

Gramvousa Fortress

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35.6093489, 23.5754541



At the island's highest point, at an elevation of 137 meters, the Venetians built an impressive castle between 1579 and 1584 to protect the entire northeastern region of Crete.

Despite its large size and significant capacity (able to hold 3,000 men), the fortress was never used by the Venetians in any major battle. In 1692, the fortress fell to the Turks after they bribed the Venetian commander, who subsequently enjoyed a comfortable life in Constantinople.

In 1825, Cretan fighters captured the fortress, making it the headquarters of the Revolutionary Committee of Crete. For three years, the island served as a base for over 3,000 rebels. Due to a lack of food and resources, they were forced to become pirates, leading to Gramvousa being infamously known throughout Europe as "the Pirate Island."

This piracy ran counter to the interests of European powers, prompting their intervention in 1828. A multinational force of British, French, and mainland Greek troops attacked and seized control of the island. In 1830, in cooperation with Kapodistrias (the Governor of Greece), the island was liberated. However, under the terms of the London Protocol of 1830, Crete, along with the fortress, was returned to Turkish rule until Crete eventually gained its independence.

Overview

Purpose: Excursion	Type: Castle	Country: Greece
Zip code: 734 00		

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Greek Map