

Castle of Oria

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37.4634086, 24.4098984



Once a significant fortress, it controlled the vital passage through the valley—the only route connecting northern Thessaly to southern Greece through the mountains.

The remaining structure visible today, perched on a high rock above the valley, is merely a bastion of the original castle. The main part of the fortress, which was located lower down near the river, was demolished during road construction.

The Vale of Tempi (Greek: Τέμπη, Témpi) is a narrow gorge in northern Thessaly, lying between Mount Olympus to the north and Mount Ossa to the south. Stretching 10 kilometers and narrowing to just 25 meters at points, with cliffs nearly 500 meters high, the Pineios River flows through the valley on its way to the Aegean Sea. In antiquity, the valley was celebrated by Greek poets as a sacred haunt of Apollo and the Muses, and a temple dedicated to Apollo once stood on the river's right bank.

The Tempi Pass has been a strategic route since ancient times, connecting Larisa to the coast. Though the Sarantoporo Pass offers an alternate route, it is longer, making Tempi an important site for control and defense, often the focus of battles throughout history.

Due to its strategic significance, the valley has been fortified since ancient times, with defensive structures found within the gorge and at both entrances. The Byzantines constructed a major fortress here known as Lykostomion. It is possible—though not certain—that this fortress was the same as the "Castle of Oria."

The name "Castle of Oria" translates to "Castle of the Fair Lady." According to legend, the castle's name originates from the 15th century, when the Ottomans laid siege to it for 12 years. In the end, the Turks captured the fortress, and the daughter of the Lord of the castle, known as the Fair Lady, leapt from the rock to her death.

Overview

Purpose: Excursion	Type: Castle	Country: Greece
City: Kythnos	Zip code: 840 06	

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Greek Map