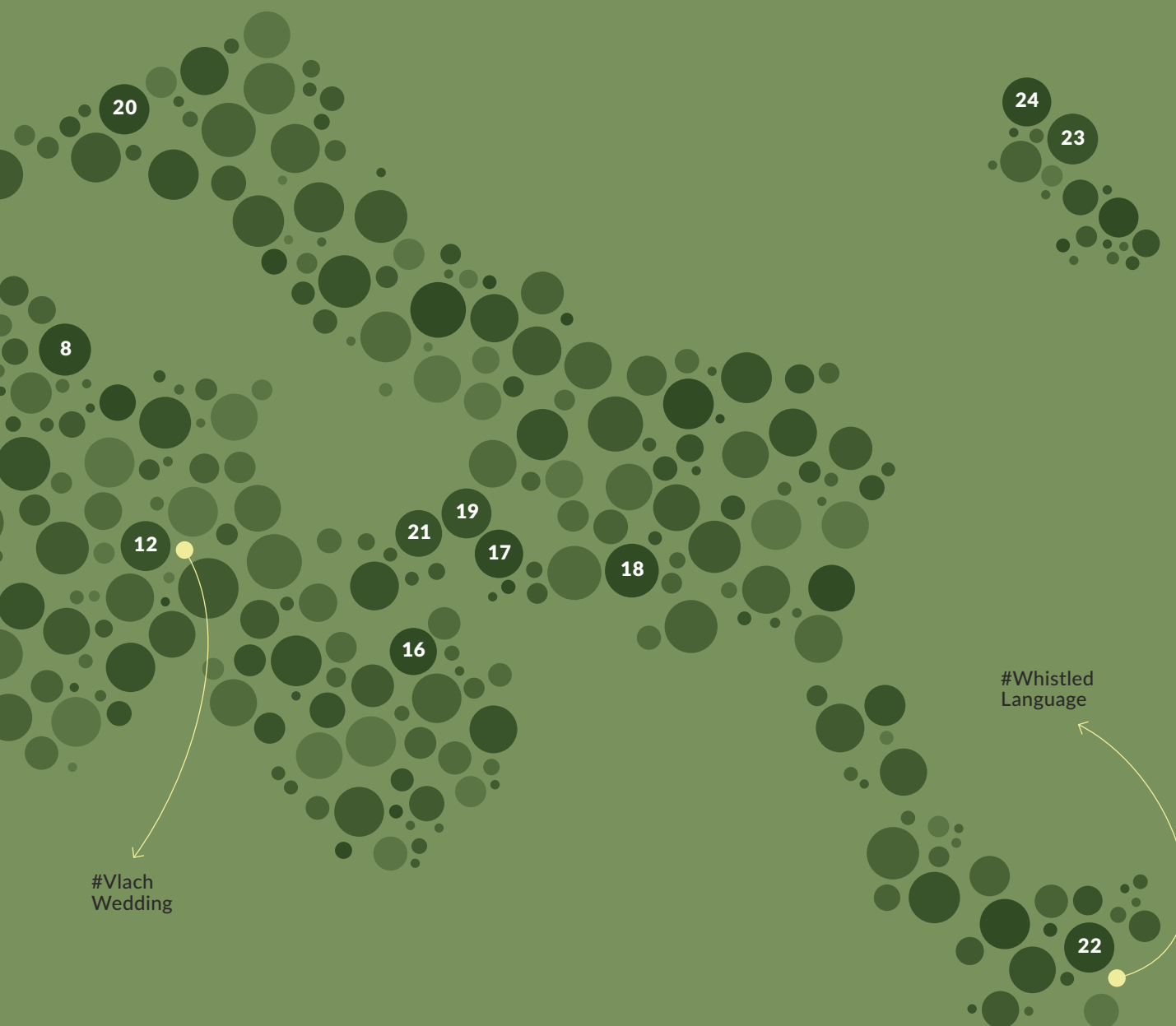
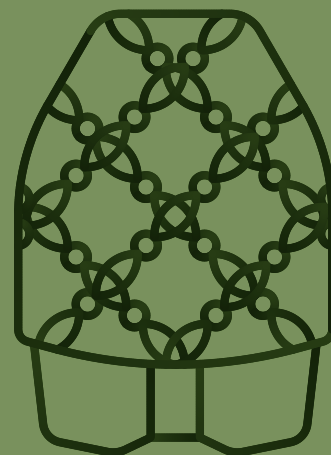


## REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

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#Vlach  
Wedding

#Whistled  
Language



### Delphi

Delphi was not randomly chosen for the construction of the temple and the operation of Apollo's oracle. The location, between two majestic cliffs in the shadow of Parnassus, the Sacred Mountain of the ancient Greeks, occupies a fortified location and exhibits a strong energetic charge. According to mythology, it was the point where the two eagles sent by Zeus from the far ends of the universe, one from the East and the other from the West, met to mark the "navel of the Earth".

Before becoming a place of worship of Apollo, tradition has it that Gaia was the dominant deity in the area, but she did not manage to take root in the hearts of the locals because of her son, Python, a terrible monster with the body of a snake who terrorized the area. When Apollo finally killed him, he began being worshipped as "Pythios", while his priestess was named "Pythia". The Oracle of Delphi flourished in the late Archaic and early Classical period, and was

housed in the Doric temple of Apollo, a part of which is still visible today.

The remaining temenos was discovered during the "great excavation" (1860-1903), which expropriated the village of Kastri that had been built over its ruins, bringing to light a complete way of life. The altar of the Chians, the treasury of the Athenians, the tholos, the stadium, the gymnasium and the numerous fascinating votive offerings confirm that Delphi was not only a spiritual and religious centre, but also a symbol of the ancient Greek world's unity.

 Delphi, Phocis





### Archaeological Museum of Delphi

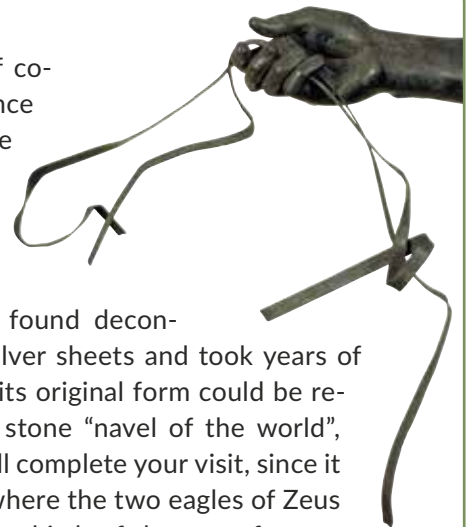
The Archaeological Museum of Delphi was inaugurated on May 2, 1903, with the completion of the “great excavation” that brought to light the temple of Apollo and generated an imperative need to accommodate the valuable votive offerings found under the Sacred Way. What followed was a period of discussion and rearrangement, during which the dominant position of the soulful Charioteer, the bronze young horseman with the intense gaze that seems to follow you wherever you go, was challenged as the most valuable asset of the collection.

In the meantime, the Delphic festivals organised by the poet Angelos Sikelianos and his then wife, Eva Palmer Sikelianou, brought Delphi back into the international spotlight, while with the outbreak of World War II the Charioteer and the chryselephantine heads of Apollo and Artemis, which had just come to light, were taken to Athens.

Today, with these exhibits occupying their rightful place, the museum’s collections form a museological narrative spanning over twelve centuries of political, religious and artistic activity. Prominent among them are the Sphinx of the Naxians, a renowned

marble statue of colossal size that once rose 9.5m above ground on an Ionic column, and the mysterious silver

bull, which was found deconstructed in 60 silver sheets and took years of research before its original form could be restored. It is the stone “navel of the world”, however, that will complete your visit, since it marks the spot where the two eagles of Zeus met, heralding the birth of the most famous sanctuary in the history of paganism.



📍 Delphi, Phocis





## Archaeological Museum of Amfissa

Money is at the heart of the Archaeological Museum of Amfissa, as a significant part of its collection is dedicated to the history of transactions and coinage, from pre-monetary currency –i.e. inanimate or living goods that, due to their recognized value, served as currency substitutes– to the euro. It's no coincidence that the building housing the museum, a typical two-storey urban residence with a garden from the early 20th century, of which few remain in the city, used to accommodate the National Bank. Among others, the world of women holds a special place in the exhibition, as examples of a collection of some 800 small heads of female terracotta figurines from the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC found in the Amfissa playground are on display, depicting various types of ancient Greek hairstyles; the most popular was the so-called “melon” hairstyle, which ends in a bun at the back of the head, held in place with bronze or gold hair rings.

📍 8 Kechagia Street, Amfissa



## Acropolis of Proerna

Located on the rocky Gynainkokastro hill, the Acropolis of Proerna crowns the ancient town. The trapezoidal fortification wall of grey limestone was constructed during the Hellenistic period and was reinforced by two rectangular towers. The structure, now used for cultural events, was an attempt by the successors of Alexander the Great to impose themselves on central Greece.

📍 Neo Monastiri, Fthiotis



## Thermopylae

Site of one of the most famous battles in history, Thermopylae needs no introduction. Here, in 480 BC, 300 Spartans and 700 Thespians led by king Leonidas fought the numerous Persian forces under king Xerxes I and fell heroically. Thermopylae took its name from the thermal springs that exist to this day –according to the legend, they were created when Hercules fell into the waters to relieve the pain he suffered from the poisoned tunic of centaur Nessus. The bronze statue of the armoured Leonidas, created by the sculptor Vassos Phalireas in 1955, greets the visitors before they climb the Kolonos hill, where the final phase of the historic battle took place.

📍 Thermopylae, Fthiotis







## Fthiotic Thebes

The name Fthiotic Thebes was shared by two ancient towns in the region of Magnesia. One was perched on the volcanic Kastro hill and the other was coastal, built on the harbour of ancient Pyrasos. The Hellenistic Fthiotic Thebes flourished in the 3rd century BC, until the army of the Macedonian king Philip V captured the town and sold its residents as slaves. The coastal Christian Thebes flourished in the 6th century AD, endowing the region with a number of basilicas with fine mosaic floors that are preserved in excellent condition.

📍 Nea Aghialos, Mikrothives



## Archaeological Collection of Atalanti

The torso of a Roman general, a poros funerary statue, the only one in the Atalanti Archaeological Collection, occupies a prominent place among the finds excavated in the burial monuments and sarcophagi of the eastern cemetery of ancient Opus, at the suggestion of a citizen. The museum, however, which mainly includes objects from local excavations (Locris, north-eastern ancient Phocis), also has a few surprises in store, as you will find parts of Cycladic figurines and frying-pans, which testify to the special relations of the locals with insular Greece.

📍 21 Varonou Velliou Street, Atalanti



## Byzantine Museum of Fthiotis

The military austerity of the Fthiotis Byzantine Museum building is not by chance, since it was built in 1836 as an infantry barracks. Rectangular, with two storeys, symmetrical openings and a solid construction of grey limestone, the building has been associated with some bloody pages in the history of Otto's reign. On the other hand, its interior, bathed in a sweet Byzantine light, is dedicated, among other things, to the art of the Early Christian mosaic floors and the coinage circulation in Fthiotis. Its collection includes 3,000 ancient Greek, Roman, Byzantine, medieval and modern coins.

📍 Hypate, Fthiotis




## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

BYZANTINE CASTLE OF HYPATE | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF LAMIA  
| ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTION OF ELATEIA

### Archaeological Collection of Elateia

Using natural building materials that imitate the periods' techniques, the Archaeological Collection of Elateia stages its finds, from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Submycenaean period, with an impeccable educational instinct. By re-creating part of a Neolithic household and a Mycenaean chamber tomb, it places the objects in their original contexts, bringing the visitor one step closer to history. From the exhibits dating from the historical era, stand out a collection of impressive female protomes and the theatrical masks from the cemeteries of Abai, Elateia and Tithorea.

 Elateia, Locris



### Archaeological Museum of Lamia

The relatively challenging climb to the Lamia Castle will bring you to the gates of the town's Archaeological Museum, housed on the first floor of a preserved barracks from the time of Otto. The barracks is located on the top of a steep hill where the acropolis of ancient Lamia used to be, and remained in use until World War II. The museum has a rich collection of outstanding ceramics, as well as some rare Mycenaean finds, such as a boar's tusk helmet that was reconstructed on the basis of Homer's detailed descriptions. The museum is temporarily closed due to works, but is due to reopen soon.

 Lamia Castle, Lamia



### Byzantine Castle of Hypate

Female honour plays the leading role in the history of the Hellenistic citadel of ancient Hypate. The wonderful castle experienced legendary sieges by the Crusaders, the Byzantines and the Ottomans, was renovated in the 6th century, during Justinian's reign, and flourished in the 13th, during the reign of John Angelos Doukas Comnenus. However, none of the stories associated with the castle is comparable to the legend of the woman from Patras recorded by the folklorist Zachos Xirotyris. In order to escape the lust of the conquering Pasha, she had the castle guarded by three ghosts who, according to tradition, are still there, locked up in the well.

 Hypate, Fthiotis





### Archaeological Museum of Thebes

The Archaeological Museum of Thebes widely opens its doors to a revised past. The stone fence with the hammered iron gate of the original museum –we are currently in its third version– still welcomes the visitors, while the cypress tree that cools the courtyard with its shade counts at least a century of life. But what you will find in the 18 completely remodelled sections inside the building will put an end to any sense of nostalgia.

The palatial centres of Thebes and Orchomenos, around which communities were reorganised with the development of Mycenaean civilisation, shine out through the showcases: unique cylinder seals from the palace of Thebes, murals from the acropolis of Gla, larnakes from the chamber tombs of Tanagra –shards of splendour that slowly build up an overall picture. The audiovisual material, on the other hand, creates its own myth, glorifying Thebes' role in dramatic poetry: Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, Sophocles' *Antigone*, *Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus*,

Euripides' *Hercules*, *Bacchae*, *The Suppliants* and *Phoenician Women*– all based on Theban myths, transforming Thebes into an imaginary theatrical stage. The overwhelming battle of Chaeronea, in August 338 BC, vanquished the Theban Hegemony, which, with its great general Epaminondas was briefly on top of the Greek world. With this historical event opens the bitter subject of funerary customs in the exhibition.

The Boeotian narrative clearly did not end there, as the Middle Byzantine period brought the region a final period of prosperity associated with the silk industry and trade –this is a tale that the precious exhibits from that period narrate better than any one else.

1 Threpsiadou Street,  
Keramopoulou Square,  
Thebes





### Monastery of Hosios Loukas

Nestled on the scenic slopes of Mount Helicon, opposite Parnassus, the famous monastery of Hosios Loukas is not accidentally one of the just three Greek monasteries (together with Nea Moni in Chios and Dafni in Attica) included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Built beneath the acropolis of ancient Steiris, on the site where the temple of Demeter once stood, it is the largest and best preserved monastic complex of the Middle Byzantine period in Greece.

According to the chronicle of the monastery's establishment, as documented in 962 by the anonymous monk who wrote the *Life of Hosios Loukas* (896-953), the overgrown with olive groves area is identified with the space where Hosios Loukas himself lived, as he practised there for the last seven years of his life, undertaking charity work and healing people, while it is believed that he had the gift of foretelling the future. His reputation made him a beloved figure among both locals and senior local officials, so that the area became a place of pilgrimage from very early on, while the construction of the church of Saint Barbara, which was completed after his death, was financed while Hosios Loukas was still alive. He was buried under the floor of his cell, around which the monks would erect the cells of a first monastic community two years later.

However, the basic structures (the church of the Virgin Mary and the catholicon), which constitute the monastic complex as we know it today, were built later, under the auspices of the emperor. And although historians and archaeologists debate between Romanus II, Basil II the Vulgar Slayer and Constantine IX the Gladiator, as to who was responsible for the erection of the monastery, the characterisations "royal monastery" and "Saint Sophia of Roumeli" perfectly illustrate its imperial background and the excellence of its construction.

According to the prevailing view, the church of the Virgin Mary was built according to Constantinopolitan architectural trends after 961, following the triumph of the Byzantines who had recovered Crete from the Arabs, as prophesied by Hosios Loukas. The catholicon, on the other hand, larger in dimensions and built during the first decades of the 11th century to accommodate the relic of Hosios Loukas, belongs to the continental octagonal architectural

type and is considered the model for all later churches of this type.

For today's visitor, however, the monastery is not only a magnificent example of Byzantine art and architecture, but also a living monument of Greek history, since during the Turkish rule it was a base of resistance. For more than half a century, the monastery's premises served as a preparation camp and a hideout for *armatoles*, *klephts* and fighters, an area of confinement of Turkish prisoners, a place for gathering and providing supplies and food to warriors and villagers, a shelter for the care of the sick and wounded, while during the 1821 Revolution, the





monastery signalled the beginning of the Struggle in Roumeli. As a result of its location and use, the monastery was often the centre of attacks, clashes and looting. Fortunately, however, the restoration works that commenced in 1938 managed to salvage most of it.

So, the visitor can still marvel, in the catholicon, at the luxurious compositions of coloured marbles that cover both the floor and the vertical surfaces of the walls, and particularly at the brilliant mosaics adorning the upper surfaces of the church's wall, true masterpieces of Post-Byzantine art and one of the most important mosaic assemblages of their kind.

The feeling of awe follows the visitor to the imposing underground crypt, where the original grave of Hosios Loukas is located, just below the spot, where his reliquary is placed in the catholicon.

📍 Steiri, Boeotia





## Archaeological Museum of Chaeronea

The famous Lion of Chaeronea, the most recognizable historical symbol of Boeotia, is a bitter reminder of the inglorious end of the Sacred Band of Thebes at Chaeronea in 338 BC, marking the beginning of Macedonian rule over Greece. Chaeronea, rarely mentioned in ancient texts until then, save for Homer's *Iliad*, suddenly acquired enormous importance. Among the museum's exhibits, is a stunning stone sphere with the relief figures of the Sun and Moon, as well as numerous grave offerings from the Macedonian burial tumulus and the Theban polyandrion, the location of which is marked by the Lion himself, right next to the museum.



📍 Old Athens-Lamia Motorway,  
Chaeronea



## Archaeological Collection of Distomo

The recent bloodied history of Distomo may have taken precedence over the archaeological interest in the area, but Pausanias, who visited it in the 2nd century AD, recounts a very different story. Ambrossos, as it was then called, hosted gymnastic and equestrian games every four years, while in its plain grew a bush used for dyeing cloth. The Archaeological Collection of Distomo includes gabled funerary stele carved in local grey marble and grave offerings from the cemeteries of Antikyra, Karakolithos and Zemenos.

📍 Distomo,  
Boeotia



## Archaeological Museum of Schimatari

The oldest museum in Boeotia is located in the back of a verdant courtyard in Schimatari, where a finely designed open-air exhibition of funerary monuments, sections of buildings and shrines, as well as two Christian inscriptions referring to funerary customs and beliefs about the afterlife is displayed. Founded in 1890, the museum traces the evolution of the art of ancient Tanagra, which is located 5km to the south of the town, and introduces visitors to its myths, cults and burial practices.




📍 38 Tanagras Street, Schimatari





## Archaeological Museum of Chalkis «Arethousa»


The area accommodating the new Archaeological Museum of Chalkis is as important as the museum itself. During the Classical-Roman period, a port was located here, with public buildings, industrial structures and port facilities, and for decades the area was the city's industrial district. This was also the site of the "Arethousa" spring, now lost in myth, which gave its name to the building, as soon as it was erected. The initial use of this industrial monument, which has been a diachronic witness of commercial activity during the early 20th century, was as a distillery and ice-cream factory. Since May 2021, it houses a thematic exhibition that stretches through time, bringing to life the most important aspects of the prehistory and history of Euboea and Skyros. From the spread of the Euboean alphabet and the Iphigenia myth, to Byzantine and Ottoman Chalkis, the new Archaeological Museum "Arethousa" stands as a bridge between the present and the past and has already left its mark on the area.

 146 Arethousis Street, Chalkis



## Archaeological Museum of Eretria

The Centaur from Lefkandi, a little masterpiece of exquisite plastic art, is the first known depiction of this mythical creature –half man and half horse– in Greece. Not only that, but this Early Geometric terracotta figurine was found broken in two and buried in two different tombs, thus suggesting that its owners were aware of its value and had agreed to share it before they died. This and other little wonders from the wider Eretria region are waiting to be discovered at the local Archaeological Museum, founded in 1962 and renovated in 1991. Surprisingly beautiful is the group of Theseus and Antiope, depicted in a sensuous rotation as the Athenian king seizes the queen of the Amazons. The merging of the two figures into a synthesis of soft volumes is typical of the statues from the western pediment of the Archaic temple of Daphnephorus Apollo, fragments of which are kept in the museum.

 Archaïou Theatrou & Amarysias  
Artemidos Streets, Eretria



## Archaeological Museum of Chalkis

The three horse busts from the Late Classical period, which welcome the visitor to the spacious courtyard of the Archaeological Museum of Chalkis, are the best way to introduce our little friends to the magic of archaeology. The statue of a rushing little girl, dedicated to Artemis, continues in the same expressive manner, while the round ball-like vase with the bird motifs not only offers important information about the evolution of art in Euboea, but also proves that everyone can make their own archaeological narrative.

📍 13 Eleftheriou Venizelou Street, Chalkis



## Archaeological Collection of Oreoi

The tiny Archaeological Collection of Oreoi, next to the famous Oreoi bull, the largest in volume and weight votive sculpture found in Greece, is a welcome addition to the archaeological walk along the coastal road. In this hall, one can marvel at fanciful funerary stelae and sculptures from cemeteries in the wider region. Among them, stand out a burial monument in the form of a lion and a stele depicting a child with a dog.

📍 Oreoi, Istiaia, Euboea



## Karababa Fortress

The undulating fortifications of the Karababa Fortress made Chalkis impregnable, so that the Greeks could not liberate it from the Turks, despite their repeated efforts. Finally, the town surrendered without a fight after the Treaty of 1833. The castle of Chalkis, which was unfortunately demolished in 1885, played a major role in its vigorous defence. The fortress, as we know it today, was built by the Turks, but was designed by a Venetian architect, so that it has more of a European than an Ottoman character.

📍 Kanithos, Chalkis



## REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF SKYROS | PALAMARI, SKYROS  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF KARYSTOS



### Archaeological Museum of Skyros

The Archaeological Museum of Skyros is a tribute to the Skyrian household. The great folklore Kostiris Collection, featuring everything from ornate tableware and lavish local costumes to exquisite examples of traditional Skyrian furniture, frames the antiquities in the heart of the museum in a unique way. The most distinctive exhibits of the collections that dates from the Early Helladic to the Roman period are a flask of Cypriot origin, an Attic Geometric pyxis with horse figurines attached on its lid and a horse-shaped rhyton (ritual vase).

📍 Brooke Square, Skyros



### Palamari, Skyros

It all started in 1979, when the Skyrian antiquities' guard Achilleas Katsarelias found prehistoric sherds among bushes and sand deposits in the Palamari Bay. While collecting them, he noticed sections of walls of large buildings; two years later, an archaeological excavation began, which unearthed an extremely well-preserved coastal settlement from the 3rd millennium BC. Its main feature is the characteristic 200m long stone fortification with successive horse-shoe-shaped towers, representing an architectural type that was particularly common in the Aegean at that time.

📍 Palamari, Skyros



### Archaeological Museum of Karystos

The Archaeological Museum of Karystos is housed in the west wing of the Giokaleion Cultural Foundation, on the coastal front of the town. The museum's permanent collection features finds from ancient Karystia, Styra and Drakospita, with the most recent acquisition being an Eros-shaped Roman table leg. Sculptures made of the renowned Karystian cipollino marble (cipolla means onion in Italian), are placed on light blue pedestals that highlight perfectly the characteristic coppery hues of the material.

📍 Maximilianou Square, Karystos

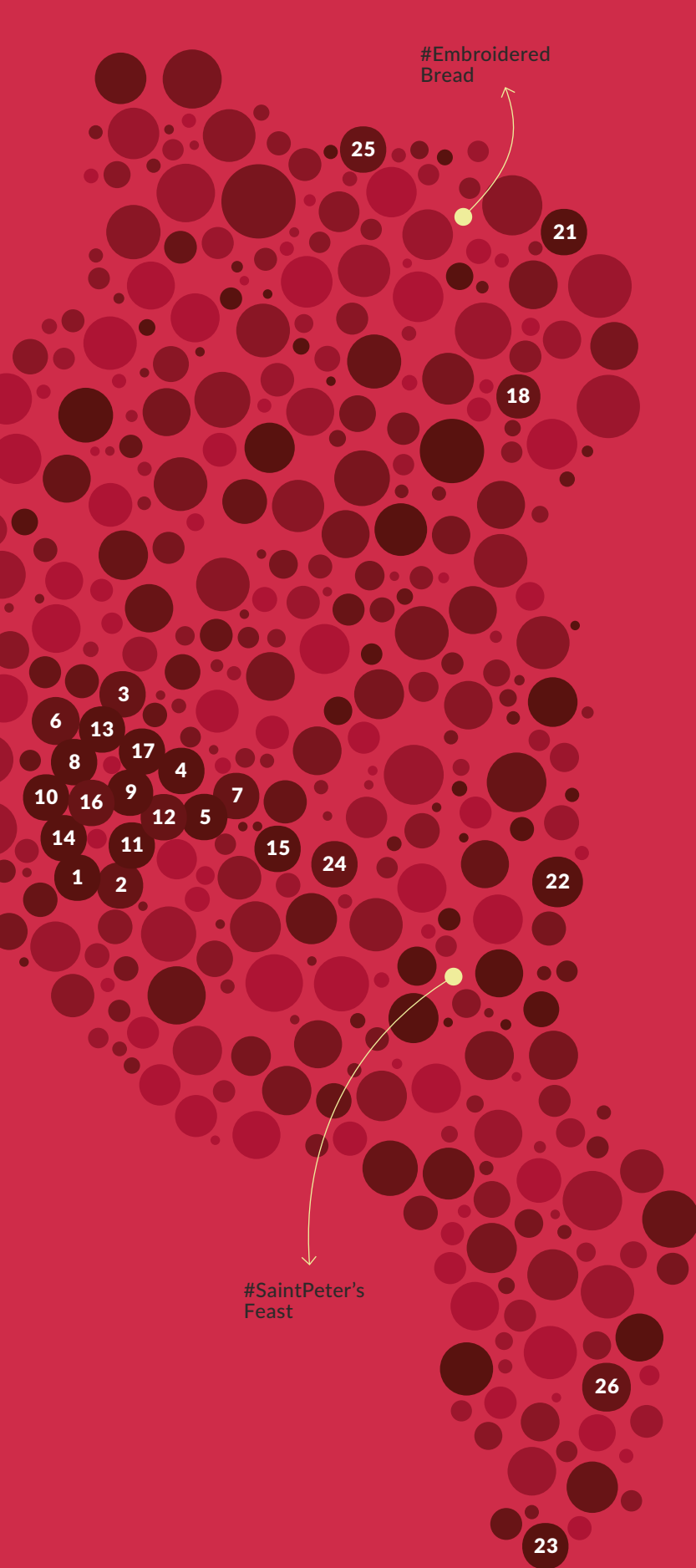




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### Acropolis

Inspired by myth and enlightened by philosophy, ancient Greeks always attached great importance to female deities. A dominant position in their imagination was occupied by the goddess Athena, who, according to myth, claimed the town from Poseidon. The winner would be judged on the basis of the best gift, which for Athena was none other than the olive tree. The wise goddess offered the town fruits, fuel and wood in a single move. What would be more appropriate, then, than to erect the Parthenon, the most emblematic monument in the history of Greek architecture, in her honour?

