

NAFPLION
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM

ARGOLIS



The Archaeological Museum of Nafplion is housed in the imposing Venetian building whose impressive size and austere, symmetrical form takes up the western side of Plateia Syntagmatos (Constitution Square). The building was constructed in 1713 by the Superintendent of the Venetian Fleet, Agostino Sagredo, to be used as a warehouse for the fleet.

The exhibition is arrayed in two galleries on the building's two floors; it is organized into themed sections presenting the cultures which developed in the Argolis from Earliest Prehistory to Late Antiquity.

The oldest exhibits in the Museum are the Paleolithic clay hearths from the Kleisoura Gorge near Prosymna (32000-21000 BC).

Finds from the Franchthi Cave in the Hermionid document the transition from hunting-gathering to farming. Exhibits include stone and bone tools, shells, animal and fish bones, jewelry made of shells, bone, and stone, the first handmade Neolithic clay vases, and a series of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic clay figurines.

The Early Helladic period (3300-2100/2000 BC) is represented by exhibits from Tiryns, Asine, Berbati, and Palaia Epidavros. There are exhibits of pottery, stone, clay and bronze seals, clay sealings, bone tools, Early Cycladic marble figurines, and the clay hearth from Berbati. A separate place is reserved for the unique "cooler" from Tiryns.



Vases and other artifacts from the Middle Helladic settlements at Asine, Pronoia (Nafplion), Midea, Tiryns, and Berbati cover the entire chronological range of the Middle Helladic period (2100/2000-1600 BC), the culture which formed the substrate for Mycenaean culture.

The structure of Mycenaean palace rule and administration is illustrated by finds from the important Mycenaean centres of Tiryns, Midea, and Asine. Among items that stand out are the impressive wheel-made female figurines from Tiryns and Midea and the famous "Lord of Asine", Linear B tablets, storage amphorae, workshop remains, as well as Mittanian cylinder seals, a bronze ingot and objects made of faience, amber and alabaster.

These are followed by exhibits from the chamber tomb cemeteries of Evangelistria (Nafplion), Asine, Dendra, Palaia Epidavros and the tholos tomb at Kazarma. Stone, metal and clay vases, figurines, ivory pieces, seal stones and jewelry of gold, semi-precious stones, amber, faience and glass shed light on burial practices and reflect the stratification of Mycenaean society. Among them the Dendra cuirass (late 15th c. BC) stands out.

The presentation of the Historical times begins with the Iron Age material remains. The bronze helmet from the famous Sub-Mycenaean tomb at Tiryns (11th c. BC) holds a prominent place in this display.

The Geometric period is illustrated by finds from the tombs of Pronoia (Nafplion), Tiryns, Asine, and Berbati. Representations of horses and horse-leaders, boats, ritual dances, animals and birds form a picture of the age of Homer.

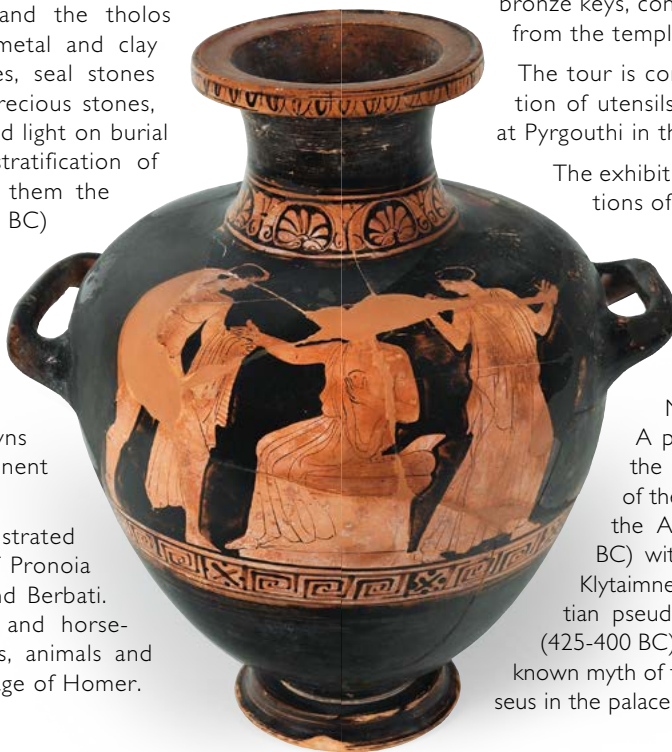
The cults of the Archaic period are presented mainly through finds from Tiryns. Enthroned female deities, female votaries, miniature vases, flowers, fruits and garlands are connected with the cult of Hera, while bronze miniature helmets and greaves are connected with the worship of the goddess Athena. The famous 7th c. BC terracotta votive shields and ritual masks from the "Bothros" (pit-repository) at Tiryns are of special interest.

Next is the section on the ancient cities of Epidavros, Hermione, Halieis, and ancient Asine. Clay and glass vases, figurines, gold jewelry, strigils, bronze mirrors and utensils all illustrate aspects of life and death in these ancient cities. We may single out the bronze statuette of a kore (ca. 600 BC) from the sanctuary of Artemis in the city of Epidavros, the bronze mirror of the Karyatid type (490-470 BC) from Hermione, and three bronze keys, concreted together by corrosion, from the temple of Apollo at Halieis.

The tour is complemented by the presentation of utensils from a 6th c. AD farmstead at Pyrgouthi in the Berbati Valley.

The exhibition concludes with the Collections of Museum donors, with a presentation of Attic, Boeotian, and Corinthian vases and figurines from the Collections of the antiquarian donors Glymenopoulos, Potamianos, Archbishop Nikandros, and Thermojiannis.

A prominent place is reserved for the Panathenaic amphora, a work of the Mastos Painter (530-520 BC), the Attic red-figure hydria (ca. 440 BC) with the scene of the murder of Klytaimnestra by Orestes and the Boeotian pseudo-red-figure Kabeirian skyphos (425-400 BC) depicting a parody of the well-known myth of the hospitality offered to Odysseus in the palace of Circe.





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