

Acropolis & Fortification of Mystra Castle

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37.072118, 22.367227



The castle is located 6 km west of the city of Sparta, atop a high hill that overlooks the Evrotas River valley.

It is highly conceivable that the decision of the Franks to erect a fortress there had to do with the vicinity to the ancient Sparta. Owning a castle was more than simply a tactical decision for the French—far more so than for the Byzantines. It was a demonstration of strength and achievement. A Spartan palace would also be the ultimate prestige symbol. on a European scale.

Mystras was the capital of the Frankish Principality of Achaea in 1249. Prince William II Villehardouin constructed a palace and a fortification here. The Frankish Principality of Achaea was founded in 1205 following the fall of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade.

In order to free William II, who had been taken prisoner in the Battle of Pelagonia, the Latins gave up Mystras and many other forts in the southeast Peloponnese in 1262. Under Michael VIII Palaeologos, the seat of the Peloponnesian Byzantine territory was moved from Monemvasia to Mystras in 1289.

Mystras was made the seat of the semi-autonomous Despotate of Moreas in 1349. Manuel Kantakouzenos (1349–1380), the son of Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, was the first despot.

Overview

Purpose: Excursion	Type: Castle	Country: Greece
City: Kato Chora	Zip code: 231 00	

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Greek Map