Let's take things from the beginning: life on the rocky hill, later known as the "Sacred Rock of the Acropolis", began in the 3rd millennium BC. The naturally fortified area was completely inaccessible from all sides except the west, and water gushed up the slopes. During the Mycenaean period, the settlement grew in size, was fortified by a Cyclopean wall and the Acropolis became a centre of power. During the 8th century BC it acquired an exclusively sacred character with the establishment of the cult of Athena Polias, who had her own sanctuary in the northeastern sector of the hill. This was followed by the Hekatompedon, in the mid-6th century BC, while the construction of the Pre-Parthenon began when the Athenians defeated the Persians at Marathon in 490 BC, but was never completed.

The area began to take on a new significance in the 5th century BC, as a result of the ambitious building programme of Pericles, a charismatic leader with a progressive outlook. His aim was not only to glorify and protect the city, but also to offer work to anyone who needed it. The construction of the Parthenon, the Propylaea, the Erechtheion and the temple of Athena Nike lasted throughout the second half of the 5th century BC and generated numerous jobs for Athenians and foreigners, freemen and slaves, with a daily wage of one drachma.

The Parthenon –the ultimate architectural expression of the ancient Greek spirit– was designed by Ictinus together with Callicrates, while Pheidias, a sculptor and close friend of Pericles, was responsible for the sculptured decoration. Dedicated to Athena the Virgin (Parthenos), the protector of the city, it was one of the largest Doric temples of classical antiquity and the jewel of the Acropolis' Sacred Rock. The temple housed the majestic chryselephantine statue of Athena, a revered votive offering

lost in the depths of time, similarly to the Dodecatheon.

The renowned prothesis (portico) of the Caryatids –one of which Lord Elgin stole, along with half of the Parthenon's sculptural decoration– belongs to the Erechtheion, where the Panathenaea ended, a glorious festival that rivalled the Olympics in popularity.

The Acropolis was a centre of cults celebrating Athena in all her manifestations: as Polias (protector of the city), Virgin, Pallas (goddess of wisdom), Promachos (goddess of war), Ergani (goddess of manual labour) and Nike. But her most enduring





quality has been the fact that she embodies ideas that have survived through time and influence our lives until today. In other words, the Acropolis of Athena and its monuments reflect the Athenian Republic.



2-4 Stratigou Ioanni  
Markygianni Street, Athens



## Acropolis Museum

The New Acropolis Museum is perhaps the boldest and most discussed architectural intervention in 21st century Athens. Designed by the great Swiss architect and deconstruction enthusiast Bernard Tschumi and his Greek peer Michalis Photiadis, the monumental building of this collaboration, extending over 14,000m<sup>2</sup> spread over three floors, was inaugurated in 2009.

Designed to broaden the human mind, the Acropolis Museum is more like a tour of an archaeological site than a conventional exhibition. This revolutionary approach puts the visitors above the exhibits, both metaphorically and literally, since, as soon as they enter the forecourt a whole world opens up beneath their feet. Indeed, the archaeological excavation undertaken before laying the foundations of the building was treated as a huge exhibit, and thanks to a series of glass panels, one can observe it while walking right over it.

The first large hall on the ground floor is essentially a glass ramp that not only imitates the ascent to the Parthenon, but also presents finds from the slopes of the Sacred Rock that are related to daily life. The eastern and southern sections of the first floor feature Archaic and early Classical statues, strategically placed to allude to the statue-laden Sacred Rock during antiquity, but also to simulate a crowd of people in an ancient agora, a revolutionary curatorial

idea that places the visitor on the same level as the exhibits, encouraging an instinctive understanding of the era. On the west side of the first floor, the sixth Caryatid shines in its absence, having been sold to the British Museum in the early 19th century by Lord Elgin.

The fourth floor, Bernard Tschumi's indisputable masterpiece, built in parallel with the Parthenon itself, offers the most magnificent view of the ancient temple in all of Athens, enhancing the illusion that one can touch it. This marble vision matches the glamour of the floor's stunning exhibits, namely the pediment sculptures, the frieze and the temple's metopes, which have been set up in proportion to their actual position on the monument – also an unparalleled idea. And one more thing: the spaces between them correspond to the Parthenon sculptures that are on display at the British Museum.



15 Dionysiou  
Areopagitou Street, Athens



© Acropolis Museum, photograph: Giorgos Vitsaropoulos 2019





## National Archaeological Museum


The National Archaeological Museum was officially founded during the warmest month of summer, on August 9, 1893, with the purpose of “studying and teaching archaeological science, disseminating archaeological knowledge to us and cultivating a love of fine arts”. With a Presidential Decree that spoke of love and 8,000m<sup>2</sup> full of ancient Greek splendour, it could not but develop into one of the most important museums in the world.

Housed in a 19th century building in the heart of the city, that was designed by Ludwig Lange and finalised by Ernst Ziller, the museum was temporarily closed down with the outbreak of World War II to confine and hide the antiquities, so as to secure their protection. In 1945, the re-exposure work began and in 1995 a unique in Greece collection of Egyptian antiquities was added to the museum.

The museum currently consists of six collections: Prehistoric Antiquities, Sculpture (Greek and Roman), Metalwork, Vases and Minor Arts, Cypriot Antiquities and Egyptian and Oriental Antiquities. Be sure to dedicate a full day to visit it, letting the sparkling charm of the Mycenaean civilization be the first to carry you away. The golden mask of Agamemnon is just the beginning. On the opposite side, the ele-

gance of the unblemished Cycladic figurines with their crossed arms is soothing –though misleading, since the Cycladic people used colour extensively in their creations, which were not all-white as we know them today.

The finds from Akrotiri in Thera, also known as “Pompeii of the Aegean”, offer an almost spine-chilling experience, since the ash from the volcano’s eruption managed to preserve both the objects and the extensive wall paintings that covered entire rooms. The Sculpture Collection, dating from the 7th century BC to the 5th century AD, is the museum’s big guns, but the Antikythera Mechanism (the closest thing to an analogue computer) and the Dipylon Amphora (the most significant vase of the Geometric era) are worth your attention.

 44 Eikostis Ogdois Oktovriou  
(Patision) Street, Athens






## Numismatic Museum

The Numismatic Museum was founded in 1834, but its collection was periodically housed in various locations before finding a permanent home in the stunning Iliou Melathon in 1998, following the restoration of the monument. Designed by Ernst Ziller and built in 1878-1879 to accommodate the archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann and his family, the two-storey mansion fascinates with its rich decoration: magnificent ceiling paintings and murals, painted decorations reproducing themes from Pompeii frescoes and mosaic floors depicting prehistoric finds from Schliemann's excavations. In this magnificent setting, the history of exchange economy and coinage in Greece from the 14th century BC to the present day is revealed, through a collection comprising more than 500,000 objects: mainly coins, but also medals, lead seals, seal stones, weights, obols and talents. The richest collections are those of ancient (6th century BC-5th century AD), Byzantine and medieval (6th-15th century) coins, while the period from the 15th to the 20th century is represented by coins of modern countries from all over the world.



 12 Eleftheriou Venizelou (Panepistimiou) Street, Athens



## Byzantine and Christian Museum

Even if you have never visited the Byzantine and Christian Museum, you have certainly noticed its impressive building or have briefly retreated into its beautiful garden. Although the museum was founded in 1914, its original collection was housed in the National Archaeological Museum until it was permanently moved to Villa Ilissia in 1930. The impressive mansion, which combines elements of Classicism and Romanticism, was erected in 1840-1848 to be used as the winter residence of the eccentric Duchess of Plaisance, Sophie de Marbois-Lebrun, who spent the last years of her eventful life here. Today, after the necessary extensions and modifications, the building is completely identified with the Byzantine and Christian Museum of Athens, a major landmark and one of the most important museums for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine art internationally. Its collection includes over 25,000 objects, from the 3rd to the 20th century, which exploit every aspect of Byzantine civilization: the transition from the ancient to the Byzantine world, the ultimate dominance of the Byzantine Empire, and its influence on modern art.

 22 Vasilissis Sophias Avenue, Athens



## Kerameikos

In antiquity, Kerameikos was not just a cemetery. It was the place, from where the procession of the Eleusinian Mysteries started, through the Sacred Gate, and one of the largest demes of ancient Athens, while the Dipylon, the most imposing gateway to the ancient city, is also located here. The name "Kerameikos" originates from the ceramic workshops of potters (kerameis in Greek), who chose this area for the deposits of clay along the banks of the River Eridanos, which was ideal for the production of vases. Kerameikos started being used as a burial site from the Early Bronze Age (2700-2000 BC) and gradually became the most important necropolis of ancient Athens. Its operation continued uninterrupted until the 6th century AD, thus offering modern visitors the unique opportunity to experience 15 centuries of Athenians and settlers sleeping under their feet. Through monumental inscribed funerary stelae and impressive statues, the ancient necropolis will inevitably lead you to its elegant museum. This is where Kostis Palamas, facing the funerary monument of the young horseman Dexileos, called Kerameikos "the marble Elysium of art" in his poem entitled *Dexileos*.


 148 Ermou Street, Athens



## Aristotle's Lyceum

Hidden in the heart of Athens, Aristotle's Lyceum is an oasis that once hosted the contemplative steps of the "Peripatetic School". Aristotle, who had been entrusted with the education of Alexander the Great, returned to Athens in 335 BC, at the age of 50. He immediately began teaching at the Lyceum, in a lush area stretching from the foothills of Lycabettus to the National Garden, creating his own school. It is an area of 11.5 stremmata bordering the beautiful garden of the Byzantine and Christian Museum and the Athens Conservatoire. The remains of the Lyceum came to light in 1996, during an excavation for the construction of the Museum of Modern Art of the Basil and Elise Goulandris Foundation, that revealed the palaestra of an ancient gymnasium. The circular route around the archaeological site, steeped in olive, cypress and pomegranate trees, as well as fragrant shrubs, mainly rosemary and lavender, alludes to Aristotle's passion for botany and, at the same time, his habit of walking as he taught.

 11 Rigillis Street, Athens






### Ancient Agora of Athens

Nothing reflects the evolution of democracy in Athens more effectively than the successive buildings in the ancient Agora, an open-air space bounded by three hills: the Acropolis, the Areopagus and the Agoraios Kolonos. This large open square was the centre of public life, attracting Athenians in every way: for shopping, religious ceremonies, theatrical events, sports games, meetings and much more. It is believed that it was here that Aeschylus' first tragedies were performed. Anything could happen in the Athenian Agora. Administrative, legal and commercial buildings (stoas), altars, temples and sanctuaries, fountains, an odeum, a library, the Bema, monuments and votive offerings by donors, spaces for walks and philosophical pursuits lined the ancient road leading from the Dipylon to the Acropolis, where the steps of participants in the magnificent Panathenaic procession resounded.

The Agora hill, i.e. the Agoraion Kolonos, was dominated by the widely known Theseion, the temple of Hephaestus and Athena Ergane, who were wor-

shipped together, and best preserved temple of the 5th century BC, since even its original roof has survived. The public buildings that accommodated the institutions of the Athenian democracy have been uncovered along the foot of the hill: the Bouleuterion, where laws were drafted, the Tholos, seat of the executive power representatives, and the State Archives. From the square, ancient Athenians would make their way to the site of the people's meetings on the Pnyx hill, passing through some of the most densely populated districts of the city. All great politicians and thinkers of the time, e.g. Socrates, Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles and Demosthenes, acted in the ancient Agora and the Pnyx, but it was the anonymous and all-powerful Athenian people who had the first say, not only by participating, but also by directly shaping the institutions of the Athenian democracy.

 24 Adrianou Street, Athens







## Roman Agora of Athens

If Rome conquered Athens, then Athens captured the hearts and minds of the Romans, thanks to the ancient Greek spirit, prompting them to enhance the city and improve its infrastructure. The Roman Agora, a project financed by Augustus and the family of Herod Atticus during 19-11 BC, proves this two-way relationship. It was constructed mainly for mercantile purposes and featured a large rectangular courtyard surrounded by stoas, shops and warehouses. The courtyard was paved with large marble slabs during the Hadrian's rule; some of these slabs were inscribed with texts by Marcus Aurelius, as they had originally been used for other purposes. On the Agora's western side there was a monumental gate, which is still preserved, dedicated to Athena Archegetis, with four Doric columns and a pediment of Pentelic marble. It is interesting to notice that the second propylon is not on the same line, nor is it made of the same material, but is placed diagonally to the east.

In contrast to the Ancient Agora, which also remained

unknown until the 20th century, the Roman Agora had completely disappeared under the city's urban fabric and its only visible feature was the gate of Athena Archegetis. Many thought it was a temple, but the British architects and travellers Stuart and Revett provided the correct interpretation, based on inscriptions mentioning the tax duties of oil merchants. To uncover the Roman Agora, not only were houses demolished but also the street was cut off –nevertheless, the current picture of the monument corresponds to half of its original size, with the remaining still buried beneath the houses.



3 Polygnotou Street, Plaka, Athens



### Museum of Modern Greek Culture



In Monastiraki, right in the busy heart of Athens, hides, similarly to an oasis, one of the city's most idiosyncratic museums, dedicated to modern Greek culture from the 17th century to the 1970s. The museum's complex, on the block defined by Adrianou, Areos, Kladou and Vrysakiou Streets, consists of a total of 18 restored historic buildings, a unique mosaic reconstructing an entire old Athenian neighbourhood and is in itself a distinctive monument perfectly integrated into the urban fabric.

The museum's permanent collection includes over 25,000 objects of great folklore interest, bringing out every aspect of the country's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Within the same space, one has the opportunity to explore the colourful world of traditional Greek costume, and marvel at finely worked embroideries and woven fabrics, ceramics and silverware, sculpted utility items of every material and style, folk art paintings and prints (including works by Theofilos), toys and religious objects, as well as a representative shadow theatre collection including figures, advertisements and props.

This fascinating journey does not stop at the Monastiraki complex, but continues at The Museum at 22 Panos Str. in Plaka, where the permanent exhibition "People and Tools. Aspects of work in pre-in-

dustrial society" is on display; it presents the tools before industrial development and the people who worked with them. The museum has also 'adopted' the restored Bath House of the Winds, the only Athenian public baths to survive to this day. Built during the first period of Ottoman rule, it operated until 1965; today, fully restored, it hosts theatrical and musical performances, art exhibitions and other cultural events. Our last stop is the Tzisdarakis Mosque, built in 1759, during the rule of Mustapha Agha Tzisdarakis, governor (voevoda) of Athens at the time. Temporarily closed due to renovation works to be completed soon, it was the first home of the museum, when it was founded as "Museum of Greek Handicrafts" in 1918.



#### The New Museum-Permanent Exhibition

📍 10 Areos Street, Monastiraki, Athens | 🗺️ 📅 ♿



#### The Museum at 22 Panos Str.

📍 22 Panos Street, Plaka, Athens | ♿



#### Bath House of the Winds

📍 8 Kyrristou Street, Plaka, Athens | ♿



#### Tzisdarakis Mosque

📍 1 Areos Street, Monastiraki, Athens | ♿








## Olympeion

If the Acropolis dominates modern Athens, as it looms over our heads, then the Olympeion, i.e. the Temple of Olympian Zeus, located on the same level as the busy Amalias Avenue, elevates daily life with its heavenly beauty. This is probably because it is the largest temple of Hellenistic and Roman times, which, however, was completed after many adventures.

Its foundations were constructed during the rule of Peisistratus, in 515 BC, but the building remained unfinished for a full 300 years, causing Aristotle to use it as an example of how tyrannical regimes sucked the people dry, forcing them to engage in huge, futile undertakings. The Olympeion was finally completed in AD 125, during the reign of the Roman emperor Hadrian, who loved Athens more than any of his compatriots and seemed to have unlimited funds at his disposal. The end result was a gleaming Corinthian temple, measuring 110.35×43.68m, in the middle of a large precinct, with a propylon facing the Acropolis.

Of its original 104 columns, only 16 have survived (15 standing and one lying dismantled on the ground), after numerous catastrophes. During the Byzantine period, the area was inhabited and most of the columns were pulverized, while during the Ottoman period another column was turned into lime, to end up as building material in the Tzisdarakis mosque in Monastiraki Square. After many disasters caused by man, a fierce tornado comparable to the wrath of the gods crushed, in 1951, the sixteenth column, which can be marvelled at in all its fragmented glory at the monument's foot.

 Vasilissis Olgas Avenue,  
Athens





## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

MUSEUM OF GREEK FOLK MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS "PHOIVOS ANOGEIANAKIS"  
| PAUL AND ALEXANDRA CANELLOPOULOS MUSEUM | EPIGRAPHIC MUSEUM | KAISARIANI MONASTERY

### Museum of Greek Folk Musical Instruments "Phoivos Anogeianakis"

Have you ever been in a museum where you can not only see the exhibits, but also hear them? In a beautiful Plaka mansion, built in 1842 by the chieftain Georgios Lassanis, is housed the collection of 1,200 Greek folk musical instruments of the musicologist Phoivos Anogeianakis. The museum was inaugurated in 1991 and contains musical instruments dating from the 18th century to the present day, organized in four sections: membranophones, aerophones, chordophones and idiophones. Apart from the ethnological and musicological interest, the most appealing innovation of the museum is that in each display case there are headphones with which visitors can listen to samples of music played on the presented instruments.



📍 1-3 Diogenous Street, Plaka, Athens



### Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum

Situated under the Acropolis, the Canellopoulos Museum holds a truly impressive collection of Byzantine treasures and icons, which are displayed in the best possible way in the few square metres of this neoclassical mansion. The museum's collection, on display in the modern extension of the mansion, is divided into two sections, namely Ancient and Byzantine Art, and counts a total of 6,500 objects.

📍 12 Theorias Street, Plaka, Athens



### Epigraphic Museum

Very few Athenians are aware of the existence of the Epigraphic Museum, even though it is the only one of its kind. The reason for its inconspicuous presence is probably the fact that it is housed together with the famous National Archaeological Museum, which certainly does not surpass it in terms of specialization. Most of the stone inscriptions, in both living and dead dialects of the Greek language, originate from Athens and Attica, as well as other regions of Greece.

📍 1 Tositsa Street, Athens



### Kaisariani Monastery

When passing through the Kaisariani Monastery gate, time as we know it ceases to exist. The aged trunks of the ancient cypress trees that protectively surround the church immediately put the visitor in the spirit. Dedicated to the Presentation of the Virgin Mary, the imposing Byzantine catholicon was erected in the 11th century, while the modern Athenian district of Kaisariani developed around it much later.

📍 Kaisariani, Athens





## Hadrian's Library

This unique building reflects the prominent figure of Hadrian, one of the longest-serving emperors of the Roman Empire, who was not only a lover of arts and letters, but also had very specific views on architecture. The traveller Pausanias has described the building in detail without ever mentioning its actual use, namely that it was a library. It consisted of a monumental rectangular structure with a Corinthian propylon following the trends of Roman architecture, while on the eastern side were the main operational buildings: the book depository, the reading rooms, and the lecture halls. At that time, people used to read scrolls, parchments and wax tablets, which were used for the temporary copying of texts. The library's façade featured two wings of Pentelic marble, while, according to Pausanias' description, in the inner court were a hundred columns of Phrygian marble, a large cistern and a pool that provided the space with much-needed freshness.

The library was inaugurated around AD 132, when Hadrian visited Athens for the third time, being one of the few emperors to travel around the Empire, in order to get to know the peoples in their territory. The Athenians adored him as god and honoured him within the Parthenon itself, as he not only protected the city, but oversaw an extensive building programme to revive its lost glory. Nowadays, only the northern wing of Hadrian's Library survives, while the southern one has been completely destroyed; nevertheless, even this is enough to allow one to imagine its splendour and magnificence.



3 Areos Street, Monastiraki,  
Athens





### Loverdos Museum

A rare architectural jewel in the centre of Athens, the Loverdos Museum is accommodated in the Ziller-Loverdos Mansion, a building with a special history. Captivating the eye from the very first moment, the façade of the elegant neoclassical building, with its eight relief caryatids framing its windows, cannot even begin to prepare the visitor for the sophisticated luxury inside: marble floors and columns, murals and ceiling paintings (by the Slovenian Juri Subic, painter of the Iliou Melathron), fireplaces and carved wooden staircases make up the decoration of a building-work of art, created by the almost coincidental meeting of two great personalities.

Designed by Ernst Ziller, the building was erected during 1882-1885 and belonged to the architect himself, who used it as a workshop and residence for his family until 1912, when he was compelled to sell it due to financial difficulties. The new owner, the banker and art collector Dionysios Loverdos, with the assistance of the architect Aristotelis Zachos, undertook ambitious reconstructions and additions characterised by a strong Byzantine influence, including an impressive chapel in the mansion's gar-

den. His purpose was to turn it into a museum, in order to house his private collection, one of the most important collections of Post-Byzantine religious art in Greece, which he had, in the meantime, donated to the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens.

Having since suffered severe damage from earthquakes, vandalism, a fire, and even from its alleged use in satanist rituals, the building required extensive restoration work that took five years to complete. Some 42 years after his death, Loverdos' vision finally came true, as the museum opened to the public in May 2021. Safe now, in a space that perfectly suits it, the collection features more than 600 exhibits, among them icons by the Cretan and Ionian Schools, screens, wooden sculptures, manuscripts, miniatures, and four complete carved wooden iconostasis from the 18th century.

📍 6 Mavromichali Street, Athens






## Marathon

The 9m high earthen tumulus covering the bodies of the 192 Athenians who fell in the victorious battle against the Persians in 490 BC is undoubtedly the most famous monument of Marathon –but not the only one. The Archaeological Museum of Marathon is an ideal first stop, in order to get acquainted with the region's rich heritage; besides the timeline of the famous battle that changed the course of Greek history, here you will see even Egyptian-style statues (among them a Sphinx and the hawk-headed god Horus) from the Roman sanctuary of the Egyptian gods founded by Herod Atticus in AD 160 in nearby Brexiza, as well as the finds from the Middle Helladic (2000-1300 BC) cemetery and the so-called "Tumulus of the Plataeans" (in honour of the warriors of the Athenians' allies), which are located next to the museum. The nearby Tsepi boasts an impressive Early Helladic (3000-2300 BC) cemetery, of which 70 cist graves have been unearthed so far, while in Arnos you will find yourself in front of one of the most spectacular Mycenaean tholos tombs, about 25m in length, which has yielded a single find: a twin horse burial.




 Archaeological Museum of Marathon: 114 Plataion Street, Vranas, Marathon



## Archaeological Museum of Megara


The museum is housed in a 19th century building, the old Town Hall, and extends over two floors/ four exhibition halls. It includes finds from the ancient town of Megara, from the 8th century BC to the 2nd century AD, e.g. marble sculptures and reliefs, inscriptions and funerary stelae, burial gifts, tools and utensils.

 48 Menidiati Street, Megara



## Archaeological Museum of Piraeus

The Archaeological Museum of Piraeus holds the entire history of the city as a key commercial centre of the eastern Mediterranean and port of ancient Athens. The two-storey building surrounds the Hellenistic theatre of Zea, while its collection is displayed in ten halls. The exhibits originate mainly from the wider area of Piraeus and the coasts of Attica, covering the period from the Mycenaean to the Roman era. Of particular importance are the funerary stelae, most notably the famous 4th century BC funerary monument of Kallithea, as well as the rare intact bronze statues of Athena and Artemis from the Archaic-Classical period, and the oldest surviving cast statue in Greece, the kouros dedicated to Apollo.

 31 Charilaou Trikoupi Street, Piraeus



## Ramnous

The shadow of revenge and justice, concepts sometimes related and sometimes conflicting, seems to hover over Ramnous, where the cult of the punishing goddess Nemesis and the righteous Themis prevailed. Strategically located due to its view of the Euboean Gulf, Ramnous constitutes one of the best preserved ancient demes of Attica and one of its lesser known archaeological sites, well worth discovering. Its walls, made of local marble, enclose the gymnasium, the theatre, the acropolis and the temples of the renowned sanctuary, dating from the 6th-5th centuries BC: the temple dedicated to Nemesis and a smaller one, where she was worshipped together with Themis. It was here that probably the most important finds from Ramnous was excavated, in 1890: the almost intact 3rd century BC statue of Themis, made of Pentelic marble, which is now kept in the National Archaeological Museum. The statue of Nemesis, created by Agoracritus, a pupil of Pheidias, unfortunately did not have a similar fate, as it was destroyed by the Christians at the end of the 4th century.



📍 Agia Marina, Grammatiko, Marathon



## Brauron

What could be more fitting for a place dedicated to the goddess of nature than being surrounded by a beautiful wetland? This is exactly what happens at the sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia, where the lush vegetation and waters of the River Erasinos have created a protected wetland-refuge for a multitude of animals and birds. One of the 12 ancient towns of Attica, Brauron saw its sanctuary flourish from the 7th to the 4th century BC. According to legend, Artemis rescued Iphigenia at the last minute from a sacrifice in her honour that would have allowed the Mycenaean fleet to sail to Troy. Iphigeneia, as Euripides mentions in *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, became the goddess's priestess and was worshipped as a chthonic heroine; her worship was centred around her cavernous tomb and her heroon, near the temple. Although the Doric temple survives today only at foundation level, the impressive, restored Stoa that surrounds it, in combination with the mystical landscape, are enough to recreate the atmosphere that once enveloped one of the most revered sanctuaries of Attica, which was also connected to the upbringing of children.



📍 Bauron, Mesogaia, Markopoulo






## Sounion

Having lost the opportunity to name Athens after himself –the contest was won by the wise goddess Athena– Poseidon drowned his grievance in the waters of Sounion, and he was not the only one to do so. In Homers *Odyssey*, the mythical king of Athens Aegeus, while waiting for Theseus to return from his encounter with the Minotaur in Crete, fell from the Sounion rock into the raging waves, thinking his son was dead. The sea was named “Aegean” after him and Sounion became a place of worship of the god who, according to ancient Greeks, ruled the waters everywhere.

