

DELOS

CYCLADES



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



World Heritage
Convention





I. Port
 2. Agora of the Competaliastae
 3. Sanctuary
 4. Agora of the Delians
 5. Agora of the Italians
 6. Letoon
 7. Lion Terrace
 8. Sacred Lake
 9. Quarter of the Lake
 10. Quarter of Skardanas

II. House of the Comedians
 12. House of Diadoumenos
 13. Foundation of the Poseidoniastae
 14. House of the Hill
 15. Hypostyle Hall
 16. Commercial Port
 17. Quarter of the Theatre
 17a. House of Dionysos
 18. Theatre

19. "Hostel"
 20. House of Hermes
 21. House of the Masks
 22. House of the Dolphins
 23. Quarter of Inopos
 24. Terrace of Foreign Gods
 25. Temple of Hera
 26. Sanctuary of Herakles (Cave of Kynthos)
 27. Sanctuary of Agathe Tyche

28. Kynthion
 29. Sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos
 30. Hippodrome
 31. Archegesion
 32. Gymnasium
 33. Stadium
 34. Museum

The archaeological site of Delos is perhaps unique, in that it is located on a small, narrow, barren island 5 km long and 1,300 m wide. The island is devoid of vegetation but resplendent in the sunlight, mainly on account of its rock-formations, that rise a short way above the azure sea. The highest elevation on the island (112 m) is Kynthos, beneath which spreads the sanctuary dedicated to Apollo and his sister Artemis, with the Hellenistic city around it.

The sanctuary, in which there had been a cult since the Mycenaean period (ca. 1400 BC), began to be placed on an organised basis in the 7th c. BC. The *Odyssey* and the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, written about 700 BC, refer to Delos as a famous religious centre of the Ionians. At this period, the dominant power in the region was the neighbouring island of Naxos, which demonstrated its superiority by erecting on Delos buildings and dedications, such as the House of the Naxians, the colossal statue of Apollo, and the Terrace of the Lions opposite the Sacred Lake and the Sacred Palm-tree where, according to the myth, the Titaness Leto brought the blond-haired Apollo into the world. In the 6th c. BC, the artistic influence of Naxos was succeeded for a short time by that of Paros, though Athens, the major power, ultimately asserted its political and cultural authority over the sacred island.

A large city of about 30,000 inhabitants grew up around the sanctuary in the Hellenistic period. It evolved into a major commercial port of the central Aegean, and was destroyed in 88 BC by Mithridates, king of Pontus. The high-quality floor mosaics may be admired *in situ* in the ancient houses, amongst them the mosaics in the House of Dionysos, the House of the Masks, the House of the Dolphins and the House of the Tritons.

The Delos Museum has one of the most important collections for the history of ancient Greek sculpture, and a unique collection of objects relating to private life in the Hellenistic period. It houses a large number of sculptures from the Archaic period down to Late Hellenistic times (7th-1st c. BC), an abundance of pottery from various island and Corinthian workshops, mainly dating from the 7th and 6th c. BC, and from Attic 6th-century workshops, and also a great quantity of clay figurines and miniature works of art. Our picture of the private life of the Delians in the Hellenistic period is completed by pottery and a variety of objects and material relating to everyday life, as well as by mosaics and wall-paintings.





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