

Castle of Onoussa

41.1024006, 23.6237997

The history of the castle is largely unknown. It is thought that a Roman fortress and necropolis once existed on this hill (Samsaris, 2004). The use of lime mortar in the masonry, which likely began in the 3rd–4th century AD, along with Early Christian period pottery found on-site, suggests that the castle may date back to the Early Byzantine period.

There are several similar fortified settlements (castles) in this region, situated at the base of the Menoikion mountain. Examples include the castles of Chionochori, Neo Souli, and Agio Pneuma. All these Early Byzantine fortifications appear to have been abandoned by the 7th century.

The hilltop stands at an elevation of 190 meters. At the base of the rock, near the area known as Faneromeni, there is a modern chapel dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin, alongside a deep gorge carved by the Kokkinorema river. This hill is the last rocky prominence before the gorge opens up.

The hilltop itself is flat and bordered by steep limestone cliffs, providing natural defenses that made it largely inaccessible. The eastern side, which was fortified, was the castle's most vulnerable point. A narrow isthmus connects the hilltop to the descending mountainside. This hill is part of the Menoikion mountain range.

Overview

Purpose: Excursion	Type: Castle	Country: Greece
City: Onoussa	Zip code: 621 00	