Poseidon's first Archaic temple was burnt down by king Xerxes during the 2nd Persian War, before it was even completed. The colossal kouroi that had been placed in the sanctuary were found buried near the temple, probably by Xerxes' men, and are now kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. Nor did the much smaller, but architecturally unique, temple of the ever-present Athena, located on the top of a lower hill, escape the wrath of Xerxes. At the time of Pericles' Golden Age, during 461-429 BC, the two sanctuaries were rebuilt in the context of his legendary building programme, but only the temple of Poseidon stood the test of time.

Its stunning location, rising almost vertically above the waves, has fuelled the imagination of people throughout the centuries. Apart from Homer, references to the Athenians' sacred cape are also found in Herodotus, who mentioned that the organized, spacious walled sanctuary, was frequented by many people, and every four years the Athenians held a glorious festival there. Little by little, cape Sounion lost its strategic importance and became a coastguard station, a haven for pirates and a romantic destination for travellers such as Lord Byron, who carved his name on the marbles.

Nowadays, Sounion has become an attraction for its breathtaking sunset, but even more miraculous is its never-ending ability to transport you back to ancient Greece, like a secret slit in the cosmic fabric of spacetime.

 Cape Sounion, Sounion, Lavreotiki





## Koutouki Cave, Paania

On the eastern slopes of Mount Hymettus, above Paania, and at an altitude of 510m, hides one of the most impressive caves of Attica, just half an hour from the city centre of Athens. About 2,000,000 years old, the Koutouki cave was discovered by chance in 1926, when a goat fell through a small opening in its roof, but its first systematic mapping was carried out in 1954 by speleologists Ioannis and Anna Petrocheilou. The rich cave formations, with their spectacular stalactites and stalagmites in a variety of colours, transformed the cave into a popular tourist attraction in the 1960s. Due to the geological formations it looks like it rests on natural “pillars” and is ideal for visits, even for entire families, because of its short tourist route.

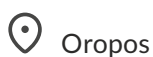


Paania



## Amphiareion

In the heart of a dense pine forest lies the Amphiareion, the largest sanctuary of Amphiaraus in ancient Greece. An Argive hero and renowned seer, Amphiaraus was defeated in the campaign against Thebes, but before he was struck by the enemy, Zeus fired a bolt of lightning that opened a chasm on earth that swallowed him up. Thus began his cult as a chthonic deity. The Amphiareion was founded at the end of the 5th century BC and functioned as an oracle and healing centre, while the Lesser and Greater Amphiareia were held on a regular basis to honour the god. Remains of the sanctuary survive to this day, such as the famous baths, the Great Stoa, the Klepsedra that functioned as a large hydraulic clock and the theatre with the thrones for the officials.

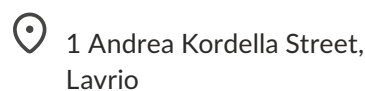


Oropos



## Archaeological Museum of Lavrio

In the Lavrio Archaeological Museum, the finds from the Lavreotiki territory (Sounion, Thorikos) are exhibited in chronological and thematic order, so as to present the life and daily activities of the locals from prehistory to the 6th century AD. Of particular importance are the finds from the mining-metalurgical workshops, related to the most diachronic activity of the Lavreotiki people, the relief slabs from the frieze of Poseidon's temple in Sounion, funerary and votive reliefs, as well as the mosaic floor from the Early Christian basilica of Lavrio (4th-5th century).



1 Andrea Kordella Street,  
Lavrio





## Eleusis

The origins of the Eleusinian Mysteries, like many ancient Greek rituals, are inextricably linked to mythology. Should we accept the myth, then Eleusis was the place where the cultivation of wheat started. It was from the goddess Demeter, who arrived here in search of her daughter, Persephone, that the locals received a great gift: the knowledge of how to cultivate the land, which put an end to nomadic life and gave birth to civilization. In return, Demeter imposed her cult, which was concealed under a veil of mystery. Those who were initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, which lasted nine days, were forbidden to reveal all they had seen and heard; thus, we have no information with regards to what happened during the initiation, since no one ever dared reveal its secrets. All we know is that it was an attempt to come to terms with death.

Today, the archaeological site of Eleusis remains the heart of the city, and the sight of the Mirthless Rock –where the goddess Demeter sat and wept for her daughter, who had been carried away by Pluto to the Underworld– remains just as heartbreaking. Cross-

ing the Processional Road, the continuation of the Sacred Way from Athens, the Greater and Lesser Propylaea, one arrives at the ancient Telesterion, designed by Ictinus himself; surviving at foundation level today, it was a square columned hall with six entrances. This was where the high priest, the Hierophant, led the initiation ceremony of an ever-increasing number of people who would come to Eleusis from all over the ancient world, after fasting and purification. Looking at the Telesterion, with its eight diazomas that could hold about 5,000 spectators, the visitor can easily imagine the initiates breathlessly attending the secret mysteries.

📍 1 Gioka & Dimitros Streets,  
Eleusis



## Dafni Monastery

The possible existence of an ancient sanctuary dedicated to Apollo Dafnaios at the same site is just one of the theories explaining the origin of the name of the Dafni Monastery; it could also have derived from the laurels (dafni in Greek) that are abundant in the area or the church of the Virgin Mary of Dafne in Constantinople. One thing is for sure: it is the most prominent monument of Middle Byzantine Attica, the costly construction of which should probably be attributed to the imperial court. Dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, the catholicon, a typical example of the 11th century continental octagonal church type, rises in the centre of the complex, while the remains of all kinds of auxiliary buildings (refectory, underground cistern, bathhouse, cell wings) are scattered around it, surrounded by a fortification wall reinforced by towers and battlements. Although the monastery was used as a garrison, a shelter for rebels and a powder magazine during the 1821 Revolution, and, later, a public psychiatric hospital, the deep spirituality of the place remains unspoilt; it is this spirituality that is captured most profoundly in the renowned wall mosaics of the catholicon, with figures recalling Classical and Hellenistic forms, and with the Pantocrator dominating the imposing dome.



📍 Iera Odos, Chaidari



## Temple of Apollo in Kolona, Aegina

It is not difficult to overlook the immense importance of the Kolona hill, where the sole surviving architectural member of the Doric temple of Apollo proudly stands, reminding passers-by of the island's glorious past. Aegina was inhabited from as early as the Neolithic period, with the location of the island's prehistoric settlement being identified with that of this column, which now stands alone. The hill witnessed successive phases of habitation until the 7th century BC, when it was turned into a sacred place – a home of gods, not people – and became the acropolis of Aegina. The temple of Apollo was built at the end of the 6th century BC, long before the Parthenon, mainly of local limestone, whereas the pediments, depicting the legendary Amazonomachies, were made of Parian marble. During the late Archaic and early Classical period, Aegina amassed wealth and fame as a result of its maritime trading activity. The hill was named “Kolona” by Venetian sailors, who used the columns of the temple as a landmark.



📍 near the Aegina port, Aegina








## Temple of Aphaia

The temple of Aphaia in Aegina is part of an extraordinary geographical symmetry: together with the temples of Poseidon in Sounion and Hephaestus in Theseion, Athens, it forms an imaginary isosceles triangle. Another isosceles triangle is formed between the temple of Apollo at Delphi, the Parthenon and Aphaia. Both Aristotle and Strabo acknowledged that the establishment of sanctuaries was not random, but followed an internal rule that remains a mystery to us. However, it cannot but affect the special energy one senses on reaching the top of the pine-clad hill, where local limestone reflects the sunlight with unexpected splendour, making this incredibly well-preserved monument look like a miniature of the Acropolis. It is said that Ictinus and Callicrates drew on this architectural model in order to design the Parthenon. A visit to Aegina will convince you. Built around 500-490 BC, the Aphaia temple is Doric with a peristyle, with 24 of its 32 columns still standing today. In antiquity, it was particularly known for its pediments, full of co-

lourful sculptures, which topped the temple's narrow sides. In 1811, however, the English architect Charles Cockerell and his friend, Baron von Hallerstein, carried them to Italy, where they passed to the hands of Ludwig I of Bavaria, and have been on display in the Munich Glyptothek ever since. But what no one can take away from the Aphaia temple is its magnificent location on a green hill, where the visitor can rest and contemplate the odds of a 5th century BC architectural monument standing, almost untouched, before his eyes.

 Aphaia, Aegina



## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF SALAMIS | MUSEUM OF SPETSES | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF CYTHERA  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF POROS | CYTHERA COLLECTION OF BYZANTINE AND POST-BYZANTINE ART

### Archaeological Museum of Salamis

In the first of the ten Kapodistrian “mutual-teaching schools”, are exhibited finds from the island dating from prehistoric to early Christian times; many of them used to be kept, during the 19th century, in the National Archaeological Museum and the Salamis Town Hall, and later in the Archaeological Museum of Piraeus. The collection of funerary and votive reliefs, and a marble figurine –a forerunner of the Cycladic ones– are the most prominent exhibits of the museum.

📍 42 Polychroni Lembesi Street, Salamis



### Museum of Spetses

On an island inextricably linked to the Greek Struggle of 1821, the Spetses Museum is housed in the impressive mansion from 1798 that used to belong to the local lord Hatzigiannis Mexis. It contains objects dating from prehistory to the Byzantine era, from 18th century Spetsiotan sailors, as well as folklore exhibits. Historical relics related to the Revolution, such as the Revolution flag and Bouboulina's ossuary, stand out.

📍 Dapia, Spetses



### Archaeological Museum of Cythera

At the entrance of Chora, the renovated Archaeological Museum of Cythera welcomes visitors, with exhibits that unravel the history of the island from the 9th millennium BC to the 3rd century AD. Among finds from the Minoan colony of Paleopolis and the sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena, the imposing Archaic marble Lion of Cythera dating from the 6th century BC steals the show.

📍 Chora, Cythera



### Archaeological Museum of Poros

Located in the area where the house of the Greek Prime Minister Alexandros Koryzis used to be, the museum contains finds from the wider area of Troizinia and Ermioni, dating from the Early Helladic to the Byzantine period. Particularly important are the Mycenaean exhibits, originating from sanctuaries, tholos and chamber tombs of the region and the rocky islet of Modi.

📍 Koryzi Square, Poros



### Cythera Collection of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art

The Collection is accommodated in the hospitable Byzantine church of the Ascension, a single-aisled vaulted church, with no mural decoration to rival the rich exhibits from the Early Christian to the late Post-Byzantine period. Here you can marvel at wall-paintings from Cytherian churches, rare fragments of Early Christian mosaic floors, Post-Byzantine icons, as well as a variety of ecclesiastical objects, e.g. silverware, metallic items and pottery.

📍 Kato Leivadi, Cythera








## Castle of Chora, Cythera

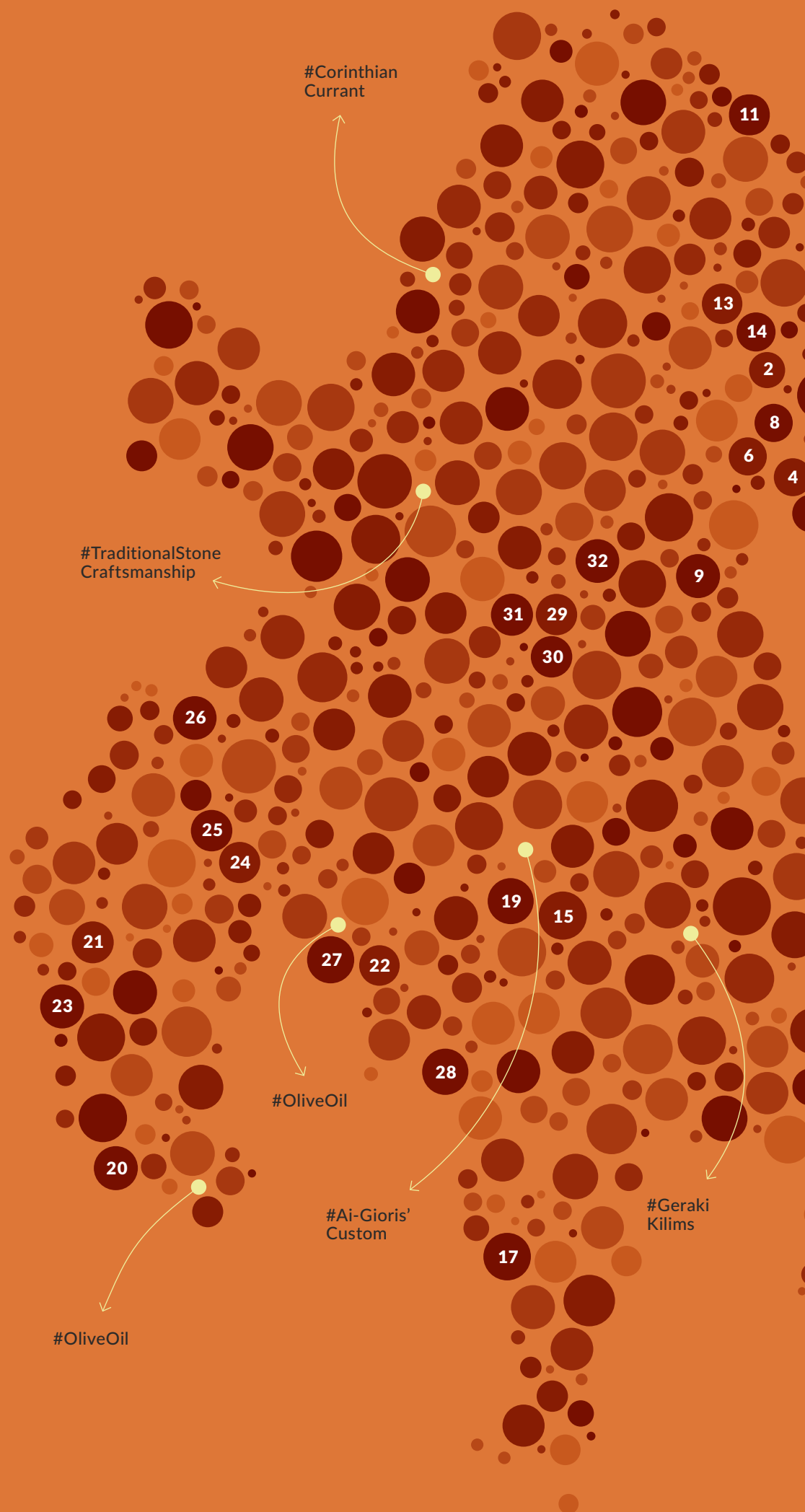
As a magnificent crown topping the steep ridge over Chora, at a height of 200m, the Castle of Cythera did not acquire the title “Eye of Crete” for no reason: its strategic location, with an unobstructed view to the south, allowed the simultaneous monitoring of the Ionian, the Aegean and the Cretan Sea. The castle was built in the 13th century by the Venetians, who acquired Cythera with the division of the Greek territories after the fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders, in 1204. Its current form, however, is due to the extensive reconstruction work carried out by the Venetians in 1503, including the castle’s façade. Its impregnable character and a mighty artillery saved it many times from Turkish sieges –even the notorious pirate Barbarossa, dreaded throughout the Mediterranean, who brutally sacked the island in 1537, did not manage to take the castle. It was no coincidence that it remained in Venetian hands until the fall of the Venetian Republic, in 1797. Then it would pass into the hands of the French, the Russo-Turks, the Ionian State, the British and the German-Italian conquerors until the liberation of the island, in 1944.

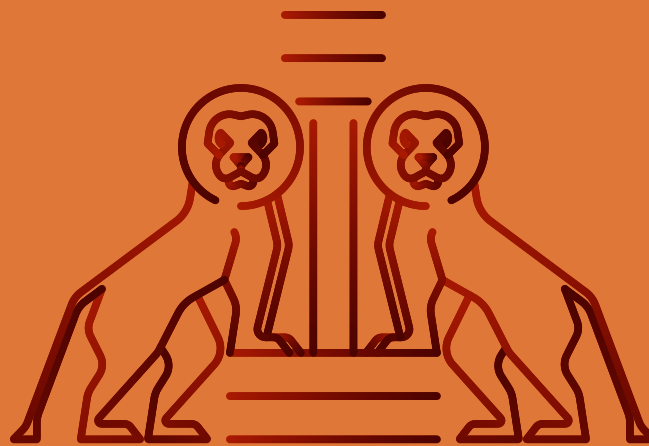
While wandering along its cobbled streets, the visitor is urged to recreate in his imagination life in this glorious castle-town of 16 stremmata, at a time when more than 200 people lived here. The once two-storey houses are now derelict, but the huge Venetian cistern, the gunpowder magazine and the seat of the Venetian Provveditore and the castle’s administration building have been preserved; this is where the Historical Archive of Cythera, the second most significant and extensive archive collection in Greece after that of Corfu, is accommodated today. Among the several beautiful listed churches, stand out those of the Virgin Mary Orphani, the Pantocrator, with murals from the 16th and 18th centuries, and, above all, the Virgin Mary Myrtidiotissa, the patron saint of the island, dating from 1580; it used to be a Catholic church until 1806, known as the “Virgin Mary of the Latins”.

 Chora, Cythera









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#Tsakonian  
Commemoration

#Tsakonian  
Dance

### Epidaurus

Although Epidaurus is today closely associated in collective memory with the world-famous theatre, the latter is just one part of the Epidaurian Asclepieion. An ancient place dedicated to healing deities, the area had a sanctuary from as early as the Mycenaean period, where a goddess with healing properties was worshipped. This was succeeded, in 800 BC, by the first sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas, while later on a sanctuary was added in honour of the primary healing god, Asclepius, whose cult was established during the 6th century BC. According to tradition, he was native to this region, as son of Apollo and Coronis, granddaughter of Malus, king of Epidaurus.

The thermal springs, serene landscape and mild climate turned this local Asclepieion into the most important therapeutic centre of the entire Greek and Roman world, triggering an unprecedented growth during the 4th and 3rd centuries BC. It was then that most of the monuments, parts of which survive to this day, were erected: the temple of Asclepius, which once housed the chryselephantine statue of the god; the Abaton stoa, where the healing rituals were performed; the Tholos, which is said to consti-

tute the most perfect circular building of ancient Greek architecture; the Katagogion, a 160-room guest-house for the accommodation of visitors and the sick; the stadium, where the Asclepieia games were held every four years in honour of the god; and, finally, the famous theatre, which seated about 13,000 spectators.

An integral part of the holistic treatment offered to body, soul and spirit in the Asclepieion, the theatre addressed the latter, hosting musical, singing and dramatic contests during the Asclepieia festivals and drama performances for the pleasure of the visitors. Famous for its perfect acoustics and sophisticated design, Polykleitos' work remains the most emblematic ancient theatre in Greece, attracting artists and visitors from all over the world.

 Lygourio, Argolis





### Mycenae

Much celebrated in the Homeric epics and featuring in the tragedies of the Classical era, Mycenae “rich in gold” was founded by Perseus, son of Zeus, and Danae, and is the most prominent palatial centre of the Late Bronze Age in Greece.

Although traces of habitation from as early as the Neolithic period (7000 BC) do exist, Mycenae reached its heyday during 1350-1200 BC. It was then that the palaces, buildings and sanctuaries of the settlement, the fortification of the acropolis by means of the renowned Cyclopean walls and the famous Lions’ Gate, as well as the masterfully constructed tholos tombs, started being built.

The megalithic walls still impress the visitor today. It is no wonder that legend has it that Perseus commissioned the Cyclopes, mythical creatures from Asia Minor, to erect them. Around the middle of the 13th century, the magnificent Lions’ Gate was constructed. Perhaps the most iconic monument of Mycenae, it crowns the central gate to the acropolis with two lions in relief facing each other in perfect symmetry, while standing on a biconcave altar.

The excavations of Heinrich Schliemann, in 1876, unearthed a group of graves in a circular enclosure, the Grave Circle A, with numerous valuable finds from the Early Mycenaean Age, i.e. fantastic jewellery, vases and weapons, as well as the golden mask of Agamemnon, all of which are currently on display at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, while important finds can be viewed at the Archaeological Museum of Mycenae, located in the archaeological site.



### Tholos tomb of Atreus

The wealth of burial finds in Mycenae led to the conclusion that the corresponding burials belonged to members of the royal dynasty. Most striking of all, the Tholos Tomb of Atreus is the most splendid funerary monument of Mycenaean culture. Also known as the “Treasury of Atreus” or the “Tomb of Agamemnon”, it most probably belonged to neither of the two mythical rulers of the Mycenaean dynasty, but the name given to it by Schliemann has been preserved, thus contributing to its fame. This takes nothing away from the awe that one feels when passing through the majestic entrance with its 120-tonne stone lintel and finding oneself inside, a huge dome of 13.5m in height and 14.5m in diameter. Though almost nothing of its original contents survives, as the tomb had been looted already by the 2nd century AD, sections of the relief decoration of its façade are kept in the National Archaeological Museum and the British Museum.



📍 Mycenae, Argolis

🍴 📖 ♿ ©



## Archaeological Museum of Nafplio

The Archaeological Museum of Nafplio offers a new meaning to the comprehension of the Palaeolithic period and the evolution of man in the Neolithic, since, along with the tools for daily chores from the Franchthi cave in Ermionida, illustrating the transition from a hunters' to a food-production economy, remains of food that the inhabitants of the cave had consumed, such as sea shells and fish bones, are exhibited. But let's take things from the start. If you have ever visited Nafplio, then you have surely noticed the facade of the museum, which is housed in the imposing three-storey Venetian Armoury on the west side of Syntagmatos Square. On the first floor, prehistoric finds are displayed, while on the second are exhibits from the historical periods. In a prominent position, you will see the bronze armour from Dendra dating from the end of the 15th century BC; it is the most splendid example of Mycenaean armour surviving to the present day; a reproduction of it was worn by marines of the Greek Armed Forces for archaeological research purposes.




 Syntagmatos Square, Nafplio



## Tiryns

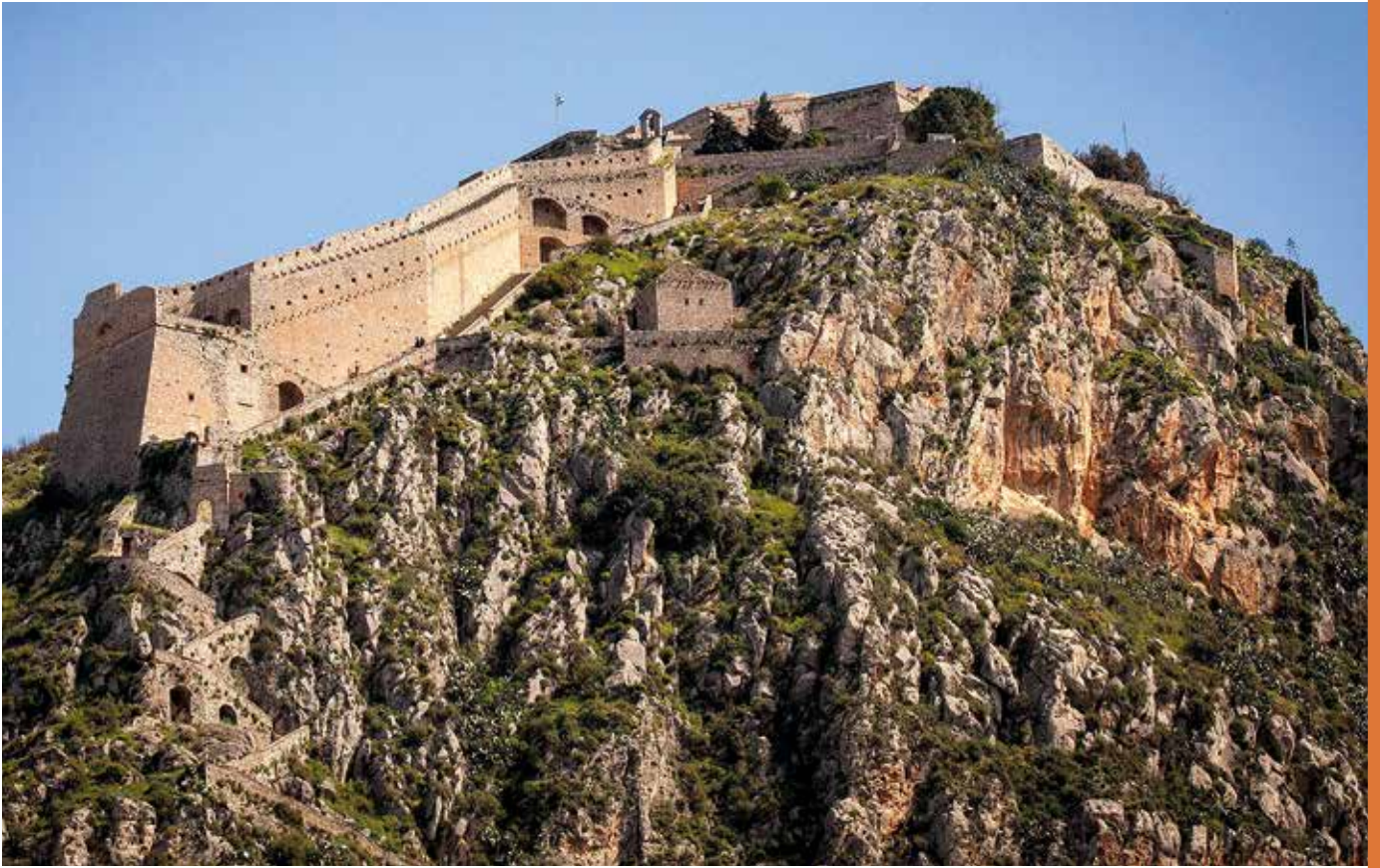
The Mycenaean acropolis with its Cyclopean walls, which made even Pausanias, in the 2nd century AD, wonder about the method employed in their construction, now in ruins, prompted UNESCO to include the now restored archaeological site of Tiryns in the World Heritage Sites list. Over the centuries, the town was buried under the deposits and was gradually uncovered in 1884, thanks to the excavations of the legendary German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann, a lover of Homer and the excavator of Mycenae and Troy. The huge grey-reddish boulders, hewn in an unusual way, have inspired various theories as to how the walls were constructed; this is reflected in the Cyclopes myth, but we now know that the Mycenaeans were great engineers. Apart from the impressive fortification with its tunnels, one can visit the Western Bastion, an outstanding achievement of Mycenaean architecture, the Megaron with the throne room, the Lower Acropolis and the Geometric-Archaic temple, which is preserved at foundation level.



 Tiryns, Argolis








## Palamidi Castle

The best preserved castle from the Venetian rule is associated with three stories of betrayal. Built in just a few years and completed in 1714, to serve the strategic needs of the Venetian conquerors, Palamidi –with its renowned 999 steps– stands proudly on a 216m high hill to the east of Akronafplia. It was named after the Homeric hero Palamides, an inventive youth from Nafplio, who took part in the Trojan War but never returned home, as he was murdered after a betrayal by Ulysses.

