

# Frangokastello Castle – Agios Nikitas

Frangokastello Castle Agios Nikitas

35.1822768, 24.2344529



The Venetians originally named the castle "Castle of St. Nikitas," after a nearby church. However, the locals, who viewed the Venetian presence negatively, mockingly called it "Frangokastello," meaning "Castle of the Franks" (referring to Catholic foreigners). This name, also rendered as "Castelfranco" or "Franco Castello," eventually became widely accepted, even by the Venetians themselves.

The Venetians built Frangokastello between 1371 and 1374 as a military garrison to maintain control over the rebellious Sfakia region, deter pirate activity, and protect Venetian nobles and their estates. According to local legend, the Sfakians, led by six brothers from the nearby settlement of Patsianos, repeatedly destroyed the construction each night. The Venetians were forced to bring in additional troops, and after being betrayed, the Patsos brothers were arrested and executed.

In 1770, the Cretan rebel Ioannis Vlachos, also known as Daskaloyiannis, briefly occupied Frangokastello. However, he was later captured by Turkish forces, tortured, and executed in Heraklion.

Frangokastello was the site of a significant battle on May 17, 1828, during the Greek War of Independence. Hundreds of Sfakiots and Epirotes, led by Hatzimichalis Dalianis, a Greek patriot from Epirus, occupied the castle in an attempt to spread the Greek revolt to Crete. However, the forces were besieged by the Turks, and many, including Dalianis, were massacred.

## Overview

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|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Purpose: Excursion   | Type: Castle     | Country: Greece |
| City: Frangokastello | Zip code: 730 11 |                 |

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**Greek Map**