

Temples Fortress

35.2031168, 25.1054791



The fortress occupies a strategic hilltop south of Profitis Elias, where traces of the acropolis of the ancient town of Lykastos, mentioned by Homer in the Iliad, can also be found. The location was ideal for building an impregnable castle, as it commands a view over the entire surrounding area. Additionally, a natural freshwater spring on the Rocca hill fed a fountain, known as Fountana, located within the fortress.

When the Byzantine general Nikephoros Phocas (who later became emperor) liberated Crete from the Arabs in 961 AD, he established a fort on Rocca with the intention of relocating the city of Candia (modern Heraklion) there. Although the fortress was built, Candia was not moved due to the importance of its port for Cretan trade. As a result, the fortress remained isolated on the hill, overlooking the region, and was named Temenos. The surrounding area is still called Temenos Province today.

In 1204, when the Genoese pirate and Count of Malta, Enrico Pescatore, briefly took control of Crete, he either established or repaired 15 fortresses to solidify his hold on the island. One of these was the fortress of Temenos.

Overview

Purpose: Excursion	Type: Castle	Country: Greece
City: Heraklion	Zip code: 715 00	

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Greek Map