In 1715, during the Turkish-Venetian war, the castle was stormed by 100,000 men and fell into Turkish hands after another betrayal. This time it was Lasalle, one of the two engineers who had designed the fortress and knew all its weak points. Palamidi was based on a system of mutually supported bastions, so that if one of them was taken, the defence would be continued in the others. Without Lassalle's help, the attackers would have been hardly able to breach the fortifications.

The third betrayal occurred after the liberation from the Turks, turning the fortress into a notori-

ous prison. It is said that in 1834, Theodoros Kolokotronis, the hero of the Greek Revolution, was imprisoned in a dark dungeon, carved deep into the rock, together with Dimitrios Plapoutas, when he was accused of high treason by the Regency regime. Recent studies, however, have demonstrated that he was probably imprisoned in the bastion of Miltiades, since each one of the castle's eight bastions had its own name. Folk tradition even has Kolokotronis' horse breaking the thousandth step of the fortress, resulting in the access from the western side of the castle, which starts from today's Arvanitia beach, having 999 steps.

 Palamidi hill, Nafplio





## Ancient Theatre, Ancient Agora and Heraion of Argos

It may sound incredible, but the ancient theatre of Epidauros was not the largest in Argolis. The centuries-old town of Argos hides many secrets, the most important being its theatre, a great architectural achievement of the Greek world. Carved onto the hillside during the 4th century BC, it had a capacity of 20,000 people and was directly connected to the ancient Agora, just across the street. On leaving, one must head towards the Argive Heraion, the region's ancient religious centre, which was located 8km from the town. If we are to believe Homer, it was in this sanctuary that Agamemnon was chosen to lead the Argives in the Trojan War. Today, although a plain archaeological site with an impressive staircase and a wide horizon, the Heraion preserves traces of the piety of those who worshipped the austere goddess Hera, the patron deity of Argos. Her first temple has been completely destroyed, but the second, erected around 420-410 BC and originally housing a chryselephantine statue of the goddess, survives at foundation level.




 Tripoleos Street, Argos



## Asine

The wonderful archaeological site of Asine, endowed with the charm that the Nobel Prize winner Giorgos Sepheris has attributed to it in his poem entitled "King of Asine", gazes from above the sea, between two busy beaches of the Argolic Gulf, Psili Ammos in Tolo and Plaka in Drepano. The modern name of the hill, a verdant natural peninsula which is identified with the core of ancient Asine, is "Kastraki". In the 1920s, the Swedish archaeologists who had undertaken the excavation of the area, with the active support of King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden, brought to light settlements of the Early Helladic, Middle Helladic, Mycenaean, Geometric, Archaic and Hellenistic periods, a complex historical puzzle that covers a total of 3,000 years and continues to be investigated to this day. Moreover, the recent enhancement of the archaeological site, in particular harmony with the natural environment, was the occasion for a reconsideration of the finds, contributing to a comprehensive presentation of the place's history.



 Tolo Regional Road, Argolis



## REGION OF THE PELOPONNESE

BYZANTINE MUSEUM OF THE ARGOLIS | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF ISTHMIA  
| LERNA | ANCIENT SICYON

### Byzantine Museum of the Argolis

The unique iconographic approach of the recently renovated Byzantine Museum of Argolis promises a fascinating tour of Argos' rich archaeological heritage. Fragments of ceramics, sculptures and murals rediscover an unexpected wholeness, suspended over sketches that either represent the object as it was originally, or highlight the use and functionality of the exhibits. The Byzantine Museum of the Argolis is housed in the Kapodistrias' Barracks, a historical listed building complex in the town's centre.

📍 Kapodistrias' Barracks,  
Argos



### Archaeological Museum of Isthmia

The Corinth Canal, the most important technical achievement in 19th century Greece, is located a short distance from ancient Isthmia, a pine-wooded area that flourished in antiquity due to its key location. In the sanctuary of the Isthmian Poseidon, the region's patron deity, you will find a small Archaeological Museum designed by Pavlos Mylonas, featuring finds unearthed during excavations in the area's Mycenaean cemeteries. The most important exhibits, the glass panels from the temple of Isis present an early form of the much later art of stained glass!

📍 Kyra Vrysi, Isthmia



### Lerna

The ruins of ancient Lerna are located 10km from the settlement of Myloi, in the Argolis. If the name "Lerna" sounds vaguely familiar, it is because it appears in mythology, in the account of Hercules' fight against the Lernaean Hydra; a mythical monster with nine heads, Hydra, in fact, symbolized the efforts of Lerna's people to drain the polluted marshes located in their land. The most important monument of the settlement is the so-called "House of the Tiles", which dates from the Early Helladic period.

📍 Myloi, Argolis



### Ancient Sicyon

Ancient Sicyon, a charming archaeological site on a small plateau surrounded by fertile orchards, is one of the best kept secrets of Corinthia. It was a complete city-state, with a temple, a palaestra, a bouleuterion and a superb theatre, which flourished during the Hellenistic period. Sicyon was the first city-state in the Peloponnese to mint coins bearing with the head of the goddess Artemis.

📍 Vasiliko, Corinthia





### Ancient Corinth

The stone figure of the Acrocorinth stands out patiently on the horizon every time you pass through the Corinth Canal, waiting to become your final destination rather than a fleeting silhouette on the way to a more distant journey. And rightly so, since thanks to the Isthmus, Corinth was the most prosperous trade centre of the ancient world, until its competition with Athens led to the Peloponnesian War. The Acrocorinth cliff was first fortified during the rule of Periander, one of the seven sages of antiquity, in the 7th-6th century BC, although over time it incorporated structural and decorative elements from all periods of its long history. Even Julius Caesar had it rebuilt in 44 BC, when he decided to revive Corinth as a great Roman colony, ending in the port of Lechaion. Much later, Leo Sgouros, the Byzantine lord of Nafplio, committed suicide by jumping from the walls on horseback, hopelessly watching the Peloponnese fall into the hands of the Franks.

The archaeological site lies in the shadow of the Acrocorinth, where the Temple of Apollo (560 BC)

provides ample evidence for the prosperity and influence of ancient Corinth, although the greatest display of power was the elevation of the Isthmian Games –held at the Corinthian sanctuary of Poseidon and Amphitrite in the Isthmus area– to panhellenic level (584 BC). A visit to the Archaeological Museum of Ancient Corinth is the best way to get a complete picture of the city-state, from the prehistoric to the Byzantine era, and to admire the Twin Kouroi from ancient Tenea, the only example of twin funerary statues from the Archaic period found in Greece.

 Ancient Corinth, Korinthia






## Sanctuary of Zeus in Nemea

Resting on the blessed land of Nemea, the sanctuary of Zeus rises among the vast cultivated fields of the largest vine growing zone in Greece. It constitutes the earliest evidence for human presence in the area of the sanctuary, which dates from the beginning of the 6th century BC. The most important building in the sanctuary is the temple of Nemean Zeus, god of shepherds and animal husbandry, who is probably not identified with the celestial Zeus of Olympus. The temple, one of the first structures to combine the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian orders, was erected in 330 BC and was surrounded by buildings and monuments associated with the cult rituals and sporting events of the Nemean Games. The latter were being held in turns with the other sacred pan-Hellenic games, i.e. those of Olympia, Delphi and Isthmia. From the temple of Nemean Zeus survive three Doric columns, whereas two columns were restored by the American professor Stephen G. Miller, who dedicated his career to the excavation of Nemea and the enhancement of the archaeological site.



 Nemea, Korinthia


   



## Nemea Stadium

According to legend, the Nemean Games –known as “Nemea”– were established by Hercules himself after slaying the lion that was terrorizing the area, thus completing the first of the twelve labours assigned to him by Eurystheus, king of Mycenae. First held in 573 BC, the Nemean Games were among of the four most important sporting events of antiquity, after the Olympic, the Pythian and the Isthmian Games. The stadium of Nemea was built in 330 BC and had a capacity of 40,000 people. Excavations for the discovery of the stadium began in 1974, when the stone section of the starting line that divided the track into 12 lanes was uncovered. Looking at the stadium today, one can easily envisage the athletes entering through the surviving vaulted entrance, one of the oldest semi-circular domes in the Mediterranean. Its walls, as a matter of fact, bear inscriptions that the ancient athletes had engraved, as they waited for their turn to compete.



 Nemea, Korinthia




## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF SPARTA | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF NEAPOLIS, VOIES  
PIKOULAKIS TOWER MUSEUM | ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTION OF MONEMVASIA

### Archaeological Museum of Sparta

The ancient Spartans' relationship with the arts was particular. Primarily oriented towards martial virtues, the rival state of ancient Athens demanded from its citizens total devotion to military training, so that involvement in the arts was forbidden. If you are familiar, even a little bit, with the region's history, then the Archaeological Museum of Sparta will be a pleasant surprise for you. Housed in a neoclassical building from 1876, it was Greece's first regional archaeological museum and contains an ever-growing collection of finds from Laconia, largely due to the toil of the perioikoi. The perioikoi were Laconians who lived in the region before the Spartans settled there and, thus, not accountable to the city-state of Sparta and free to even practice artistic professions. Perhaps the most impressive exhibit in the museum, the bust of Leonidas from 480 BC, reflects the culture of the Lacedaemonians, along with many other sculptures and reliefs from the Archaic and Classical periods, while the peculiar ritual masks from the altar of Artemis Orthia also stand out.



 Lykourgou & Osiou Nikonos Streets, Sparta



### Archaeological Museum of Neapolis, Voies

The Archaeological Museum of Neapolis in Voies follows the journey of an anonymous traveller –partly identified with Pausanias– and experiences the peninsula of Maleas through his eyes. The exhibition area traces the outline of the peninsula, displaying archaeological treasures before the visitor's eyes, in a fascinating journey from land to the sea.

 Dimokratias Avenue, Neapolis, Voies



### Pikoulakis Tower Museum


As towers are a typical feature of the 'rough' culture of Mani, it is no coincidence that the Byzantine Museum of Areopoli is housed in a tower and a tower house of 1821 and 1850, respectively. The permanent exhibition includes an impressive collection of iconostaseis from the 17th to the 19th century, and is displayed on two floors.

 Areopoli, Mani



### Archaeological Collection of Monemvasia

The Archaeological Collection of the Monemvasia Castle is accommodated in an old Muslim mosque that has been used in several ways, from a prison to a café. The most important exhibit is a fully restored iconostasis from the castle's oldest church, which 'haunts' the room with its pale marble and the weight of its medieval past.

 Elkomenou Christou Square,  
Monemvasia Castle, Monemvasia





## Mystras

The dead castle-town of Mystras, founded and erected by dragons, as folk tradition has it, is one of those places that suddenly fill the soul of the visitor with poetry. It all began with the fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders in 1204, when the Byzantine Empire was torn apart. The Peloponnese ended up in Frankish hands, and the castle of Myzithra –its real name before the passing of time shortened it– was established by prince William II Villehardouin on the summit of a naturally fortified hill. The location offered many advantages, the main ones being security and excellent control of the fertile Eurotas valley; however, there was another, more essential reason: prestige, since possessing a castle was for the Franks a display of supremacy.

This did not last long, since in 1262 they were forced to surrender this and many other castles to the Byzantines, marking the beginning of a period of great prosperity that would last for two centuries. The Lacedaemonians, recognizing the advantageous location of the site, settled along the hill's foot, turning Myzithras into the region's most prominent urban centre. Around the castle looms an uphill settlement surrounded by imposing walls on two different lev-

els, dividing the castle-town in two. The Lower Chora accommodated soldiers and officials, while the Upper Chora palaces and mansions. The Lower Chora featured typical stone-built churches and monasteries, many of which still survive. Over the heads of its inhabitants, the watch-towers allowed for complete surveillance of the territory, and it is said that the neighbouring castles used to communicate at night through lit torches.

In 1460, it was conquered by the Turks, with Sparta taking over most of the population, thus turning Mystras into an imposing medieval ghost, which in 1989, by decision of UNESCO, was included in the World Heritage list.

📍 Mystras, Laconia





### Methoni Castle

The castle of Methoni is 'made to measure' with the natural landscape. It occupies the entire peninsula of Agios Nikolaos, with fortifications stretching down to the sea, which surrounds it on three sides. Not one of the 93 stremmata of the peninsula has been left unexploited. At the point where it joins the Mesinian mainland, the Venetians –for it is mainly them who are responsible for the medieval fortifications that we see today– dug an impressive dry moat and the only way to reach the main land gate was to cross a stone 14-arch bridge. It is clear that we are talking about defensive architecture of monumental scale, culminating in the sea portico, which is not only preserved in excellent condition, but also resembles a theatrical setting. Directly in front of it, a narrow sea walkway leads to the tiny Bourtzi, an octagonal turret where the garrison that controlled the entrance to the natural harbour used to reside.

During their rule, the cunning Venetians had established the port of Methoni as a compulsory stopover

for all Venetian ships travelling in the eastern Mediterranean, turning the area into a renowned commercial centre and a half-way stop for pilgrims bound for the Holy Land. This prosperous period ended in August 1500, when, after a bloody siege, Methoni was occupied by the Ottomans, who in turn surrendered the castle to the Greeks three centuries later, in 1828. With the establishment of the Greek state, as provided for by the Treaty of London, the town was moved outside the walls and the castle of Methoni was deserted.

 Methoni, Messinia



## Nestor's Palace

The fragrant palace of Nestor is one of the best preserved Mycenaean palaces to have been discovered so far. However, it is not a simple building, but an entire complex reflecting the palatial system of administration and economy of its time. The imposing palace, which was the king's main residence, was surrounded by storerooms, baths, lobbies and workshops where, among others, the production of perfume oils flourished. The complex consisted of four main buildings, divided into 105 ground floor rooms. It was made of wood and mudbrick, a fact that contributed to its destruction by fire in 1200 BC, only a hundred years after its erection. Today it survives only at the level of the stone foundations, although many of its features, such as the decorated clay bathtub and the circular hearth in the throne room, remain intact. The rich and particularly colourful painted decoration of the walls and floors enhanced the sense of sophisticated prosperity surrounding the mythical king Nestor, a wise and beloved leader who led the Pylians into the Trojan War with 90 ships and, according to Homer, was respected by all Achaeans.



 Kyparissia-Pylos National Road, Messinia



## Kalamata Castle

Mathilde or Macho d' Hainaut. What does Angelos Terzakis' *Princess Isambo* has to do with the castle of Kalamata? The protagonist of the well-known historical novel is none other than princess Isabella of Villehardouin, granddaughter of the Frankish prince Geoffrey I Villehardouin, who founded the principality of Achaia at the beginning of the 13th century. The novel is set in the Middle Ages, a turbulent period during which, however, Kalamata experienced its greatest prosperity. The castle, situated on a low rocky hill on the northwestern side of the town, was built over the ruins of an ancient acropolis, which had been succeeded by a Christian church. However, its present form is clearly due to Geoffrey I, although the battlements from where his granddaughter watched the attempted conquest of the castle by rebels in 1293 no longer exist. The lush enclosure is associated with another famous Greek writer, Zacharias Papantoniou, who, during his tenure as prefect of Messinia in the early 20th century, redeveloped the area into a park.

 28 Spartis Street, Kalamata






### Castle of Pylos (Niokastro)

The castle of Pylos, more commonly known as “Niokastro”, is inextricably linked to the sea. Built by the Ottoman Turks in 1573, after their defeat at the naval battle of Nafpaktos, it features one of the most unusual citadels in Greece. Its hexagonal shape, resembling a constellation when seen from above, and its thick and low walls testify to a major change in the conduct of warfare, namely the introduction of fire-arms. Thus, the walls were thick to withstand cannon fire and low to avoid providing targets for projectiles. The steep slope helped repel armed attacks, making the impact somewhat milder.

The Ottoman occupation of Niokastro lasted until the beginning of the Greek Revolt, with two brief interruptions: the first one was when the Venetians occupied the castle under the orders of Morosini (1686), and the second when the Russians captured it, thanks to the Orlov brothers (1770). On October 8, 1827,

Niokastro was transformed into a bloody theatre, as it offered an unobstructed view of the Navarino naval battle, during which the three Great Powers (England, France and Russia) destroyed the Egyptian fleet of Ibrahim Pasha.

Inside the fortification, huge rusty anchors and a cannon with its balls echo the wartime past, with the superbly restored church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour somewhat mellowing the experience. The amber mosque with its octagonal dome is one of the few buildings to survive within the walls, housing a stunning iconostasis, as well as the spiral staircase that once led to the minaret.

 Tsamadou, Pylos





## Ancient Messene

Behind its unpretentious name, ancient Messene hides a magnificent ancient town that catches the visitor completely unprepared. The relatively low profile of this archaeological park, which covers an area of 400 stremmata that constitutes about one third of the original ancient city that was founded in 369 BC by the Theban general Epaminondas, is a real revelation. The excavations, which began in 1987 and have been continuing at a progressively faster pace up to the present day, have already unearthed all the public and religious buildings that were once recorded by the traveller Pausanias: the Odeum, which is preserved in excellent condition, the Asclepieion, the Stadium with the complete Heroon, the Sanctuary of Zeus, the Gymnasium, the Theatre, the Ecclesiasterion, the Fountain of Arsinoe, and, to put it in more general terms, all the components of a flourishing cultural and political centre that managed to attract all the brilliant Messenians who had fled to Sicily to escape the yoke of Sparta, so that they could return home.

📍 Mavromati, Ithomi, Messinia

🏛️ | ♿ | 🅕



## Museum of Ancient Messene

The Museum of Ancient Messene has its own history: the simple, two-storey building was erected according to the instructions of the architect-archaeologist Anastasios Orlandos, who excavated ancient Messene during 1957-1974. However, it remained closed to the public until March 2000, when the exhibition was finalised by his successor, Petros Themelis, who dedicated his life and career to the most important systematic excavation ever carried out in the region. The most impressive finds is an imposing marble statue of Hermes, 2m in height, which was found almost intact with its plinth. You will also see architectural members, inscriptions, and statues, proving how iconic Messene was for the ancient Greek world.

📍 Mavromati, Ithomi, Messinia

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## Peristeria, Kyparissia

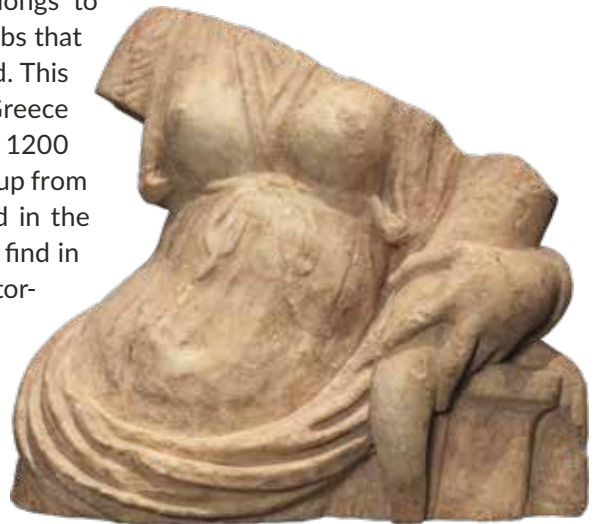
Located 8km from Kyparissia, the archaeological site of Peristeria is not called “Mycenae of the Western Peloponnese” by chance. The excavations initiated by Spyridon Marinatos in 1960 revealed four tholos tombs, the section of a palatial building and several houses, dating from 2200-1200 BC. It is even speculated that the largest tomb may have belonged to king Nestor of Pylos. Whatever the truth may be, the abundance of valuable items found inside them (golden cups, jewellery, vases) and currently exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of Chora, attest to the noble origin of the dead. The area also stands out for its natural beauty –it is worth combining your visit with a hike in the lush green gorge of Peristeria (or Neraidorema) and its cave.

📍 Raches, Triphylia



## Archaeological Museum of Messinia

The Archaeological Museum of Messinia resembles a rushing river, ready to carry you along the course of history. Designed along a central axis emulating the River Pamisos, which runs through a large part of Messinia and flows into the Messinian Gulf, each section of the museum is a branch of this course. The branches follow the old geographical division of the prefecture into four provinces: Kalamata, Messene, Pylia and Triphylia. The Mycenaean kingdom of Nestor, which belongs to Triphylia, is considered the land of origin for the tholos tombs that gradually appeared throughout the rest of the Aegean world. This is where the largest number of Mycenaean tholos tombs in Greece were located, dating from the end of the 17th century BC to 1200 BC, when people stopped building them. The relief golden cup from Peristeria, one of the most precious grave offerings found in the royal tholos tombs, is just a small example of what you will find in the museum, which is located in the heart of Kalamata's historic centre, where the Municipal Market used to be hosted.



📍 Benaki & Agiou Ioanni Streets, Kalamata



## Mourtzinoi Tower, Kardamyli

A unique window into time and the special architectural tradition of Mani, the fortress complex of Troupakides-Mourtzinoi rises among the olive trees, with its tower competing in height with the proud cypress trees. Its owners, one of the most influential Mani families, ruled the captaincy of Androuvista for more than 200 years, as, according to the peculiar administrative system of Outer Mani, the captain was the local ruler of a specific area, which he controlled from his personal "fortress". Built in stages from the late 17th to the 19th century, the complex has three fortification enclosures surrounding the tower, the three-storey fortified residence (tower-house or ondas), numerous subsidiary buildings (blacksmith's workshop, cistern, olive press, vegetable garden), as well as a church dedicated to Saint Spyridon. The existence of only one family church like this one (with a four-storey bell tower) indicates the high social status of the family, the members of which even hosted Kolokotronis here, when he arrived from Corfu and before setting off for the liberation of Kalamata. The tower house now accommodates a museum for the history of the monument and of Mani.



📍 Old Kardamyli, Messinian Mani



## Temple of Athena Alea

Designed by the renowned Parian sculptor and architect Skopas, the temple of Athena Alea held a prominent place in Arcadian worship and was the second largest temple in the entire Peloponnese, after the temple of Olympian Zeus. Built in the 4th century BC on the ruins of an older temple dedicated to a female deity who was gradually identified with Athena, it was made entirely of marble. Although destroyed by an earthquake in the 6th century AD, its splendour is still very much present. As a matter of fact, Skopas was quite innovative, as he used elements from all three architectural styles, i.e. the Doric, the Corinthian and the Ionic, while the pediment sculptures, some of which are in the Archaeological Museum of Tegea, skilfully represent mythological scenes such as the Calydonian boar hunt.



📍 25 Steno-Kerasitsa Provincial Road, Alea, Tegea



## Archaeological Museum of Tegea

Nothing in its traditional, stone exterior suggests the ultra-modern interior of the Archaeological Museum of Tegea. Although it is one of the oldest museums in the Peloponnese, inaugurated in 1909, it was completely remodelled before reopening in 2014. With exhibits dating from prehistoric to Late Roman times, carefully designed lighting and interactive digital applications, the museum tells the story of the birth and development of the most powerful town in ancient Arcadia, Tegea, with a focus on its sanctuaries, especially the famous sanctuary of Athena Alea. The sculptures of the famous Parian sculptor Skopas, who created outstanding works at the sanctuary of Athena Alea, stand out, as well as the unique Arcadian Herms, abstract depictions of deities that the worshippers dedicated to the sanctuaries.

📍 Alea, Tegea



## Archeological Museum of Tripoli

The lovely, two-storey neoclassical building, with its marble windows and the imposing staircase guarded by two lions, is a reason in itself to visit the Archaeological Museum of Tripoli. Designed by Ernst Ziller, it was first used as a hospital in 1913 and inaugurated as the Pan-Arcadian Archaeological Museum in 1986. In its garden, funerary stelae peek out among the blooming rose bushes, reminiscent of a fairy tale setting. A funerary stele greets the visitor at the entrance, with the inscription "Arcadia chaire", an ideal welcome to a place that traces the history of the whole of Arcadia from the Neolithic period to late antiquity: from the prehistoric Sfakovouni and the Mycenaean cemetery of Palaikastro to the powerful ancient towns of Mantinea, Tegea and Megalopoli.

📍 8 Evangelistrias & Spiliopoulou Streets, Tripoli





#Melichloro  
Cheese

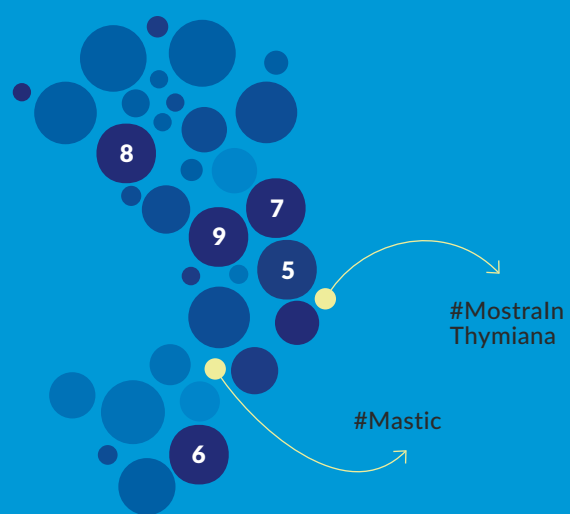
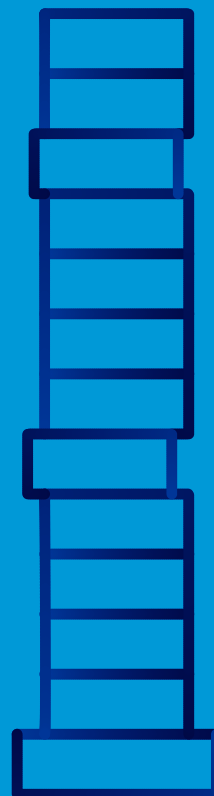
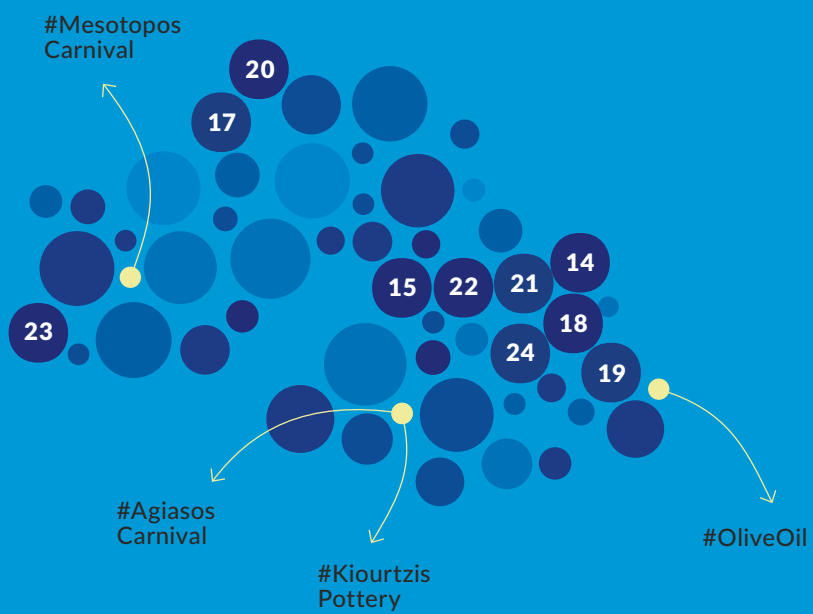
#Lemnian  
Mandras

## REGION OF THE NORTHERN AEGEAN

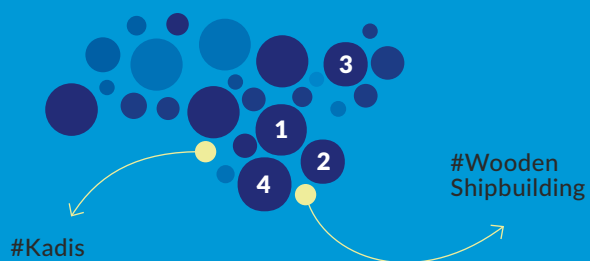
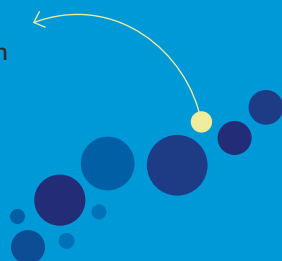
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#Icarian Fetes



### Tunnel of Eupalinos, Samos

How long does it take to dig a 1km long tunnel in solid rock with a hammer and chisel? The answer is about eight to ten years, but that did not stop Eupalinos, the ancient Greek engineer responsible for the construction of the Eupalinos Tunnel, an aqueduct at Pythagoreio, in Samos. Herodotus' reference constitutes the sole source on this unique engineering achievement, which would have been otherwise lost in the mists of time. Thanks to his description, however, it was rediscovered in 1853 and has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as it is one of the most important projects in the history of engineering.

