

# Spinalonga Fortress

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35.2973064, 25.7379145



Spinalonga is unique among Greek castles in that its modern history is particularly notable: it was used as a leper colony during the first half of the 20th century.

The strategic importance of the fortress is evident, as it protected the Bay of Elounda, a key point for Venetian sea trade. Additionally, Venetian cartographer Vincenzo Coronelli claimed that Spinalonga was not originally an island but was once connected to the nearby peninsula. According to him, in 1526, the Venetians carved out a section of the peninsula, thereby creating the island. Due to its strategic location, the island was fortified early on to protect the entrance to the port.

The name "Spinalonga" derives from the Latin words "spina" (thorn) and "lunga" (long), which was adopted by locals. The Venetians may have drawn inspiration for this name from a similarly named island near Venice, now known as Giudecca.

Another theory, supported by Venetian documents, suggests that the name originated from the Greek expression "στην Ελούντα" (stin Elounda), meaning "to Elounda."

## Overview

Purpose: Excursion	Type: Castle	Country: Greece
City: Elounta		

**Agent info**

info@omicronacademy.com – Μαρία Παππα

**Greek Map**