

Archangelos Castle

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36.211713, 28.1188455



Archángelos, situated 2.5 kilometers from the island's eastern coast, is overshadowed by a castle belonging to the Knights Hospitallers (Order of St. John). This castle sits atop an isolated, elongated hill in front of the steep limestone massif of Profitis Ilías, southeast of the town. Although one of the lesser-known Knights' castles on Rhodes, it remains of interest to castle researchers.

Locally referred to as the "Acropolis"—a term even seen on village signage—there is an implication of an ancient fortification at this site. However, no definitive evidence supports the presence of an ancient structure on the castle hill. The term "Acropolis" is also used by locals for an ancient or possibly medieval repurposed fortification located about 1.2 kilometers southeast of the castle. It lies on a narrow ridge, positioned to the left above the fork in the road from Archángelos to Stegna (to the left) and Agathi Bay.

What remains of the castle today includes a relatively thin outer wall (enceinte) constructed of quarry stone with some brick reinforcements, which still stands several meters high. Holes for beams might indicate the presence of a wooden battlement structure. The castle lacks towers, but the inward and outward curving sections of the enceinte wall allowed for limited flanking defense, a feature common in Byzantine fortifications.

The castle gate was fortified with a small barbican added in the 15th century. At the castle's highest point, foundations and walls of (post-)medieval buildings and a turret, likely part of the initial construction phase, are still visible. In the northeastern corner, a barrel-vaulted chapel stands, which underwent alterations at a later date.

During the period of Turkish occupation, after 1522, gun-loops were reportedly modified, based on archaeological observations (see Spiteri 2001, p. 137; Poutiers 1989, p. 255). Simple slits with rounded tops are still visible at ground level.

The castle's location provides views of several notable landmarks, including the Byzantine fortifications below the Moni Tsambika monastery, Atavyros mountain, and the vigla near Archipoli.

The castle is accessible via marked footpaths from the village (look for signs labeled "Acropolis"). Entrance is free.

There have been speculations about a Mycenaean or Byzantine fortification preceding the Archángelos castle, but no concrete archaeological evidence supports this. The German researcher Albert Berg (1862, p. 113) noted: "Guérin believes the castle predated the Knights' era and was merely repaired by them, but this assumption contradicts

Overview

Purpose: Excursion	Type: Castle	Country: Greece
City: Rhodes	Zip code: 851 02	