Construction of the aqueduct began around 550 BC, with two crews digging on both sides of the mountain at the same time and meeting in the middle, thanks to Eupalinos' precise mathematical calculations. The tunnel is 1,036m long and measures 1.8×1.8m on average; it channelled water to the cisterns and fountains of the ancient town by means of

clay pipes. The men were working by oil lamp light, which made their already arduous work even harder, polluting the atmosphere. The reason why the aqueduct was built inside the mountain was to remain impregnable from any invaders; it even provided shelter from the Persians and Arabs in later times, when it had been abandoned due to salt build-up.

Descending into Eupalinos' tunnel is like touring through the mind of the great engineer, who braved every risk of failure in a seemingly impossible project at the time, thanks to his profound faith in mathematics.

 Pythagoreio, Samos





## Archaeological Museum of Pythagoreio

The ancient Samians knew how to enjoy the pleasures of life and did not miss an opportunity to hold celebrations in honour of Hera, the mother goddess, whose cult defined life on the island. The evening banquets were interwoven with music, wine drinking, Dionysus and viniculture, which the god himself taught the islanders when he arrived on Samos, in pursuit of the Amazons. You don't have to look very far to find traces of this elevated lifestyle, as the courtyard of the well-designed Archaeological Museum of Pythagoreio constitutes the most extensive archaeological site in the town. Before you even have a chance to marvel at the giant marble statue of the Roman emperor Trajan, the gleaming hoard of 300 Byzantine coins and the eerie loom hall inside the museum, you will find yourself in front of a lavish Roman residence, which not only features a banqueting hall, but is also adorned with a beautiful mosaic made of colourful tesserae, resembling an ornate carpet that welcomed visitors to the villa's peristyle.

 Pythagoreio, Samos



## Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Samos

The first of Samos' two archaeological museums is housed in a two-storey neoclassical building from the early 20th century, known as "Paschaleio", the construction of which caused such a stir in the local community that it even inspired songs. In 1987, the Archaeological Museum of Vathy acquired a second building, sponsored by Volkswagen. This is where the gigantic Kouros of Samos, the pride of the Vathy Museum, is kept. This athletic young man, 4.8m in height, carved in white marble with ashen veins around 580 BC, stood proudly –together with other, equally enormous kouroi– in the Samian Heraion, along the Sacred Way, demonstrating the social and economic strength of its donor. Unlike the always naked kouroi, korai were modest, clad in tunics and cloaks. The ultimate expression of this statue type is Philippe from the group of Geneleos, the most gifted Samian artist of the mid-6th century BC.

 Town Hall Square, Vathy




### Heraion of Samos

The Heraion of Samos became a battleground against nature, a traditional place of worship of the goddess Hera, but it did not manage to preserve any of the temples built in her honour. According to legend, it was on this site that Hera was not only born, but also married to Zeus, under the shade of a wicker tree. In reality, however, the location was completely unsuitable, since the stagnant waters in the plain deposited clay, sand and other materials that made construction extremely risky. Nevertheless, during the 8th century BC the first temple of Hera was erected here, the so-called "Hekatompedos", as it was 100 feet (ekato podes in Greek) long. At the end of the 7th century it was replaced by another temple, and in the early 6th century a gigantic third temple was built, measuring 100×50m, and completely overlapping the earlier Hekatompedos. This ill-fated structure, built under the supervision of the architect Roikos and the sculptor Theodoros and described as a masterpiece of Ionian architecture, was

destroyed by an earthquake just a few years after its completion.

In the time of Polycrates, Samos became the greatest naval force in the Aegean and, due to its wealth and political power, the tyrant believed that he could oppose even natural phenomena. Herodotus mentions the beginning of an even more grandiose undertaking, the construction of dipteral temple "the like of which no man had ever seen before", measuring 55×108m. The temple was never completed; however, it presented Samos with a magnificent ruin, with just one of its 155 columns still standing today – and at half its original height –, forever reminding us of the vanity of the past.

 Heraion, Samos





## Archaeological Museum of Chios

Housed in a building representative of the 1960s architecture, the museum was renovated in 1999 in order to be in line with modern museum concepts. Its halls, painted in different colours in the context of the permanent exhibition "Chios t' enalos polis Oinopionos" (Chios, the coastal town of Oinopion), are enhanced with finds dating from the Neolithic to the Roman period, with special emphasis on the famous Chian workshops of sculpture, coroplastics, ceramics and metalworking. The museum is temporarily closed due to works, but is due to reopen soon.

📍 10 Michalon Street, Chios



## Byzantine Museum of Chios (Mecidiye Mosque)

In perfect harmony with the 19th century Ottoman mosque that houses it, the exhibition of the Byzantine Museum of Chios displays exhibits from the Early Christian period to modern times in a way that highlights the relationships and interaction between the different groups of people that lived on the island. Here, you will see, among others, sculptures and wooden carved objects, examples of folk and miniature art, icons and wall paintings.

📍 12 Kanari Street, Vounaki Square, Chios



## Emporio

With a panoramic view of the Asia Minor coast, Samos and Icaria, it is no coincidence that it was here that the first Ionians, in the 8th-7th century BC, built a settlement with a fortified acropolis, a temple dedicated to Athena and a megaron (chieftain's palace). Outside the acropolis, on the steep slope, are located the ruins of the main settlement, consisting of about 50 buildings ranging from single-room houses to two-storey structures for the wealthy.

📍 Emporeios, Mastic villages, Chios



## Volissos Castle

Overlooking Volissos –where Homer is thought to have once lived– this Byzantine castle with its six circular towers protected the northwestern part of Chios. Although it was built in the 11th century, it was given its final form in the 15th century by the Genoese; its characteristic colour is due to the cupriferous local rock that has been used in its construction. We should also note the presence of a tunnel connecting it with the coast and the area of Pythonas.

📍 Volissos, Amani, Chios





## Nea Moni, Chios

The magnificent monastic complex of Nea Moni in Chios is tied to a miracle: according to tradition, it was founded at the spot, where three Chian hermits found an icon of the Virgin Mary intact amidst the branches of a burning myrtle tree. This is why it was built with great splendour, with the imperial sponsorship of the porphyrogennitae daughters of emperor Constantine VIII, Theodora and Zoe, and the latter's husband, emperor Constantine IX Monomachos. A remarkable example of the insular octagonal church type, the monastery's catholicon, dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, was built during 1042-1055. Later on, an enclosure with a three-storey tower, a vaulted refectory, chapels and wings with cell were gradually added around it. Thanks to imperial favour, Nea Moni grew immensely, accommodating hundreds of monks at its heyday. Although it suffered severe damages caused by the Ottomans during the Chios Massacre in 1822 and the 1881 earthquake, much of the renowned mosaic decoration and fragments of the luxurious, multi-colored marble revetments still survive, waiting to meet the awe-filled gaze of visitors.



 Karyes, Chios


  



## Poliochni, Lemnos

If you have ever wondered which ancient town served as the model for modern Europe, it's not Athens, but Poliochni on Lemnos. Surrounded by two rivers and fertile land, Poliochni instantly solved two of the most pressing problems of its inhabitants, namely providing them with fresh water and a substantial means of livelihood. Its establishment dates from the mid-5th millennium BC, and its heyday was in the 3rd millennium. Its highly advantageous geographical location, on the eastern side of Lemnos, brought it into competition with Troy, which was built directly across from it, a millennium later. The reason why Poliochni is considered the oldest European town is because, when its inhabitants faced a problem that affected public life, they would gather in a place with stone benches to take decisions. Later called "Bouleuterion", this place, which is still visible on the west side of the fortification wall, was the first human invention exclusively related to the public resolution of communal problems.



 Kaminia, Poliochni



## Kabeirion, Lemnos

The Kabeirion, one of the most important places of occult worship in the ancient world, was located near Hephaestia and definitely linked to the myth of fire. The Kabeiroi, from whom it took its name, were malevolent spirits who represented underground fire and mining, unleashing earthquakes and fires from the depths of the earth. The Kabeirian Mysteries were held once a year after sunset, lasting nine days, and initiation was accessible to everyone, whether free or slave. The rituals included animal sacrifices, libations, and offerings, while the Porphyria festival was a reenactment of the discovery of fire, comparable to the lighting of the Olympic flame. The ruins of the Kabeirian sanctuaries, preserved on two plateaus, offer a good insight into how these ceremonies were conducted. In fact, at the top of the hill, one can discern the remains of a tall fortification wall that had been erected to conceal the events from the rest of the island.




 Chloi, Kontopouli, Lemnos



## Hephaestia, Lemnos

According to Aeschylus, the temple of Hephaestia was the first place where fire emerged and was delivered to humans by the titan Prometheus. The largest and most ancient town of Lemnos, Hephaestia owed its prosperity to the fact that, due to its two ports – one natural and one artificial –, it was a maritime junction between Thrace, Macedonia and the Hellespont. Its heyday occurred from the 7th to the 1st century BC, after which its population began declining, following the Athenian conquest of Lemnos during the Classical period. Until then, however, Hephaestia remained the centre of ancient Greek religion on the island. Its theatre, classified among the oldest in the Greek world, has been restored and, since 2010, has been hosting drama festivals, concerts and performances in the heart of a vibrant archaeological site.



 Kontopouli, Lemnos

## Prehistoric Settlement of Myrina

At its heyday (2500-2000 BC), the Early Helladic settlement of Myrina had 3,000-4,000 inhabitants. It developed in parallel with Poliochni, but it featured taller and larger stone houses, divided into two or more rooms –the existence of streets and a sewage system is also impressive for its time.

📍 Myrina, Lemnos



## Archondiki, Psara

In Archondiki, Psara, a Mycenaean settlement, laid out with roads and mud-brick houses in clusters, was discovered. Even more important, however, is the coastal necropolis, where more than 160 chamber tombs were excavated, containing rich grave goods such as swords, tools, ceramics, jewellery and seal stones. Among them was the tholos tomb of the chieftain, who was worshipped as a hero until the 5th century BC.

📍 Archondiki, Psara



## Thermi, Lesbos

Located in one of the most fertile valleys of the island and maintaining close trade relations with Troy, the prehistoric settlement of Thermi developed during the Bronze Age. From a small, unfortified village, it grew to feature fortifications and an urban layout with blocks, streets, and small open spaces, accommodating around 1,200 inhabitants during its heyday.

📍 Pyrgoi, Thermi, Lesbos



## Sanctuary of Messon

A place of age-old worship and seat of the “Commune of Lesbians”, the Sanctuary of Messon took its name from its location in the middle of the island. The first religious building was erected during the Archaic period; it was succeeded, around 300 BC, by a temple dedicated to the Lesbian Triad (Zeus, Hera, Dionysus), while, later, at the same site an Early Christian basilica and a Middle Byzantine chapel dedicated to Archangel Michael were erected.

📍 Messa, Agia Paraskevi, Lesbos



## Vareltzidaina Mansion

One of the few surviving traditional Lesbian mansions, the Vareltzidaina Mansion, dating from the late Ottoman period, owes its name to its last occupant, who died in 1940 at the age of 100. Its rich interior decoration includes plasterwork, carved wooden ceilings and murals, where the element of water, depictions of cities and popular floral motifs of the period predominate.

📍 Petra, Lesbos





### Mytilene Castle

The breathtaking sunset from the top is just one of the surprises that Mytilene castle has in store for its visitors. Perched on the highest point of a peninsula that used to be an island, between the sea and a lush pine forest, it stands as the largest castle in Greece and one of the largest in the Mediterranean. Although its initial construction probably dates from the 6th century, i.e. during the reign of Justinian I, its current form was achieved during the rules of the Genoese Gatillousi (1355-1462), who were almost completely wiped out in the castle during the 1384 earthquake, and the Ottomans (1462-1912). Divided in three sections (Upper, Middle and Lower), the castle was the heart of the town for centuries, with the coats of arms of the Palaeologoi and the Gatillousi still engraved on its walls. From the Byzantine cistern to the Princess Tower, and from Ottoman buildings (mosques, a teke/Ottoman monastery, a medrese/Islamic school, a hammam, a powder magazine, and more) to the houses of the Asia Minor refugees, visitors witness the castle's life through the centuries unfold before their eyes.




 Kioski, Mytilene



### Archaeological Museum of Mytilene - New Building

A natural continuation of the Old Building, located just a few metres away, the New Building of the Archaeological Museum of Mytilene picks up the baton and narrates the daily, religious, economic and political life on the island from the 3rd century BC to the 4th century AD. The permanent exhibition entitled "Lesbos from the Hellenistic to the Roman Era" was inaugurated in 1999; it invites visitors into the luxury Roman villas that were uncovered on the Agia Kyriaki hill, to walk among the exquisite mosaic floors and murals that adorned them. Among the masterful scenes you'll encounter here, are a sea demon from the House of Euripus, the arrival of king Telephus on the Asia Minor coast from the house of the same name, and Orpheus mesmerising wild animals with his lyre from the House of Menander. The second section includes funerary reliefs, statues and portraits of prominent figures of the time —undeniable testimonies, carved in marble, of ancient Lesbos' prosperity.



 Ogdois Noembriou Street, Kioski, Mytilene




### Castle of Molyvos, Lesbos

Strange as it may sound today, in 1355 the whole of Lesbos was given as dowry by emperor John V to his sister, Maria Palaeologina, for her marriage to the Genoese Francesco I Gattilusio. In truth, it was payment for his assistance in regaining the throne, but the important thing was that the transition to the new regime was peaceful and the Gattilusi loved the island. They rebuilt the ruined castle of Methymna, which stood on top of a rocky hill, and eagerly engaged in the cultivation of olive trees, ensuring a period of prosperity and providing the area with a new name. According to the prevailing theory, the word “Molyvos” is a contraction of the Frankish “Mont d’olives”, i.e. mount of olive-trees, and from the 14th century onwards it became the predominant name of Methymna.

Climbing up to the Molyvos castle, starting from the charming settlement that spreads around it, can be relatively demanding, but its beauty is worth every drop of sweat. The castle itself is built of reddish-brown trachyte rock, in complete harmony with

the stone houses in the area, which from above seem like an ocean of roof tiles. Ten tall towers reinforce the castle’s fortification, which features three successive gates, while the buildings surviving inside the fortress date from the Ottoman period. The first Turkish siege ended unsuccessfully, when Orietta Doria, the daughter of the Genoese commander, put on armour and disguised like that fought on the battlements, thus encouraging the soldiers; her bravery inspired Verdi to compose the opera *Orietta di Lesbos*. The island eventually surrendered to Mohammed II in 1462, turning Molyvos into the administrative and military centre of northern Lesbos; it was not liberated before 1912.

 Molyvos, Lesbos





## REGION OF THE NORTHERN AEGEAN

ANCIENT THEATRE OF MYTILENE | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF MYTILENE - OLD BUILDING  
ÇARŞI HAMMAM, MYTILENE | ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTION OF ERESOS



### Ancient theatre of Mytilene

One of the most remarkable monuments of Lesbos, the ancient theatre of Mytilene, was one of the most important theatres of the ancient Greek world – Plutarch, as a matter of fact, mentions that it served as a model for analogous Roman structures. It was constructed during the early Hellenistic period upon a volcanic rock, on a quite prominent location, from where it was visible from both harbours of the island. What survives today, however, belongs to the Late Roman period, during which it could accommodate about 10,000 spectators.



22 Sapphous Street, Mytilene



### Çarşı Hammam, Mytilene

Also known as the “Market Bathhouse”, the perfectly preserved Çarşı Hammam is located in the centre of the former Ottoman quarter of Aziziye and is part of the adjacent Yeni Cami, which dates from the first quarter of the 19th century. Following the models of Byzantine and Ottoman bathhouses, it had a linear layout, where the visitor gradually went from cold to hot.



2 Lorentzou Mavili Street,  
Mytilene



### Archaeological Museum of Mytilene - Old Building

In the Vournazos family mansion, designed in 1912 by the Smyrnian architect Vapheiadis, Lesbian history, from the Neolithic period to late antiquity, is presented through finds from excavations, chance discoveries and donations. Pottery, figurines and jewellery dominate the main building, while large objects such as Aeolic capitals and architectural members are to be found in the outhouse and the courtyard. The museum is temporarily closed for renovation, but will reopen soon.



7 Eftaliotou Street, Mytilene



Skala, Eresos, Lesbos



### Archaeological Collection of Eresos

In an old stone school, next to the archaeological site of the Basilica of Saint Andrew, the Archaeological Collection of Eresos contains finds from the ancient town of the same name. The exhibition illuminates the locals' life from the Late Helladic to the Early Christian period by means of thematic sections: in the “Religion and Cult” section one can marvel at a rare statuette of Cybele, while a terracotta larnax stands out in the “Burial Customs” section.

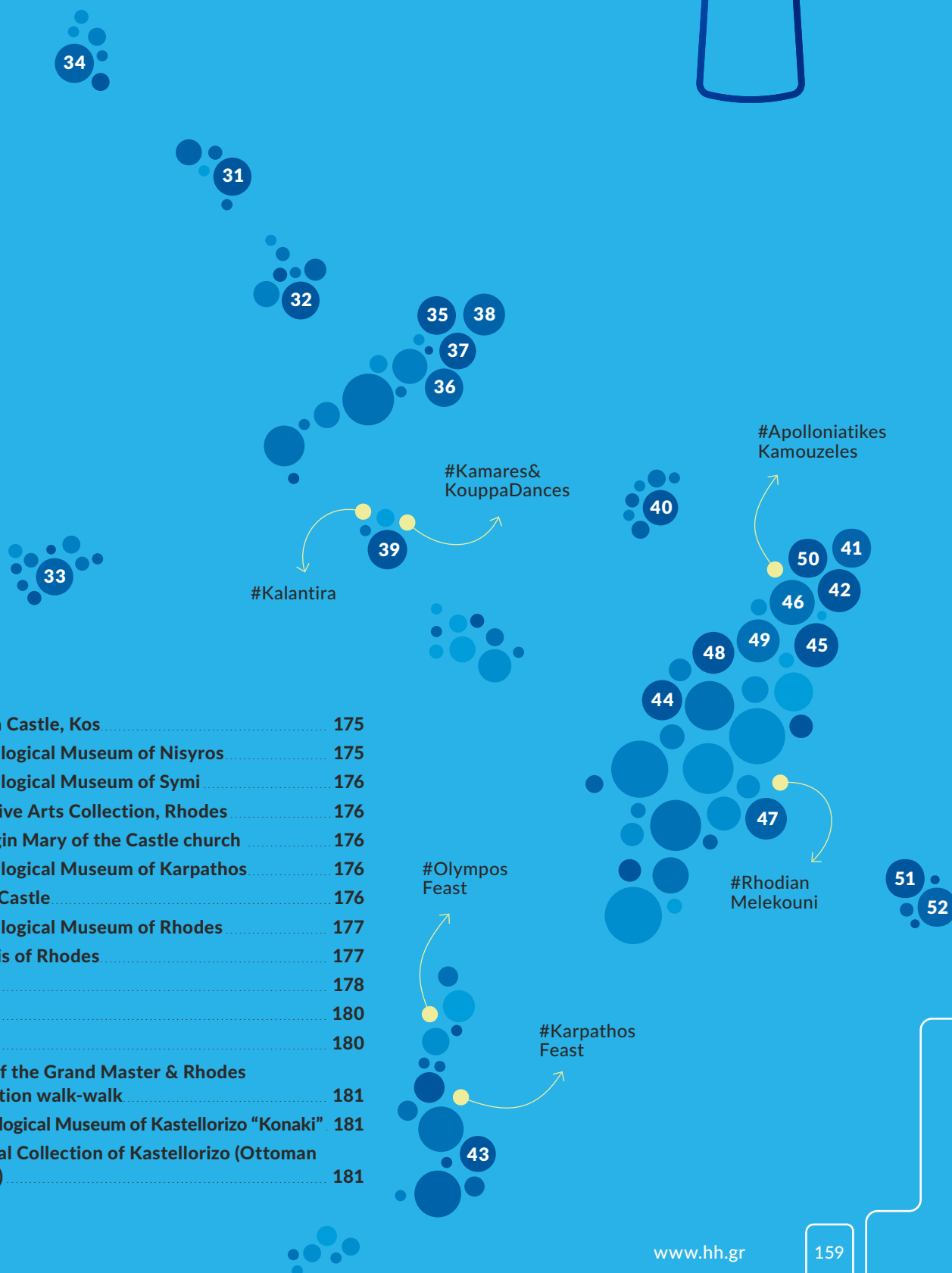
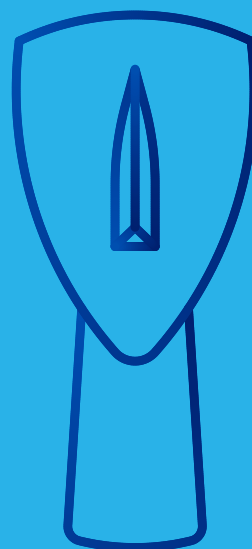




## REGION OF THE SOUTHERN AEGEAN

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### Akrotiri, Thera


In Santorini, one of the world's most popular tourist destinations today, once flourished one of the most advanced civilisations of prehistoric times –and that was when the island was still round in shape. But let's take things from the start.

Akrotiri was already inhabited from the Late Neolithic period (4500 BC), with the settlement continuously expanding, to become one of the most important urban centres and ports of the Aegean during the early phase of the Late Bronze Age (18th-17th century BC). What put a violent stop to its growth was none other than the destructive volcanic eruption that shook the world around 1600 BC and covered everything with ash –just like what happened in Pompeii. But unlike the Roman city that was buried alive by the wrath of Vesuvius, the people of Akrotiri managed to escape in time, forewarned by the earthquakes preceding the catastrophic eruption. The latter wiped out most of the island, which was then known as “Strongyli” due to its shape (strongylos in Greek means round), forming the caldera and modern Santorini in its place.

What is most impressive in this story is that the volcano, which destroyed the prehistoric town, was also responsible for its preservation to this day, as the volcanic materials penetrated every nook and cranny of

the settlement, thus protecting it from erosion. The excavations revealed a town stretching over 200 stremmata, with densely packed buildings, exemplary urban planning, a developed sewage network and elaborate two- and three-storey buildings, decorated with exquisite murals that offer valuable information about the life and habits of the residents.

The wall paintings and finds from Akrotiri are kept in the Museum of Prehistoric Thera, which makes a combined visit essential. The archaeological site of Akrotiri itself, however, is exquisitely landscaped, with a bioclimatic cover that maintains a constant temperature all year round, provides natural light and protects the buildings, while the walkways above the latter allow visitors to obtain a comprehensive picture of the layout and function of the ancient town.

 Akrotiri, Thera







## Museum of Prehistoric Thera

Having first toured the age-old streets and houses of Akrotiri, the next stop is the Museum of Prehistoric Thera in Phira, where you can marvel at the rich decoration that once adorned the houses of the prehistoric town.

As the inhabitants of Akrotiri managed to escape in time before the volcano erupted, taking with them as many precious objects as they could, very few pieces of jewellery or other valuables have been discovered in the area. One of them is the simplistic gold goat figurine, which was discovered inside a clay larnax and is now displayed in the museum.

Despite the ritual objects of exceptional craftsmanship, the Early Cycladic marble figurines, the various ceramic vases with painted decoration and utensils originating from Akrotiri and other excavations in Santorini, while covering the island's history from the Late Neolithic to the Late Cycladic I period (17th century), the indisputable attraction of the museum are the renowned wall paintings from public buildings and private houses in Akrotiri.

The exhibition "Thera Murals-The Treasure of the Prehistoric Aegean", which opened in 2021 on the second floor, presents 28 mural arranged according to the original layout of the rooms where they were

located, thus recreating the atmosphere of a real visit to a prehistoric Theran house. With brilliant colours that remain vivid, Theran wall paintings reveal similarities with Minoan art and, at the same time, a strong love for nature and its creatures (ducks, swallows, bobcats, antelopes and other animals live in these colourful compositions), while also providing us with important information on human activities, hairstyles and clothing of the time. Nothing compares to the experience of seeing up close the famous "Saffron Gatherers", young women picking the precious crocus flowers from the field, or the unique "Blue monkeys", a composition of gaudy blue monkeys running away chased by dogs.

 Phira, Thera



### Ancient Thera

After the dreadful volcanic eruption that wiped out the amazing prehistoric settlement of Akrotiri, Thera remained, with a few exceptions, uninhabited for centuries; until the 8th century BC, when Dorian settlers from Sparta arrived on the island. According to Herodotus, their leader was Theras, son of Autesion, who gave his name to the island, which by that time was known as "Kallisti". The new settlers chose the top of the Mesa Vouno hill dominating the south-eastern coast of Thera at an altitude of 385m, as the location for the new town. With no need for fortifications, due to its naturally fortified location, the town became the urban, administrative and religious centre of the Thera city-state and flourished during the Archaic and Hellenistic periods. It remained inhabited during the Roman and the Byzantine periods, until it was finally abandoned after the 9th century AD.

Climbing up to ancient Thera is not an easy task, while the legendary Cycladic wind certainly doesn't make it more accessible, but visiting a place with a century-old history and the breathtaking view of the

Aegean sea, Anaphi and Herakleia, will definitely make up for it. This otherworldly location literally appeared in the dream of Artemidorus, a priest from Asia Minor, who arrived here at an old age, driven by his dreams, founded a sanctuary and benefited the town. The sanctuary that bears his name is hewn directly into the rock and on it you will find carved, besides the wreathed portrait of its founder, animal symbols of the gods: an eagle for Zeus, a lion for Apollo and a dolphin for Poseidon. The small yet imposing theatre also stands out, while the plain church of Saint Stephen from the 8th century AD, built on the ruins of an earlier temple, stands as a silent witness to life in the area after antiquity.



Episkopi Gonia, Kamari, Thera



## REGION OF THE SOUTHERN AEGEAN

ICON AND HEIRLOOM COLLECTION OF PYRGOS, THERA | SKARKOS, IOS  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF IOS | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF KIMOLOS



### Icon and Heirloom Collection of Pyrgos, Thera

Ecclesiastical art is truly celebrated in the Collection kept in the restored church of the Holy Trinity. Created immediately after the devastating 1956 earthquakes, the collection preserves unique works of art and objects of ritual use from the island's churches, e.g. Post-Byzantine icons by Cretan and local painters dating from the 16th to the 19th centuries, wooden carved crosses, altars, vestments, liturgical books and vessels.

📍 Kasteli, Pyrgos,  
Kallisti, Thera



### Skarkos, Ios

A visit to the archaeological site of Skarkos sheds light on the life of people during the Early Cycladic II period, as it features the largest and best preserved settlement of that time, with two-storey houses, fenced courtyards and streets with open spaces. Apart from figurines, vessels and seals, the finds from Skarkos included even remains of sea urchins and snails, providing evidence for the ancient menu!

📍 Skarkos, Ios



### Archaeological Museum of Ios

In the neoclassical Amoiradakeion Mansion, the documentation of the archaeological heritage of the island begins with the collection of the mayor Fragkoulis Kortesis from 1904 to get as far as modern excavations. Next to the key exhibits from the Early Cycladic settlement of Skarkos, one can marvel at finds from the ancient town of Ios, dating from the historic era, such as a rich collection of inscriptions and two impressive funerary stelae.



📍 Chora, Ios



### Archaeological Museum of Kimolos

The museum's adventure begins in 1954, with the Kimolians' attempt to prevent the transfer of more than 300 vases to the National Archaeological Museum. Now housed in a 19th century traditional two-storey house, the exhibition covers the island's past times, from prehistory to late antiquity, with finds mainly from the ancient town's cemetery, while, as a result of the transparent floor, one can practically walk over a reconstructed ancient burial.



📍 Chora,  
Kimolos





## Episkopi, Sikinos

In the unspoilt landscape of this small Cycladic island, among crops stretching over traditional terraces, stands one of the most distinctive and important ancient monuments of Greece. The peculiarity of Episkopi is that it was a Roman mausoleum from the 3rd century AD that was converted into a Byzantine church and its continuous use has resulted in it being preserved almost intact with features from all its phases – a rare case of a monument where antiquity meets the Middle Ages. Closed for 60 years due to severe deterioration, Episkopi was reopened to the public in 2022, after restoration work that brought to light a major discovery: the unlooted tomb of the woman for whom the mausoleum is thought to have been erected. As evidenced by the stone inscription and rich grave goods, her name was Neico and she was probably a Roman aristocrat. The monument's exemplary restoration by the Archaeological Service was awarded one of the European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards 2022, while after the restoration, the Sikinians' feast for the Virgin Mary, which takes place every August 15th, was revived in the area.



 Sikinos



## Archaeological Museum of Melos

Ernst Ziller's architectural genius made it as far as the island of Melos, where in 1870 he delivered the magnificent neoclassical building that has been home to the Archaeological Museum of Melos since 1985. Recently renovated, the museum contains exhibits from various parts of the island, dating from the Neolithic period to late antiquity. None, however, could greet visitors more effectively other than the famous Venus de Milo, even though this is just a plaster replica, though a faithful one; the original statue was found, in 1820, in a rural area of the island, only to end up, a year later, at the Louvre Museum, where it is still on display today. The most important collection is arguably that of the finds from the prehistoric settlement of Phylakopi, with the famous "Lady of Phylakopi", discovered in the Mycenaean sanctuary of the settlement, being the most significant one. This 14th century wheelmade ceramic female figurine probably depicts the deity worshipped in the sanctuary – a masterpiece of Mycenaean art, it still looks incredibly modern despite being 35 centuries old.




 Plaka, Melos



## Melos catacombs

If you are looking for a break from the island's sunny beaches, the renowned catacombs of Melos offer a diverse, unforgettable experience. While resembling an atmospheric gothic setting, this is an ancient, underground communal cemetery dating back to early Christian times and is considered the third largest of its kind, after the catacombs of the Holy Land and Rome. They were created in the 1st century AD by the persecuted Christians who took refuge in Melos, probably working as slaves in the island's mines; they remained in use until the 7th century as burial and worship areas, as evidenced by a piece of rock that had been used as an altar. The catacombs comprise a complex of three large underground galleries connected by smaller corridors and burial chambers, with a total length of 200m. On the walls, carved into the soft volcanic rock, are the arches (arcosolia) crowning the graves –although opinions differ as to their exact number, it is estimated that some 1,500-2,000 people were buried in the Melian catacombs.



 Klima, Trypiti, Melos



## Phylakopi, Melos


On the northern coast of Melos, one of the most important towns of the prehistoric Aegean flourished. Although a section of the settlement had been eroded and sunk into the sea since antiquity, excavations that began in 1896 uncovered remains spanning over almost two millennia (3300-1100 BC), from the beginning of the Early to the end of the Late Bronze Age. Among the architectural remains that were brought to light are cyclopean walls made of volcanic boulders, as well as a sanctuary and a megaron, both from the Mycenaean period. Minoan and Mycenaean influences are attested by various finds, such as a Linear A tablet and a golden mask discovered in the sanctuary.

 Phylakopi, Melos



## Archaeological Collection of Seriphos

The Archaeological Collection of Seriphos is currently housed in the former Municipal Guesthouse "Perseus", in Livadi, Seriphos, right next to the coast. This plain building, a work of the architect Philippos Vokos and typical example of the 1960s modernist architecture and the Xenia hotels, is the only one of its kind on the island and has been given new life by accommodating finds from various parts of Seriphos dating from the Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods. Among them are marble sculptures, statues, architectural members, relief funerary stelae and ceramic amphorae from the Castle in Chora (which is identified with the ancient town of Seriphos) and the restored Aspropyrgos in Mavra Voladia, which is now an archaeological site open to visitors.

 Livadi, Seriphos



## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF SIFNOS | MYCENAEAN ACROPOLIS OF AGIOS ANDREAS, SIFNOS  
| AGIA EIRINI, KEA | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF KEA

### Archaeological Museum of Sifnos

In the heart of the medieval Kastro, on the first floor of the traditional Maridakis house, the Archaeological Museum of Sifnos holds collections of sculptures, ceramics and coins from the Geometric to the Late Roman period. Among the most remarkable finds, you will discover an anthemion-crowned funerary stele from the 4th century BC, a kouros head and an Ionic capital from the 6th century BC and a marble funerary stele from the Hellenistic period.



📍 Kastro,  
Sifnos



### Mycenaean Acropolis of Agios Andreas, Sifnos

Distinguished as “an outstanding example of enhancement and promotion of archaeological finds”, the archaeological site of the Mycenaean acropolis of Agios Andreas dominates the hill, where the homonymous chapel dating from 1701 is to be found. Apart from the panoramic view of the central settlements of the island and the Aegean Sea, the 12th century BC Mycenaean wall with its eight rectangular towers, enclosing the ruins of five buildings, makes the site worth visiting.

📍 Agios Andreas,  
Apollonia, Sifnos



### Agia Eirini, Kea

With its remains going back to 3,000 BC, the prehistoric settlement of Agia Eirini, named after the small church in its middle, was an important Aegean cultural centre that flourished until the 15th century BC, when it was destroyed by earthquakes. However, sections of Early Cycladic buildings have been preserved, together with fortifications and a sanctuary from the Middle Bronze Age.

📍 Agia Eirini, Korissia, Kea



### Archaeological Museum of Kea

Thoroughly renovated in 2002 and painted almost entirely in shades of blue, the interior of the museum seems to be submerged in the sea. On the second floor, the large ceramic figurines of women in bell-shaped skirts who appear to be dancing and originate from the prehistoric settlement of Agia Eirini, steal the show; the first floor contains important finds from the island's four ancient towns, i.e. Karthaia, Korissia, Poiessa and Ioulida.

📍 Antoniou Lazaridou Street,  
Ioulida, Kea





## REGION OF THE SOUTHERN AEGEAN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF ANDROS | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF PALAIOPOLIS, ANDROS  
| ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF SYROS | YPSILI, ANDROS

### Archaeological Museum of Andros

The museum was founded in 1981 with a donation from the Basil & Elise Goulandris Foundation; with the ingenious use of photographs, models and explanatory material, it offers a vivid tour of Andrian history from the Neolithic period to the Venetian rule. Notable are the finds from the Geometric settlement of Zagora, a collection of sculptures depicting Hermes of Andros, and a superbly preserved copy of the Rigas Pheraios' map (*Carta*).



Kairi Square,  
Chora, Andros



### Archaeological Museum of Palaioiopolis, Andros

A building donated by the Basil & Elise Goulandris Foundation houses impressive finds from Palaioiopolis, the ancient centre of Andros. The sculptures of the mythical winged horse Pegasus and Bellerephon (500 BC), an imposing life-size lion (320 BC) and a plaque inscribed with 178 verses of a hymn to the oriental goddess Isis (1st century BC), all made of fine marble, claim our attention.



Palaioiopolis, Andros



### Archaeological Museum of Syros

One of the oldest museums in Greece, the Archaeological Museum of Syros was founded in 1834; in 1900, it was relocated to the majestic City Hall, designed by Ziller. It holds finds from all Cyclades, the ancient town of Syros, the iconic Early Cycladic settlement at Kastri and the famous necropolis at Chalandriani, while one of its halls is dedicated to the great archaeologist Christos Tsoungas, researcher of Greek prehistory, with photographic material, diaries and objects from the excavations he undertook on the island in 1898.



Town Hall,  
Ermoupoli, Syros



Aprovato, Andros



### Delos

A unique case in Greek antiquity and, also, later times, Delos is in itself a major reason to visit the Cyclades, in order to experience a fantastic escape in time: from the modern cosmopolitanism of the neighbouring Mykonos to the magnificent cosmopolitanism of another era. Just the thought that in this tiny island, only 5km long and 1.3km wide, where less than 25 people (mainly staff working in the archaeological sites) currently live, resided about 30,000 people in 90 BC, is enough to provide an idea of the inestimable importance of Delos for the ancient world.

A sacred place, as according to mythology it was here that Leto, pregnant by Zeus and mercilessly pursued by the jealous Hera, found refuge in order to give birth to Apollo and Artemis, Delos gradually became a safe haven for all the peoples of the Mediterranean. Although inhabited since prehistoric times, it was its successive colonization by the Mycenaeans, the Athenians and the Romans that gave this humble islet an unprecedented glamour. The Romans declared Delos a free port, transforming it into a powerful commercial and religious centre, where people from every corner of the then known world coexisted peacefully, perhaps for the first time in history. People from the Greek world, but also from Pontus, Cappadocia, Syria, Cyprus, Egypt, Arabia and elsewhere, would settle in Delos, thus transforming the island to an unparalleled melting pot for the exchange of ideas.

The monuments that one can admire in the archaeological site of Delos –the largest in Greece–, as well as the important exhibits in its museum, are indicative of the multiculturalism and religious freedom that characterized the island. A stone's throw away from the enormous sanctuary of Apollo, which stretched over 20,000m<sup>2</sup>, and from shrines dedicated to Artemis, Hera, Zeus, Athena and the entire Dodecatheon, one can also find sanctuaries dedicated to gods that did not belong to the traditional Greek pantheon, such as deities from Phrygia and Mysia, or Syrian and Egyptian gods. Among them, the sanctuary of Isis, the patron goddess of sailors, dominates the hill of Kynthos, the highest point of the island, with the statue of the goddess still haunting its interior.

The most emblematic Delian vista, however, is by all means the imposing marble statues lined along the Avenue of the Lions. Of the 16 lions, only five sur-

vive today, and although they are copies (the originals are kept in the Archaeological Museum of Delos), one can easily imagine the awe they must have caused, lined up in a row, guarding the road to the sanctuary of Apollo. A gift of the Naxians to the god of light, they are an outstanding example not only of the extraordinary skills possessed by the Naxian craftsmen, but also of their effective effort to impose their presence everywhere on the island. It should be noted that they were the first to introduce this arrangement of animal figures, unprecedented in Greece before that time, which was more common in Egyptian art and the comparable rows of statues of sphinxes and felines that were standing as vigilant guards in the temples of Karnak and Luxor.



Similarly impressive are the private houses in the Theatre district, which are named after the exquisite mosaics that often adorn their floors, e.g. the once two-storey, lavish House of Dionysus, the ground floor of which had been embellished with a mosaic depicting Dionysus with open wings, riding a tiger with a grape wreath around its neck. While admiring the magnificent detail and still vibrant colours of the scene, one can easily close their eyes for a moment and imagine the wealthy occupants welcoming their distinguished guests with a cup of fine wine. The theatre after which the district was named could accommodate about 5,500 spectators, offering them a unique vista of the Aegean sea along with the actual performance.

Nothing less than an island resembling a living mu-

seum in its entirety, hiding numerous treasures in every corner, Delos has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1990.

 Delos





## Archaeological Museum of Myconos

The “cleansing” of Delos in the winter of 426/5 BC, when all the tombs were opened and the bones, as well as some grave goods were taken to the neighbouring island of Reneia and buried in the “Purification Pit”, led to their subsequent discovery, in 1898, by the archaeologist Dimitrios Stavropoulos, who unearthed the Delians’ burial remains. The Archaeological Museum of Myconos was built in 1902 to house and display these unique finds and acquired its final, Cycladic appearance in 1934.

📍 Chora, Myconos



## Archaeological Collection of Amorgos

The Archaeological Collection of Amorgos is housed in the two-storey Gavras Tower, next to the single-aisled church of the Life-Giving Spring. On the top floor, there is a high-ceilinged reception hall with small arched windows, where a dance was once held in honour of Otto and Amalia. Today, in the “Sala of Gavras”, as it is commonly known, are exhibited mainly sculptures from the Archaic to the Roman period, while the basement holds ceramics, inscriptions and marble figurines.

📍 Chora, Amorgos



## Kionia, Tenos

The only sanctuary of the Cyclades dedicated entirely to Poseidon, god of sea, could only be located by the sea. Built on Tenos, at a short distance from the sacred island of Delos, the pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Poseidon and his wife Amphitrite was considered absolutely necessary for those who ploughed the seas; the most important building in the complex is the monumental 170m long stoa.

📍 Kionia, Tenos



## Archaeological Museum of Tenos

The unpretentious Archaeological Museum of Tenos, located on the busy Panagia Street, is in stark contrast to its collection of huge pithoi excavated in Xomburgo. On the neck of one of these pithoi, the visitor can see the earliest depiction of the birth of goddess Athena out of Zeus’ head. In the centre of the museum one can rest in a peaceful courtyard with mosaics, inscriptions and fragments of sculptures depicting sea monsters.

📍 75 Megalocharis Street,  
Chora, Tenos



## Archaeological Museum of Paros

The homeland of the renowned Parian marble, the material from which countless masterpieces were crafted throughout Greece, could not be without its own museum. Built in 1960, to accommodate finds from excavations on Paros and Antiparos, the museum impresses visitors right from the courtyard, where among the wind-swept palm tree and blooming oleanders, sarcophagi and statues from the Classical and Roman periods bask in the sun, as well as mosaics from the Virgin Mary Ekatontapyliani church. One of the two halls is dedicated to vases, sculptures, and small finds from the Neolithic to the Roman period (including the “Lady of Saliagos”, the oldest known Cycladic figurine), while the other is devoted to sculptures from the Archaic and Classical periods. Here you will encounter the mutilated but magnificent Nike of Paros and the colossal cult statue of Artemis from Delion, standing 2.74m tall. But the museum’s pride is undoubtedly the almost fully preserved monstrous winged Gorgon (6th century BC), with astonishing details —a scaly tunic and a snake for a belt that will leave an unforgettable impression, just as her creator intended.

📍 Paroikia, Paros



## Archaeological Museum of Naxos

Built during the Frankish occupation to house a school of Jesuits and later on a commercial school where Kazantzakis studied, the museum holds one of the most important, on an international scale, collections of Cycladic figurines from Naxos and the Lesser Cyclades, as well as pottery and other unique objects demonstrating the splendour of the Cycladic civilization. As the museum is currently under renovation, the collection is temporarily housed in the former Ursulines Monastery.

📍 Castle, Chora, Naxos



## Archaeological Collection of Apeiranthos, Naxos


The Collection was established in 1960, with the exhibits from the private collection of Michalis Bardanis being enriched later on through the addition of finds from excavations in eastern Naxos. Apart from Cycladic figurines and daily life objects, i.e. vessels and tools, notable are the prehistoric rock-paintings, as well as the rare dark stone slabs from the site of Corfi t’ Aroniou, depicting ritual or hunting scenes.

📍 Apeiranthos, Naxos



## Yria, Naxos


The Sanctuary of Dionysus at Yria underwent not one, not two, but four construction phases, in an area with continuous life and cult activity from the 14th century BC to the present day. In a location, where open-air fertility rites dedicated to Dionysus once took place, the first single-aisled temple made of wood and mudbrick was constructed around 800 BC. After it was destroyed in a flood, it was replaced, around 730 BC, by a four-aisled columned hall for mystical ceremonies, followed by a third temple dating from 680 BC. Between 580-570 BC, construction began on the fourth and largest building, a 100-foot (ekatompedos) Archaic Ionic temple, the one visible today, which was discovered as recently as 1986. But if you thought the adventures of the Yria sanctuaries ended there, be aware that in the 5th century AD, the temple was transformed into a three-aisled Christian basilica, and in the 11th century, the all-white Byzantine church of Saint George was built nearby, which still functions today –thus, closing a cycle of uninterrupted cult activity for over 3,300 years!

 Yria, Livadi, Naxos



## Sangri, Naxos

There are several reasons to visit the beautiful village of Sangri, which is aptly referred to as “Little Mystras”, surrounded by picturesque windmills, charming towers, Byzantine churches, and monasteries. However, nothing compares to the Archaic temple of Demeter, built around 530 BC as part of the ambitious building program implemented by Lygdamis, the tyrant of Naxos. As one of the earliest Ionic temples, with its unusual square layout (a rare feature for Greek temples at the time) and two monumental doorways, it is the only well-preserved example of a rare ancient building type, i.e. the telesterion, a columned hall for mystical gatherings. Moreover, the temple at Sangri is a rare example of a structure made completely of marble, with over 50% of its original material preserved. These elements make the temple not just a spectacular sight, but also an invaluable source of knowledge with regards to ancient architecture, as it offers information about techniques similar to those used on the Parthenon, a whole century before the latter’s construction.

 Gyroulas, Sangri, Naxos





## Panteli Castle, Leros


Visible from almost every corner of the island and with a panoramic view of its bays and beyond, the Byzantine castle of Panteli in Leros passed, in 1314, into the hands of the Knights Hospitaller, who built its third and outer enclosure. The church that protects the island, the Virgin Mary of the Castle (11th century), is to be found here; it features the homonymous icon from the Iconoclasm period, which, according to legend, was created by Luke the Evangelist himself. The castle is accessible by car, but also by a flight of steps up from the traditional settlement of Platanos, as the festive pilgrimage every August 15th stipulates. An ecclesiastical museum operates in the castle, and a 162-seat theatre, added in 2005, is expected to reopen.

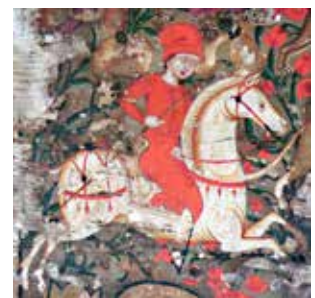
 Panteli, Leros



## Nikolaidis Mansion


Built in the 17th-18th century, the Nikolaidis Mansion is a typical architectural example of a two-storey residence of the wealthy Patmian bourgeoisie of the time. However, some of its features make it unique, such as the built-in chapel, the “ampataros” (a wooden structure with a dual role as a storage room and a partition) and the two gothic-style windows. In addition to the mansion’s domestic equipment, a small archaeological collection, drawings and documents are also kept in it.

 Chora, Patmos



## Archaeological Museum of Astypalaia


The museum contains finds dating from prehistoric to medieval times, from various locations on the island; the most significant are those from Kylindra, where the world’s sole ancient cemetery for infants was found, with about 3,000 infant burials (urn burials). Next to vases from Mycenaean tholos tombs, you will also see a hoard of silver coins from the Classical period, as well as the marble coat of arms of the Querinis (governors of the island) from the Venetian castle of Astypalaia.

 Pera Gialos, Astypalaia



## Archaeological Museum of Kalymnos

The famous “Lady of Kalymnos”, a bronze Hellenistic statue of a woman in a chiton that was ‘caught’ in the nets of a local fisherman in 1995, and a huge cult statue of Asclepius are the most renowned exhibits of the Kalymnos Archaeological Museum, which holds collections dating from prehistory to the Post-Byzantine period. The exhibition also includes the reconstruction of the interior of the 19th century mansion, where the museum is housed and which belonged to the sponge merchant Vouvalis.

 Pothia, Kalymnos



### Roman Villa (Casa Romana), Kos

If you wish to be transported back to the Roman era and feel like a wealthy official of the time, all you have to do is pass through the gates of Casa Romana in Kos! This impressive restored villa dates back to the 2nd-3rd century AD, although there is evidence, such as the statues of the Nymphs and Athena, suggesting that it was built on top of a Hellenistic house. This Pompeii-type villa was discovered in 1933, after the devastating earthquake that struck the island, then under Italian occupation, and was successively restored in 1940 and 1976. The villa's 36 rooms are arranged around three atriums, which compete in luxury with the interior furnishings. Alongside the water pools dominating their centres, the floors are embellished with exquisite mosaics: a panther devouring a deer, a Nereid on a hippopotamus, representations of dolphins, felines and other wild animals. The journey through Roman imperial times ends with the collection of artefacts exhibited in the rooms: ceramics and glassware, coins, murals and marble sculptures.



 Grigouriou Pemptou Street, Kos



### Asclepieion, Kos

It would not be an overstatement to characterize the Asclepieion of Kos as the cradle of medical science. Despite the fact that in antiquity there existed many Asclepieia, i.e. places for worshipping Asclepius and healing centres, it was in the Asclepieion of Kos that scientific medicine was particularly developed, thanks to Hippocrates and the medical school he founded here.

As the sanctuary is built on the slopes of a hill, in a stunning location, surrounded by lush vegetation and with an amazing sea view, it is not difficult to imagine how the landscape itself would have contributed to the healing process. The Asclepieion complex was built from the 4th to the 2nd century BC and operated until the 4th century AD. It stretches over three terraces, which are connected with imposing staircases. Organized in these terraces are the cult areas, such as the altar and temples dedicated to Asclepius and Apollo, rooms for the treatment and accommodation of patients, while in Roman times fountains with thermal waters, cisterns, latrines and baths were also added.



 Kos



## REGION OF THE SOUTHERN AEGEAN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF KOS | NERATZIA CASTLE, KOS  
| ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF NISYROS

### Archaeological Museum of Kos

The exuberant archaeological heritage of Kos is accommodated in a preserved building from the Italian period, a typical example of the fascist monumental architecture of the Dodecanese. The building was erected in 1936 to house the finds from the Italian and German archaeological excavations –to-day, the collection of the recently renovated museum also includes finds from excavations carried out by the Archaeological Service and research institutions across the island, dating from prehistoric to Late Roman times.

Sculpture clearly dominates the exhibition: in the entrance hall, the visitor is welcomed by the colossal head of the goddess Hera and a funerary relief representing a lion. Originating mainly from the agora and the western archaeological site, the altar of Dionysus, the odeum and Casa Romana, most sculptures are in excellent condition. The few mosaics, however, threaten to steal the limelight from the marble parade of stately deities. The most impressive examples are the Hellenistic mosaic from the Roman villa representing the bottom of the sea and the mosaic floor from the Roman House of Asclepius, which covers almost the entire floor of the museum's atrium with a composition featuring Asclepius arriving at the island.




 Eleftherias Square, Kos




### Neratzia Castle, Kos

One of the most impressive examples of the Knights Hospitaller's fortifications in the Dodecanese, this 14th century coastal fortress took its name from the numerous bitter orange trees (neratzia in Greek) that existed in the area. It features two enclosures separated by a moat and flanked by towers and battlements, while architectural members from some of the town's archaeological sites have been used for its construction.



 4 Miaouli Coast,  
Kos



 Mandraki,  
Nisyros



### Archaeological Museum of Nisyros

Almost every period of the island's long history is represented in the rich collection of the Archaeological Museum of Nisyros. Most of the prehistoric exhibits come from the volcanic islet of Gyalí, while the necropolis of the ancient town in Ai Giannis has yielded find from the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods: unique grave goods, vases and figurines, clay larnakes, tombstones and inscriptions.





## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF SYMI | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF KARPATHOS  
| DECORATIVE ARTS COLLECTION, RHODES | THE VIRGIN MARY OF THE CASTLE CHURCH | KRITINIA CASTLE

### Archaeological Museum of Symi

The Archaeological Museum of Symi extends in three levels and over two mansions from the 18th and 19th century, the Pharmakidis House and the Chatziagapitos Sala, with their upper and lower floors, kitchens, cisterns and gardens. The articulated exhibition takes the visitor onto a journey from the modern times to the distant past, from ancient sculptures to authentic objects of the Symian household.

📍 Agios Athanasios district,  
Chorio, Symi



### Archaeological Museum of Karpathos

The newly established Archaeological Museum of Karpathos is housed in the west wing of the Eparcheio, an elegant Venetian structure with unusual contours from the Italian rule. The interior is dominated by the account of the restoration of a 14th century wall painting depicting the Deesis, which originates from the ruined church of the Holy Apostles and survived only in fragments.

📍 Pigadia, Karpathos



### Decorative Arts Collection, Rhodes

Unlike folklore museums in other islands, the Decorative Arts Collection of Rhodes does not attempt to represent a local household, but is an expression of the locals' folk aesthetics. The exhibition, housed in the Armoury, which dates from the Knights period, includes wood carvings, chests and other traditional furniture, embroideries, pottery, metal objects, examples of the so-called Lindian ware and traditional costumes from all over the Dodecanese.

📍 Argyrokastrou Square,  
Medieval Town, Rhodes



### The Virgin Mary of the Castle church

The Virgin Mary of the Castle church has been used by all different denominations and religions to have existed in Rhodes. From an 11th century Byzantine church, it was converted into a three-aisled Gothic basilica with a transept when the Knights Hospitaller conquered the island, while during the Turkish rule the church was transformed into a Muslim mosque named "Enderum Camii".

📍 Megalou Alexandrou Square,  
Medieval Town, Rhodes



### Kritinia Castle


'Embroidered' on the blue sky, the tops of the ruined fortifications of the Kritinia castle look directly out over the Aegean Sea. It was Giorgio Orsini who had the castle built, in 1472, to protect the locals from the attacks of the Turkish fleet; today it guards the ruins of the Catholic church of Saint Paul inside it.

📍 11 Ialysos-Kattavia  
Provincial Road, Rhodes



## Archaeological Museum of Rhodes


To penetrate into the heart of the Archaeological Museum of Rhodes, one must first push through successive veils of historical fascination. For not only does the museum have a wealth of finds from the excavations during the Italian occupation dating from the Geometric, Classical and Hellenistic periods, but also it is accommodated in the great hospital of the Knights Hospitaller, an architectural jewel built during 1440-1489. The building's robust Gothic origins, combined with the intricate mosaics, the impressive courtyard and the shaded gardens hidden behind the grand entrance, make it easy to forget that it once was a state-of-the-art, for its time, hospital. After all, the basic mission of the Knights Hospitaller, before becoming a military conquering force, was to provide free medical and medicinal care to soldiers during the Crusades. One of the most impressive exhibits of the museum is the huge head of the Sun, the god of Rhodes, a representative example of Rhodian Baroque, while the elegant statuette of the Bathing Aphrodite is immaculate and polished like porcelain.

 Megalou Alexandrou Square,  
Medieval Town, Rhodes



## Acropolis of Rhodes

The Acropolis of Rhodes is one of the few ancient citadels that are not surrounded by fortifications. Outwardly and pious, it consisted of a monumental zone containing sanctuaries, large temples, public buildings and underground places of worship, open to all those who wished to honour Zeus and Athena (Temple of Athena Polias and Zeus Polieus), Apollo (Temple of Pythian Apollo) and Artemis (Artemision). According to Aelius Aristides, a prominent sophist of the 2nd century AD, the area was full of groves, harmoniously combining natural beauty with human interventions, as the Hellenistic spirit dictated. The small marble odeum, as well as the stadium, surrounded by vegetation, add to the feeling of a friendly space that facilitated both physical and mental upliftment. With respect to this original vision, the local Ephorate of Antiquities has embarked on an enormous effort to restore the monumental complex, but also to completely redevelop the surrounding area into an integrated archaeological park, a project that has been implemented for the most part and will be completed in 2025.

 Town of Rhodes,  
Rhodes



### Lindos

Lindos is a place submerged in myth. According to tradition, it was founded by the Danaids, the 50 daughters of Danaus from ten different mothers. After the death of their ancestor, Belus, the Danaids followed their father to Lindos, to escape the 50 sons of his brother, Aegyptus. Homer, in fact, mentions in the *Iliad* that the Lindians participated in the Trojan War under the leadership of their then ruler Tlepolemus. Its prominent place in Greek mythology is not coincidental, since it was during the Archaic period (7th-6th century BC) that it flourished most.

Nowadays, the coastal settlement of Lindos constitutes the main archaeological site of Rhodes and is located on the southeastern side of the island, some 55km from the city of Rhodes. The ancient acropolis towers over the modern settlement in a relatively barren landscape, built on a steep, 116m high cliff. The village is perched on the hillside between the acropolis and Cape Krana. The ascent to the Doric temple of Athena Lindia, the acropolis' main place of worship, requires willpower and stamina, but it's worth skipping the suffering donkeys offered as an alternative at the entrance to the village and wander on foot around the winding path leading up to the cliff. The temple's slender columns, like white slashes against the blue sky, will reward you handsomely.

Before you reach the top, however, stop at the Late Byzantine church of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary to admire one of the most densely decorated churches you'll ever come across. The depiction of Saint Christopher as a cynocephalus, i.e. with a dog's head is extremely rare in Greece; it was probably influenced by the tradition that Saint Christopher had served in the Legion of Cynocephali before converting to Christianity. The representation of the Hagarenes' punishment, on the other hand, is a gesture of protest by the enslaved Rhodians, which first fell into the hands of the Knights Hospitaller, then were conquered by Suleiman the Magnificent, and finally passed over to the Italians, along with the rest of the Dodecanese.

The most important monuments of Lindos, however, are ancient; one of them is the small-sized theatre, which dates from the 4th century BC and is located very close to the village's centre. Hewn directly into the bedrock, just below the temple of


Athena, the theatre has long since succumbed to decay and the expansive local vegetation, a fact that has further enhanced its eerie appearance. It features a circular orchestra, while the koilon could hold almost 1,800 spectators; it hosted sporting and artistic events of the time. Around the orchestra, the special seats for the distinguished guests have been preserved.

Near the theatre, the marble stele known as the "Lindian Chronicle" and dating from 99 BC, was discovered. The item is currently on display in the Ny Carlsburg Glyptothek in Copenhagen, as the exca-





ventions that took place in Lindos during 1900-1914 were carried out under Danish direction.

 Lindos, Rhodes





## Kamiros

Kamiros is an outstanding example of Hellenistic urbanism, harmoniously integrated into nature. Although the town, built amphitheatrically and overlooking the sea, was mercilessly battered by the elements (e.g. two earthquakes), it was peaceful and smoothly co-existed with Lindos and Ialysos, the two other city-states of Rhodes, until 411 BC, when they were united into a single state with the town of Rhodes as its centre. Even then, however, Kamiros remained inhabited until late antiquity. Its well-preserved remains constitute a unique window into Rhodes' Classical past, highlighting the architectural and cultural heritage of Doric culture. The most conservative of the Rhodian city-states, Kamiros was mainly focused on the land, which was fertile and rich in clay, rather than on the sea. Predominantly agricultural, it produced oil, wine and figs, and during its greatest heyday, in the 6th century BC, it became the first Rhodian town to mint its own coins.




 Kamiros, Rhodes



## Ialysos

The ancient town of Ialysos, the second of the three city-states of Rhodes, was named after the mythical hero Ialysos, a descendant of Apollo. His brothers, Lindos and Kamiros, each founded their own town on the island. The difference is that Ialysos is considered the oldest of the three, inhabited from as early as 1700 BC, but began to decline when the newly established town of Rhodes became the economic and cultural centre of the island, in 411 BC. Today one can visit the acropolis, where ruins from various habitation phases are to be found: the temple of Athena Polias from the 3rd-2nd century BC, the medieval monastery that housed the Knights Hospitaller during the Frankish rule, as well as a number of Byzantine churches. To the right of the archaeological site is the Golgotha Road, another Frankish creation, which leads to a large stone monument in the form of a 16m high cross, with a spectacular view.




 Ialysos, Rhodes



## Palace of the Grand Master & Rhodes fortification walk-walk

Seemingly inaccessible and utterly cinematic, the Palace of the Grand Master is the most attractive architectural monument in the Medieval Town of Rhodes. Built in the 14th century by the Knights Hospitaller to be used as the seat of their commander, the Grand Master, the building was destroyed during the Ottoman rule and reconstructed, like all monuments in the Medieval Town, when the Dodecanese came under Italian rule, in 1912. The Italians wanted to restore the glory of the time of the Knights Hospitaller, but only the interior remained entirely faithful to the original, as the rest of the designs had been lost. Today, the ground floor accommodates two permanent exhibitions on the ancient and medieval town of Rhodes, while on the first floor one can marvel at the mosaic floors as they were restored in the 1930s. As for the impressive fortification of Rhodes, it reflects the development of defensive architecture from the Byzantine era to the period of the Knights, since it gradually expanded covering an area four times the original and was reinforced, thus becoming much thicker. In its final form, it was 5km long and up to 12m thick.




 Kleovoulou Square, Medieval Town, Rhodes





## Archaeological Museum of Kastellorizo "Konaki"


The Archaeological Museum of Kastellorizo has been accommodated, since 1984, in "Konaki", which is part of the Agios Nikolaos medieval castle. The view from the windows and the polygonal battlements is breathtaking, while the archaeological exhibits with their folkloric accents will help you understand the history of this borderline island.

 Kavos, Kastellorizo



## Historical Collection of Kastellorizo (Ottoman Mosque)

The Historical Collection of Kastellorizo attempts to illustrate the island's former glory, when it was a great naval power with a population of more than 10,000 people, without diminishing the remarkable architectural features of the mosque that houses it. The visitor's attention is divided between the local traditional costumes, embroideries and crockery, and the mosque's dome, balcony and women's section.

 Ottoman Mosque, Kastellorizo



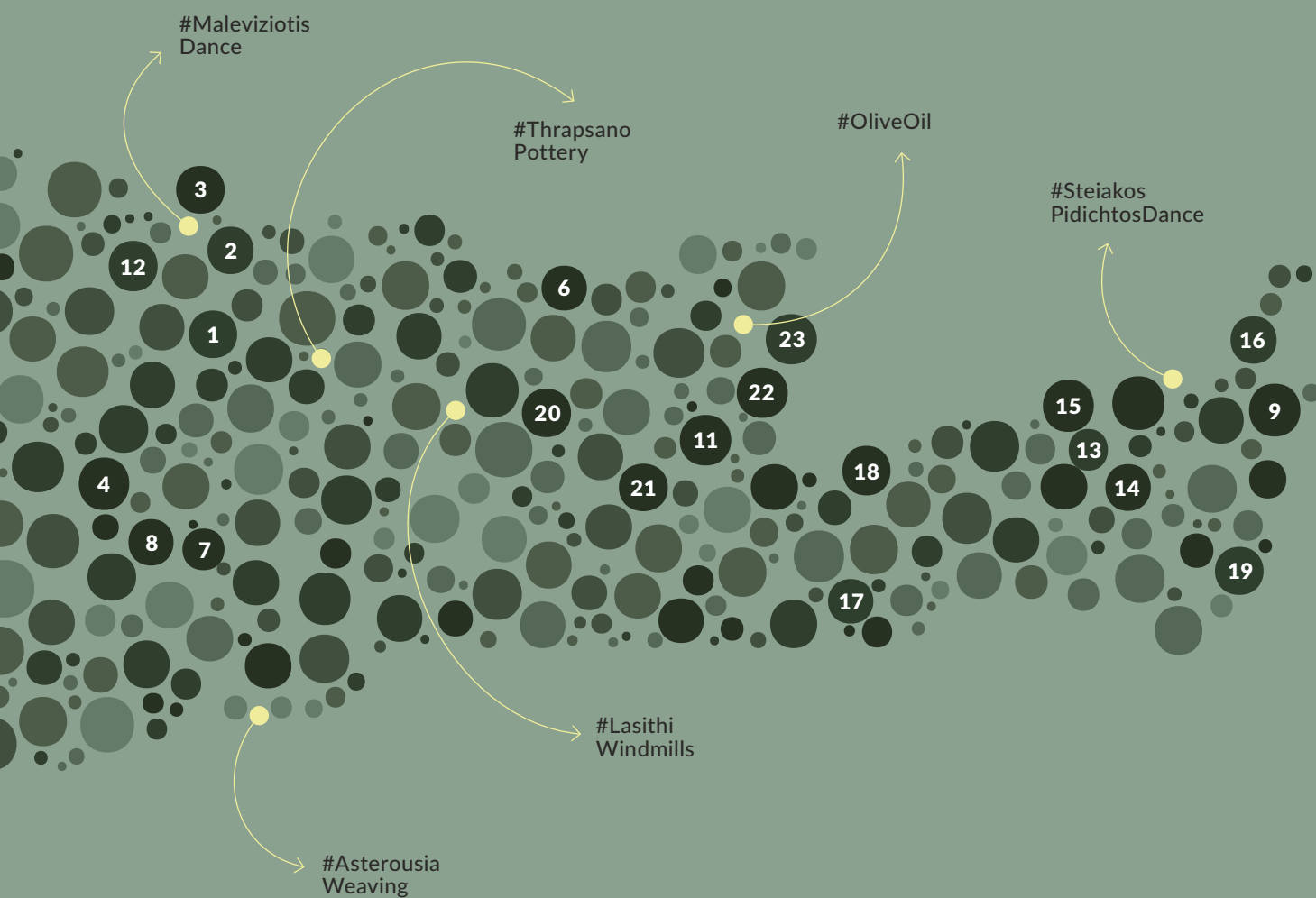
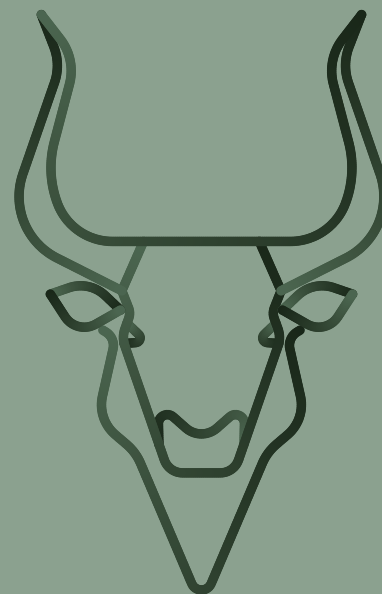


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### Knossos

Deeply rooted in Greek mythology, the palace of Knossos was associated with the myths involving the Labyrinth and the Minotaur, as well as Daedalus and Icarus, and, of course, the legendary king Minos, son of Zeus and Europa. Perhaps it was fate, then, that another Minos discovered Knossos: the merchant and antiquarian Minos Kalokairinos, who carried out the first excavations on the Kephala hill, in 1878. The first systematic excavations, however, were undertaken by the British archaeologist Arthur Evans during 1900-1931, unearthing the palace and a large part of the town.

The indisputable centre of the great Aegean-Minoan civilisation, Knossos was inhabited from the Neolithic until the Roman times. However, its heyday was in the Minoan period (2000-1350 BC), with the first palace erected around 2000-1900 BC. After its destruction by an earthquake in 1700 BC, the resourceful Minoans raised in its place an even grander palace, the largest in Crete.

Occupying an area of 22,000m<sup>2</sup>, surrounded by olive trees, vineyards and cypresses, the multi-storey palace looks like an actual town. With a complex architectural structure reminiscent of the mythical Labyrinth, it extends over four wings surrounding the spacious central courtyard and consisting of multiple

rooms: the throne room with its alabaster throne, the royal apartments decorated with magnificent murals illustrating brooding griffins and playful dolphins, ceremonial and banqueting halls, sanctuaries and open courtyards, storerooms and treasuries, workshops and lustral basins, even a stone theatre.

Evans carried out extensive restoration work, both architectural and decorative. His interventions were considered controversial by many, but it is most likely that without them, we would not all be considering the red columns as the trademark of Minoan Knossos. An integral part of the monument and its history, they contribute to the irresistible fascination that Knossos has been exerting on visitors throughout time, helping them reconstruct in their imagination life in the lavish Minoan palaces at the time of their great glory.



Knossos, Heraklion







## Archaeological Museum of Heraklion


Seven millennia of Cretan prehistory and history are wonderfully encapsulated in the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, one of the most remarkable museums in Greece and Europe, featuring exhibits dating from the Neolithic period (7000 BC) down to Roman times (3rd century AD). Although the museum was founded in 1900, the building accommodating it was erected during 1937-1940, to the designs of the great architect Patroklos Karantinos, and is a remarkable example of Greek modernism.

In 2014, the refurbished museum opened its doors to the public, the members of which can enjoy, among others, the most important collection of Minoan antiquities in the world, in an exhibition spread over 27 halls. Displayed with a modern museological concept, the exhibits illuminate every aspect of Cretan life over the centuries: from the undisputed Minoan dominance over the Aegean and fascinating ancient myths, to religious rituals, public events, daily life and burial customs.

Here, every iconic object associated in the collective unconscious with the famous dynasty of the legendary Minos awaits to be discovered by the visitor, as if it was the first time. Like the impressive ritual vase in

the shape of a bull's head, carved in black steatite, a symbol of the robust animal's leading role in Minoan religion; or the intricate gold ornament from Chrysolakkos in Malia, representing two bees depositing a drop of honey in the honeycomb – just one of the tiny masterpieces of Minoan goldwork.

And, of course, the renowned chthonic Snake Goddesses made of faience and the enigmatic ceramic Disc of Phaistos. The Minoan murals rightfully have their own gallery, dominated by the famous paintings from the palace of Knossos: the Prince of the Lilies, the dazzling “La Parisienne”, named like that by the archaeologist Arthur Evans because of her refined look that was comparable to female beauty trends of his time, and the Bull Leaping scene, through which we have the most complete depiction of these dangerous games.

 Xanthoudidou & 1 Chatzidaki Streets, Heraklion



## Venetian Koules Fortress, Heraklion

Battered by the sea more than any other, the seaside fortress of Heraklion constitutes a jewel of the city that was the final stronghold of Venetian rule in Crete. Although the siege of Candia by the Ottomans was the longest in history (1645-1669), the fortress's greatest adversary was none other than the forces of nature. From the very beginning the omens were not favourable for the Venetians, who saw the original fortress destroyed by an earthquake in 1303. Despite extensive repairs, they were eventually forced to demolish it in order to construct a new one, sinking entire shiploads of stone, so as to create embankments for its construction during 1523-1540. Even so, constant maintenance was required, as parts of it would collapse every few years due to damage from the relentless waves, a situation observed also during the Ottoman rule. Nevertheless, as far as the visitor is concerned, its past trials did nothing to diminish the grandeur of the Koules fortress, which still stands proudly as if by a miracle —an eternal symbol of the Cretan harbour, with the marble winged lions of the Venetian Republic adorning its three gates.



 Heraklion



## Phaistos

If all you know about Phaistos is its enigmatic Disc with the hieroglyphic symbols, then it's time to discover more about the second most important town of ancient Crete. Built on a low hill overlooking the fertile plain of Messara, Phaistos was founded, according to legend, by Minos, with his brother, Radamanthus, taking over as king. The Minoan period in Phaistos began around the middle of the 3rd millennium BC, whereas the palace was constructed around 1900 BC. Similarly to the palace Knossos, it was destroyed by an earthquake in 1700 BC, to be replaced by an even grander structure. The decline of Minoan civilization did not mark the end of Phaistos, which continued to develop until the Hellenistic period, to lose its splendour only in 160 BC, when it was conquered by the neighbouring Gortyna, a town occupied by the Romans. The ruins of the town, which, apart from the palace, include the archaic temple of Rhea and Hellenistic buildings, still stand stoically among the towering pines, bearing witness to the glorious trajectory of Phaistos through the centuries.



 Phaistos, Tymbaki, Heraklion



## Matala

For most people, Matala is synonymous with the “flower children”, who, during the 1960s and 1970s, had found shelter in the area’s iconic caves –an image of the hippie movement immortalised in pop culture. What few people know, however, is that the rock-cut caves were originally tombs dating from the Greco-Roman period, and it is suspected that some of them were previously used as residences. The archaeological importance of this area is even greater, however, as ancient Matelon was a port serving the palace of Minoan Phaistos, and later, during the Roman period, the port of Gortyna. In the archaeological site, next to the modern settlement, excavations that began in the 1980s unearthed houses, as well as metalworking and pottery workshops. Don’t fail to visit the beautiful, endless sandy beach of Kommos, 2km from Matala, where the ruins of the second, even more impressive, commercial port of Phaistos are to be found; this is also where the loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) have chosen to breed.



## Malia

While the town’s ancient name may still remain unknown, it was here, in Malia, that the third largest Minoan palace in Crete, after those of Knossos and Phaistos, was found. The discovery of gold sheet fragments in 1880 led ambitious gold diggers on a feverish search, but the ancient town was not discovered before 1915, thanks to the systematic excavations of the archaeologist Iosif Chatzidakis. It is said that king Sarpedon lived here, before he was ousted by his brother Minos. The palace was originally built in 1900 BC, reinforcing the existing settlement, and, similarly to the other Minoan centres, was destroyed around 1450 BC. Today, the archaeological site offers a much appreciated respite from the tourist bustle of modern Malia. Surrounding the ruins of the palace, with its numerous sacred and storage areas, courtyards and grand staircases, are also sections of the settlement built around it, as well as the necropolis, where one of the greatest masterpieces of Minoan goldworking was discovered: the famous golden pendant with the bees, currently on display at the Heraklion Archaeological Museum.





## Gortys

In the background of the archaeological site of Gortys there is a rare evergreen plane tree –according to legend, in its shade Zeus mated with Europe and from this union were born the three kings of Crete: Minos, Sarpedon and Rhadamanthys. One of the most important towns of Minoan Crete, Gortys flourished even more during the Roman period, when it became the capital of the Roman province of Crete and Cyrenica. Thus, it is no wonder that the area has preserved ruins of monuments dating from the Neolithic to the Byzantine era, such as the Minoan villa at Kania (1700-1450 BC), sections of the ancient acropolis fortification (10th-6th century BC), the temple of the Pythian Apollo (7th century BC), the sanctuary of Egyptian Gods (1st-2nd century AD), unique in Crete, the Roman odeum (1st century AD), the praetorium, seat of the Roman governor (2nd century AD), and the basilica of Saint Titus (6th-7th century). The most important is the Great Inscription, part of which is found on the walls of the odeum, with the civil law of Gortys inscribed on stone stelae in the Doric dialect; dating from around 450 BC, the Great Inscription of Gortys is the oldest and most complete legislative code of Europe!



 Gortys, Agioi Deka



## Archaeological Museum of Messara

Genuinely inspired by the natural landscape surrounding it, the brand new Archaeological Museum of Messara (inaugurated in April 2023) is perfectly integrated into the fertile plain and its low vegetation. The title of its permanent exhibition, i.e. "In the midst of the mountains. The human presence in Messara from prehistoric to Christian times", refers directly to the topography from which Messara takes its name: between the mountains, namely Mount Psiloritis and the Asterousia range. With an impeccable, minimalist layout, well designed lighting and the valuable assistance of digital technology and interactive media, the museum is dedicated to the archaeological treasures of the region, which are arranged in three large sections and corresponding halls: prehistory, the Greco-Roman period and Christian times. The exhibits include, among others, finds from neighbouring Gortys and Phaistos, the ancient ports of Kommos and Matala, and the cemeteries of Messara.



 Ambelouzos, Agioi Deka





## Palaikastro, Siteia

Next to the lovely sandy beach of Chiona, there is a Minoan settlement that flourished in 1550-1220 BC and was divided into nine districts. Although its name remains unknown, the luxury houses, with their impressive façades and megalithic walls, testify to the town's significance; an olive press, a sanctuary of Diktæan Zeus and tombs that helped anthropologists draw valuable conclusions regarding the Minoans' physique have also been discovered.

📍 Rousolakkos,  
Palaikastro



## Lato

Just 3km from the picturesque Kritsa and with a stunning view of the Mirabello Bay, you will find ancient Lato, the best preserved town of the Classical-Hellenistic period in Crete and one of the best preserved in Greece. One of the most important Doric city-states on the island, it was named after Leto, mother of Apollo and Artemis, and flourished in the 4th-3rd centuries BC, leaving behind remains of fortifications, an agora, temples, houses, the prytaneion and a small theatre.

📍 Kritsa, Mirabello



## Royal Villa at Agia Triada

In a location of outstanding natural beauty, on the banks of the River Geropotamos, lies a major monument of Minoan architecture: the royal villa or 'little' Minoan palace of Agia Triada. Built on a hill around 1600 BC, it is believed to have served as the summer residence of the king of Phaistos and was decorated with impressive murals, the fragments of which outnumber the total amount of fragments found in the rest of Minoan Crete!

📍 Tymbaki, Pyrgiotissa



## Tylisos

With its name remaining unchanged for 40 centuries, Tylisos experienced its greatest prosperity as a Minoan settlement during 1650-1200 BC. The three luxurious mansions excavated here have revealed close links with Knossos, while the rich finds (including three huge bronze cauldrons, unique in prehistoric Aegean) indicate that it was an important bronze-working centre.

📍 Tylisos, Heraklion



## Archaeological Museum of Siteia

Although not as well-known as other museums in Crete, the Archaeological Museum of Siteia boasts a collection of exquisite Minoan artefacts. The museum was inaugurated in 1984, one hundred years after the first official excavations by the Italian School of Archaeology, and includes finds from the wider region, covering a period of 4,000 years, from 3500 BC to AD 500. Among them, stand out the finds from the palace in Kato Zakros, but the undisputed masterpiece of the collection is the Kouros of Palaikastro, the chryselephantine statuette of a young man, about 50cm high, dating from the 15th century BC and made of precious materials: the largest part of the body is made of hippopotamus tusks and lined with gold sheets, while the head and eyes are made of serpentinite and rock crystal respectively.



 Siteia-Piskokephalo Motorway, Siteia



## Petras, Siteia

The archaeological site of Petras, located 2km from Siteia, has yet to reveal all its secrets, as excavations in the area have been ongoing since 1985 until the present day, unearthing a Minoan palace and the surrounding settlement. Situated on a low hill, at the foot of which the waters of the Aegean once reached, the palace was built around 1900-1800 BC; stretching over an area of 2,500m<sup>2</sup> and with at least two storeys, it marks the heyday of an area inhabited from as early as 3400 BC, which lasted until 1450 BC. Indicative of the town's significance is the fact that it was surrounded by a Cyclopean wall with three square towers, a rare feature in Crete, while the area also includes an unlooted Minoan cemetery for the elite families of the palatial settlement.

 Petras, Siteia



## Kazarma Fortress, Siteia

Although its remains are now scarce, there was once a Byzantine town in Siteia, that had probably been built over the ancient town of Iteia or Sitaia. A unique example of this glorious past, the imposing Kazarma, only part of the fortress built by the Venetians in the 13th century on the Byzantine remains, stands above modern Siteia. The fortress suffered several destructions, from the earthquakes of 1303 and 1508, and the raid of Barbarossa's pirates in 1538, to almost being completely razed to the ground by the Venetians themselves, who abandoned any possibility of repairing it; its was completely remodelled during the Turkish rule. Today, the restored Kazarma hosts drama performances and concerts during the summer months as part of the "Kornareia" festival, in honour of the great Siteian poet Vitsentzos Kornaros.

 Kazarma, Siteia







## Itanos

Next to the beach of Erimoupoli and near the famous Vai palm forest, lie the ruins of ancient Itanos, now half-submerged in the sea. Itanos was one of the most powerful Cretan towns of Hellenistic and Greco-Roman times, with evidence of habitation from the Minoan to the Early Christian period. Its prosperity, evident in its imposing marble buildings and temples, was derived from fishing, glass-making and the trade of purple.



Erinoupoli, Palaikastro



## Gournia

If you want to find out what life was like in a Minoan town, all you have to do is visit Gournia, the most characteristic example of such a settlement, which flourished between 1550-1450 BC; it included the palace of the chieftain and a sanctuary dedicated to the Goddess of the Snakes. With its ancient name lost over time, Gournia was so named because of the stone and wooden troughs (gourna in Greek) found in the area.



Pacheia Ammos, Ierapetra



## Archaeological Collection of Ierapetra

Housed in the listed building of the Ottoman School (Mechtepi) constructed in 1899, the Collection started being formed at the end of the 19th century, thanks to the efforts of the locals, who founded the Learned Society of Ierapetra. Today, the collection contains finds from ancient Ierapytna and the wider region dating from the 3rd millennium BC to the 5th century AD. Among wonderful terracotta larnakes, vases, inscriptions, sculptures and coins, stands out the beautiful statue of the goddess Persephone or Kore with the peplos, dating from the 2nd century AD.



2 Dimokratias Street, Ierapetra



## Zakros Palace

A few pieces of gold jewellery given as a "gift" by a villager to a doctor were the cause of the discovery, in 1961, of the fourth largest Minoan palace in Crete and the ancient town around it. An important administrative, religious and commercial centre from 1900 to 1450 BC, the palace of Zakros was a monumental complex of 8,000m<sup>2</sup> with 300 rooms, built at the mouth of the imposing Canyon of the Dead, where the necropolis stretches. Inside the palace, the sole treasury of the Minoan world that had remained unlooted was found.



Kato Zakros



### Dictaeon (Psychro) Cave

Perched on the northern slopes of the Dicte mountain range, at an altitude of 1,025m, the cave of Psychro has a prominent place in the cult traditions of Minoan Crete, as it is identified with the mythological Dictaion Andron. This is where Rhea fled to give birth to Zeus in order to save him from his father, Cronus, who was devouring his children to avoid fulfilling the oracle, according to which he would die by his son's hands. Moreover, this is where tradition has it that king Minos himself, son of Zeus and Europa, was born.

By venturing into the depths of the cave, one can easily understand why the Psychro cave has been the source of inspiration for so many myths –it is said that the terrible Harpies, creatures with bird-like bodies and women's heads, lived in its depths. The almost mystical atmosphere, the uncanny play of light and shadow and the peculiar geological formations often trick the eye and excite the imagination –perhaps this is why the use of caves as cult centres was particularly widespread in ancient Crete. Traces of cult activity already from the Early Minoan (2800-2300 BC) up to the Archaic period (7th-6th century BC) are present in the cave; they are evidenced by the numerous votive offerings left

behind by the pious visitors: figurines of animals and gods, shells, tools, jewellery, weapons, seal stones and more –most of these finds are on display at the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

The cave, with a total area of 2,200m<sup>2</sup>, is divided into two sectors: the Upper and Lower Cave, which in turn consists of five chambers, with a small lake and spectacular stalagmite and stalactite formations. Indeed, stalactites and stalagmites resembling figures were often turned into objects of worship –in the Lower Cave a large folding stalactite called “Cloak of Zeus” stands out.

The lovely 15-minute walk from Psychro to the cave is an additional reason to visit it, as the panoramic view of the Lasithi plain is breathtaking.

📍 Psychro, Lasithi Plateau





## Church of the Virgin Mary Kera

If you have the feeling that you have seen the church of the Virgin Mary Kera before, you are not imagining things: this distinctive Byzantine church “starred” in the widely known Greek film *The Fairy and the Man*, which was filmed in the Agios Nikolaos region in 1969! Just 1km from the beautiful traditional settlement of Kritsa, this three-aisled, vaulted church with a dome owes its particular appearance to the fact that it was built in different periods. The original church, i.e. the central aisle, dates from the 13th century and is dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, while the two side aisles, dedicated to Saint Anne and Saint Anthony respectively, were added in the 14th. Equally emblematic, the elaborate murals cover almost all the interior surfaces with some of the most important examples of Cretan painting belonging to different periods and styles. Particularly noteworthy are those in Saint Anne’s aisle, which have been executed with exceptional realism and expressiveness, while they include scenes from the apocryphal gospels of Mary, which were uncommon in Byzantine painting.



📍 Kritsa, Lasithi



## Archaeological Museum of Agios Nikolaos

When the Archaeological Museum of Agios Nikolaos was inaugurated in 1970 as a small provincial museum to house the finds from eastern Crete that were until then being transferred to the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, few could have imagined that it would end up boasting an exuberant collection of over 30,000 objects. It is housed in the recently renovated building designed by Patroklos Karantinos, a typical example of museum architecture from the 1960s; its collections cover a huge time span from the Neolithic to the Ottoman period and are displayed in eight halls. In the first one, dominate the numerous burial gifts recovered from the coastal Early Minoan cemetery of Agia Photia (3000-2300 BC), the largest in prehistoric Crete, among which stand out hand-made vases with strong Cycladic influences. Nevertheless, the undisputed ‘celebrity’ of the museum is the Goddess of Myrtos, an exquisite libation vessel shaped like a stylized female deity from the Early Minoan settlement of Phournou Koryphi. She is rivalled by the macabre but equally impressive skull of a young athlete wearing a golden crown with olive leaves and a silver tetradrachm in his mouth, an offering to Charon, that was found in the Roman cemetery of Lato.



📍 74 Konstantinou Palaiologou Street, Agios Nikolaos





### Spinalonga

A deserted islet, no more than 85 stremmata in size, yet extremely rich in history, Spinalonga has been one of the area's key points for different reasons over the centuries, to become today, perhaps unexpectedly, the second most visited site in the whole of Crete, after Knossos.

Known with the ancient name "Kalydon", the island experienced its greatest development during the Venetian rule, when it was named "Spinalonga", from the Latin phrase "spina lunga", which means long thorn. During 1579-1586, the Venetians built one of their most prominent Cretan castles here, on the ruins of the Hellenistic castle, in order to protect the port of Elounda, a centre of maritime trade, and to safeguard the salt-pans from where salt was supplied to Europe. Its strong fortification allowed Spinalonga to remain under Venetian rule for 65 years after the Turks had occupied the rest of Crete (1649); this was until 1715, when the Turks finally managed to breach its impenetrable walls and turn it into an Ottoman settlement. The Turks would gradually revive the island's commercial role, thus initiating a prosperous period that would be abruptly interrupted by the Cretan Revolution of 1896, which would lead most of its inhabitants to abandon Spinalonga.

Despite its turbulent century-long history, Spinalonga owes most of its current reputation to its notorious early 20th century phase: in 1903, the Cretan State instituted the conversion of the island into a public leprosarium, gathering here, in an exile-like manner, all Cretans suffering from the then untreatable Hansen's disease and, subsequently, lepers from all over Greece. Life in this completely isolated "leper town" was vividly described in the best-selling novel *The Island* by the British author Victoria Hislop (and its popular TV adaptation), which in a tragic irony gave new life to Spinalonga and its recently restored settlement –a vindication for the tortured inhabitants of a ghost town, albeit belated.

📍 Spinalonga

🍴 | 📱 | ♿



## Museum of Ancient Eleftherna

Nestling along the foot of Psiloreitis, with its plain, austere form emerging among the fragrant plants of the blessed Cretan land, the Museum of Ancient Eleftherna is the first museum in Crete to have been established in an archaeological site and only the fifth in Greece, after Vergina, Olympia, Delphi and Mycenae, to mention the most modern examples of this museum type. The museum was inaugurated in 2016, aiming at not only doing justice to the treasures from ancient Eleftherna and the necropolis of Orthi Petra, while unfolding the area's historical trajectory from 3000BC to Byzantine times, but also documenting Homeric Crete through brilliant analogies. It is no coincidence that the exhibition opens with a bronze shield, exquisitely decorated with a lion's head, and closes with finds from the funerary pyre of a noble warrior found together with the unburnt, headless skeleton of a prisoner, recalling the *Iliad* and the pyre of Patroclus, where 12 Trojan prisoners were slaughtered in his honour by Achilles.



📍 Eleftherna, Mylopotamos, Rethymno



## Archaeological Museum of Rethymno

A new, state-of-the-art museum is set to house the archaeological treasures of Rethymno's Regional Unit; however, until it is completed, part of the Archaeological Museum of Rethymno's collection is temporarily housed in the Venetian church of Saint Francis, which belonged to a 16th century Franciscan monastery. You'll inevitably find yourself here, as the church is located in the heart of the old town, with exhibits ranging from the Paleolithic to the Venetian period. The finds from a workshop in the Minoan settlement of Chamelevri offer the first great surprise, showcasing a developed perfume industry in Crete from as early as 2000 BC! A boar's tusk helmet made of 93 tusks draws attention to the Late Minoan cemetery of Armenoi, where several stunning larnakes with colourful painted decoration that looks incredibly modern even today also originate from. Not to be missed are the marble Roman statues from ancient Lappa, with a standout piece being a sensual Aphrodite featuring a voluptuous hairdo and garments draped in masterful folds.



📍 Saint Francis church, 4 Agiou Frangiskou Street, Rethymno



## EXPERIENCE. CULTURE. EVERYWHERE.

ARMENOI NECROPOLIS | MONASTIRAKI, RETHYMNO | BYZANTINE AND POST-BYZANTINE COLLECTION OF CHANIA | APTERA | ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF KISAMOS

### Armenoi Necropolis

Hidden in a serene oak forest, the Late Minoan cemetery of Armenoi (13th/12th century BC) was discovered in 1969, after two schoolboys discovered two ancient vases in the area. Since then, over 220 family chamber tombs have been uncovered, carved into the rock, as well as a single built tholos tomb. The majority of them had not been looted, thus presenting us with invaluable grave goods and impressively decorated larnakes, as well as important information concerning the people buried in them.

📍 Armenoi, Rethymno



### Monastiraki, Rethymno

Surrounded by a sea of olive trees, the whole of Monastiraki is a living monument with traces of life and culture through the centuries: from the important Minoan palace from the Protopalatial period (2000-1700 BC) at Kokkinos Charakas to the Roman ruins, and from the numerous Byzantine churches to the village of the same name, which has been declared a traditional settlement.

📍 Monastiraki, Amari, Rethymno



### Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Collection of Chania

Brilliantly exploiting the atmospheric catholicon of the 15th century Franciscan monastery of San Salvatore, the Collection highlights carefully selected artistic creations and utilitarian objects from the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine periods, from various regions of the Chania Prefecture: mosaics, funerary inscriptions, murals, icons, architectural sculptures, ceramics and miniature works.

📍 78 Theotokopoulou Street, Chania



### Aptera

Situated on a plateau overlooking the Souda Bay, ancient Aptera was founded in the 8th century BC, reached its heyday during the Hellenistic period, as one of the most powerful Cretan city-states and survived until the Roman period and the rise of the Byzantine Empire. Monuments such as the double temple of Apollo and Artemis, the theatre, the necropolis and the vaulted Roman cisterns bear witness to its great history.

📍 Megala Choraphia, Souda



### Archaeological Museum of Kisamos

In the renovated Venetian-Turkish Command Post, unfolds the history of Kisamos from prehistory to late antiquity. The finds from the Roman town, which occupy the first floor, stand out: among others, one can marvel at the magnificent mosaic floors, sculptures and a sundial that adorned the urban Greco-Roman villas.

📍 Stratigou Tzanakaki Square, Kisamos







## Archaeological Museum of Chania

Being the greatest museum addition of recent years in Crete, the new Archaeological Museum of Chania was inaugurated in 2022, taking over from the old museum, which was housed in the Venetian monastery of Saint Francis until 2020. The plain yet highly impressive new building, designed by architect Theophanis Bobotis, has already left its imprint on the area, as it rises in the historic district of Chalepa like a ship emerging violently from the sea, hauling with it the treasures of the island, while gazing at the Cretan Sea.

More than 4,000 ancient objects are exhibited in an area of 6,000m<sup>2</sup>, covering the long period from the Palaeolithic to the Roman era. Impeccably organized in chronological order, in three halls on the ground floor and one on the first floor, they illustrate the region's history, starting from the earliest human presence in Chania, with finds from the island of Gavdos, and from the last phase of cave habitation to the Minoan period and the development of Kydonia (modern Chania) and Aptera, the two most important city-states of western Crete.

The exhibits from the historical period, with the most recent examples dating from the 4th century AD, are the most fascinating. Here you will find an excep-

tional reconstruction of the "Miser's" House, which was destroyed in the terrible earthquake of AD 365, the figurative statue of emperor Hadrian from the sanctuary of Dictynna, reconstructed for the first time in the museum after its destruction by fire in 1934, and the marble sculptures from the Asclepion of Lissos, i.e. the statues of Asclepius, Aphrodite and Eros, as well as statues of children offered to the god for protection.

📍 15 Skra Street, Chalepa, Chania



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## SOURCES - USEFUL LINKS

Archaeological Cadastre  
[www.arxaiologikoktimatologio.gov.gr](http://www.arxaiologikoktimatologio.gov.gr)  
 Culture Platform | [digitalculture.gov.gr](http://digitalculture.gov.gr)  
 Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources  
 Development - H.O.C.R.E.D. | [www.tap.gr](http://www.tap.gr)  
 Intangible Cultural Heritage of Greece | [ayla.culture.gr](http://ayla.culture.gr)  
 National Archive of Monuments | [nam.culture.gr](http://nam.culture.gr)  
 Ministry of Culture | [www.culture.gov.gr](http://www.culture.gov.gr)  
 Odysseus | [odysseus.culture.gr](http://odysseus.culture.gr)

## Ephorates of Antiquities

Ephorate of Antiquities of Achaia | [www.efaaacha.gr](http://www.efaaacha.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Aetoloacarnania  
 and Lefkada | [www.efaatil.gr](http://www.efaatil.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Argolida  
 | [www.argolisculture.gr](http://www.argolisculture.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Arta | [efaart.gr](http://efaart.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Chalcidice and Mount Athos  
 | [www.efachagor.gr](http://www.efachagor.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania - Archaeological  
 Site of Aptera | [ancientaptera.gr](http://ancientaptera.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Chios | [efachi.gr](http://efachi.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Dodecanese | [efadod.gr](http://efadod.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of East Attica | [www.efaanat.gr](http://www.efaanat.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Euboea | [www.efaeuv.gr](http://www.efaeuv.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Fthiotida and Evrytania  
 | [www.efafeu.gr](http://www.efafeu.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Hemathia  
 | [www.aigai.gr/eforeia-arxaiothton-hmathias](http://www.aigai.gr/eforeia-arxaiothton-hmathias)

Ephorate of Antiquities of Heraklion | [knossospalace.gr](http://knossospalace.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Ilia | [ilia-olympia.org](http://ilia-olympia.org)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Ioannina | [efaioa.gr](http://efaioa.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Kavala | [www.efakav.gr](http://www.efakav.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Kilikis | [www.efa-kilikis.gr](http://www.efa-kilikis.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Larissa | [larisa.culture.gr](http://larisa.culture.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Lesbos | [www.efales.gr](http://www.efales.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Magnesia | [efamagvolos.culture.gr](http://efamagvolos.culture.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Messinia | [www.efamess.gr](http://www.efamess.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Piraeus and Islands | [efadyat.wordpress.com](http://efadyat.wordpress.com)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of West Attica | [www.efada.gr](http://www.efada.gr)  
 Ephorate of Antiquities of Xanthi | [www.efaxanthis.gr](http://www.efaxanthis.gr)

## Museums

Acropolis Museum | [www.theacropolismuseum.gr](http://www.theacropolismuseum.gr)  
 Alonissos Underwater Museum | [museum.alonissos.gov.gr](http://museum.alonissos.gov.gr)  
 The Archaeological Collection of Same  
 | [www.same-museum.gr](http://www.same-museum.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum Agiou Nikolaou  
 | [agiosnikolaosmuseum.gr](http://agiosnikolaosmuseum.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Aiani | [www.mouseioaianis.gr](http://www.mouseioaianis.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Chania | [amch.gr](http://amch.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Florina | [florina-museum.gr](http://florina-museum.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Igoumenitsa  
 | [www.igoumenitsamuseum.gr](http://www.igoumenitsamuseum.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Messara | [messaramuseum.gr](http://messaramuseum.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Neapolis Voio | [www.amnv.gr](http://www.amnv.gr)

Archaeological Museum of Patras | [ampatron.gr](http://ampatron.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Rethymno  
 | [www.archmuseumreth.gr](http://www.archmuseumreth.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Tegea | [www.tegeamuseum.gr](http://www.tegeamuseum.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum of Thebes | [www.mthv.gr](http://www.mthv.gr)  
 Archaeological Museum and Site of Delphi  
 | [delphi.culture.gr](http://delphi.culture.gr)  
 Archaeological Site and Museum of Elis | [elismuseum.com](http://elismuseum.com)  
 Byzantine & Christian Museum | [www.byzantinemuseum.gr](http://www.byzantinemuseum.gr)  
 Byzantine Museum of Argolis | [www.byma.gr](http://www.byma.gr)  
 Byzantine Museum of Kastoria | [www.bmk.gr](http://www.bmk.gr)  
 Byzantine Museum of Veria  
 | [www.byzantine-museum-veria.gr](http://www.byzantine-museum-veria.gr)  
 Corfu Museum of Asian Art | [matk.gr](http://matk.gr)  
 Digital Museum of Ierapetra | [www.ierapetra.gr](http://www.ierapetra.gr)  
 Directorate of Archaeological Museums, Exhibitions and  
 Educational Programmes | [archaeologicalmuseums.gr](http://archaeologicalmuseums.gr)  
 Friends of the Diachronic Museum of Larissa  
 | [www.sfdml.gr](http://www.sfdml.gr)  
 Heraklion Archaeological Museum  
 | [www.heraklionmuseum.gr](http://www.heraklionmuseum.gr)  
 Museum of Ancient Eleutherna | [mae.uoc.gr](http://mae.uoc.gr)  
 Museum of Byzantine Culture Thessaloniki | [www.mbp.gr](http://www.mbp.gr)  
 Museum of the History of the Olympic Games  
 of antiquity | [ancientolympicsmuseum.com](http://ancientolympicsmuseum.com)  
 Museum of Modern Greek Culture | [www.mnep.gr](http://www.mnep.gr)  
 National Archaeological Museum | [www.namuseum.gr](http://www.namuseum.gr)  
 Numismatic Museum | [www.nummus.gr](http://www.nummus.gr)  
 Petralona Cave Virtual Museum | [petralonacave.gr](http://petralonacave.gr)



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 Aigai | [www.aigai.eu](http://www.aigai.eu)  
 Amorgos Blue | [amorgos.blue](http://amorgos.blue)  
 Ancient Nicopolis | [actianicopolisarchaeopark.gr/en/](http://actianicopolisarchaeopark.gr/en/)  
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 Athens - Macedonian News Agency | [www.amna.gr](http://www.amna.gr)  
 Athens Museums and Cultural Institutions Network | [www.athensmuseums.net](http://www.athensmuseums.net)  
 Carnet de Voyage | [carnetdevoyage.gr](http://carnetdevoyage.gr)  
 Climascope | [climascope.prd.uth.gr](http://climascope.prd.uth.gr)  
 Corfu History | [www.corfuhistory.eu](http://www.corfuhistory.eu)  
 CretanBeaches | [www.cretanbeaches.com](http://www.cretanbeaches.com)  
 Cyclades Map | [cycladesmap.gr](http://cycladesmap.gr)  
 Delphi Local Tours | [delphitours.gr](http://delphitours.gr)  
 Destination Kythira | [destinationkythira.gr](http://destinationkythira.gr)  
 Discover Crete | [www.discovercrete.com](http://www.discovercrete.com)  
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 Discover Nafplio | [www.discovernafplio.gr](http://www.discovernafplio.gr)  
 Drama, the Land of Dionysus | [visit-drama.com](http://visit-drama.com)  
 Eco Zante | [ecozante.com](http://ecozante.com)  
 ELLINIKI ETAIRIA (Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage-ELLET) | [www.ellet.gr/en/](http://www.ellet.gr/en/)  
 EUREKA Science, Art & Technology of the Ancient Greeks | [www.ancientgreektechnology.gr/en/](http://www.ancientgreektechnology.gr/en/)  
 Greece Is | [www.greece-is.com](http://www.greece-is.com)  
 Greek CrossRoads | [www.greek-crossroads.gr](http://www.greek-crossroads.gr)  
 Greek Gastronomy Guide | [www.greekgastronomyguide.gr/e/](http://www.greekgastronomyguide.gr/e/)  
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 Greek Travel Pages | [www.gtp.gr](http://www.gtp.gr)  
 Halkidiki Inside your Dreams | [www.visit-halkidiki.gr](http://www.visit-halkidiki.gr)  
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 Holy Monastery of Hosios Loukas | [www.osiosloukasmonastery.gr/en/](http://www.osiosloukasmonastery.gr/en/)  
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 in.gr | [www.in.gr](http://www.in.gr)  
 inTHESSALONIKI.com | [inthessaloniki.com](http://inthessaloniki.com)

Kastrologos - Greek Castles | [www.kastra.eu](http://www.kastra.eu)  
 Kefalonia Island | [visitkefaloniasland.gr](http://visitkefaloniasland.gr)  
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 Kos Island Greece | [kos.gr](http://kos.gr)  
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 Limenoscope | [limenoscope.ntua.gr](http://limenoscope.ntua.gr)  
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 Messinia Mobi | [messinia.mobi](http://messinia.mobi)  
 Messolonghi by Locals | [messolonghibylocals.com](http://messolonghibylocals.com)  
 Municipality of Ancient Olympia | [arxaiolympia.gov.gr](http://arxaiolympia.gov.gr)  
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 Municipality of Spetses | [spetses.gov.gr](http://spetses.gov.gr)  
 Museum Finder | [museumfinder.gr](http://museumfinder.gr)  
 mySamothraki | [mysamothraki.com](http://mysamothraki.com)  
 Netcastle - Network Creation and Promotion of Castles | [netcastle-webgis.eu](http://netcastle-webgis.eu)  
 Nike of Samothrace | [nike-of-samothrace.gr](http://nike-of-samothrace.gr)  
 Orthodox Crete | [orthodoxcrete.com/en/](http://orthodoxcrete.com/en/)  
 Paliopolis | [paleopolis.ba.iac.cnr.it](http://paleopolis.ba.iac.cnr.it)  
 Parallaxi | [parallaximag.gr](http://parallaximag.gr)  
 Project Corfu | [www.projectcorfu.com](http://www.projectcorfu.com)  
 Region of Ionian Islands Regional Unit of Lefkada | [lefkada.gr/en/](http://lefkada.gr/en/)  
 Rhodes Guide | [www.rhodesguide.com](http://www.rhodesguide.com)  
 Terrabook | [www.terrabook.com](http://www.terrabook.com)  
 Thessaloniki Tourism | [www.thessalonikitourism.gr](http://www.thessalonikitourism.gr)  
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 Travel.gr | [www.travel.gr](http://www.travel.gr)  
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 Unesco Sites in Crete | [www.unescositesincrete.gr](http://www.unescositesincrete.gr)  
 Union of Licensed Tourist Guides of the Ionian Islands and Western Greece | [corfu-guides.com](http://corfu-guides.com)  
 Visit Corfu Official Visitors Guide | [visit.corfu.gr](http://visit.corfu.gr)  
 Visit Thesprotia | [www.visit-thesprotia.gr](http://www.visit-thesprotia.gr)  
 Visit Thraki | [www.visitthraki.gr](http://www.visitthraki.gr)  
 We Love Aegina | [weloveaegina.com](http://weloveaegina.com)  
 Zante Island | [www.zanteisland.com](http://www.zanteisland.com)

Αθηνολόγιο | [www.facebook.com/athenologio](http://www.facebook.com/athenologio)  
 Ανιχνεύσεις | [www.anixneuseis.gr](http://www.anixneuseis.gr)  
 Αργολική Αρχαιική Βιβλιοθήκη Ιστορίας & Πολιτισμού | [argolikivivliothiki.gr](http://argolikivivliothiki.gr)  
 Αρχεϊον Πολιτισμού | [www.arxeion-politismou.gr](http://www.arxeion-politismou.gr)  
 Δήμος Αιγαλείας | [aigielaideia.eu](http://aigielaideia.eu)  
 Δήμος Αλεξανδρούπολης | [alexpolis.gr](http://alexpolis.gr)  
 Δήμος Ανδραβίδας - Κυλλήνης | [www.andravida-killini.gr](http://www.andravida-killini.gr)  
 Δήμος Διού Ολύμπου | [www.dion-olympus.gr](http://www.dion-olympus.gr)  
 Δήμος Καρπάθου | [karpathos.gr](http://karpathos.gr)  
 Δήμος Μετεώρων | [www.dimosmeteoron.com](http://www.dimosmeteoron.com)  
 Δήμος Μυτιλήνης | [www.mytilene.gr](http://www.mytilene.gr)  
 Έθνος | [www.ethnos.gr](http://www.ethnos.gr)  
 Ένωση Ιδιοκτητών Ξεν/δων και Τουριστικών Καταλυμάτων Τριφυλίας | [www.peloponnisos.in](http://www.peloponnisos.in)  
 EPT | [www.ert.gr](http://www.ert.gr)  
 Η Καθημερινή | [www.kathimerini.gr](http://www.kathimerini.gr)  
 Θέματα Αρχαιολογίας | [www.themata-archaiologias.gr](http://www.themata-archaiologias.gr)  
 Ιερά Μητρόπολις Θηβών, Λεβαδείας και Αυλίδος | [www.imtl.gr](http://www.imtl.gr)  
 Λαός της Μαγνησίας | [e-almyros.gr](http://e-almyros.gr)  
 Μανιάτικα | [maniatika.wordpress.com](http://maniatika.wordpress.com)  
 Μηχανή του Χρόνου | [www.mixanitouxronou.gr](http://www.mixanitouxronou.gr)  
 Οιδίπους Διαδρομή Φύσης και Πολιτισμού Στερεάς Ελλάδας | [oedipusculturalroute.gr](http://oedipusculturalroute.gr)  
 Οικονομική e-εφημερίδα Voria | [www.voria.gr](http://www.voria.gr)  
 Περιφερειακή Ενότητα Φλώρινας | [florina.pdm.gov.gr](http://florina.pdm.gov.gr)  
 Πολιτιστικό & Τουριστικό Απόθεμα Δ. Λαμιαίων | [culture.lamia.gr](http://culture.lamia.gr)  
 Σαν Σήμερα | [www.sansimera.gr](http://www.sansimera.gr)  
 Σελίδες Ιστορίας και Επιστήμης | [history-pages.blogspot.com](http://history-pages.blogspot.com)  
 Το Άστρος της Θάλασσας | [astrosparalio.gr](http://astrosparalio.gr)  
 Τουριστική Ανάπτυξη Σαμοθράκης | [www.samothraki-tourism.gr](http://www.samothraki-tourism.gr)  
 Τουριστικός Οδηγός Περιφερειακής Ενότητας Γρεβενών | [www.visit-grevena.gr](http://www.visit-grevena.gr)



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