

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF THESSALONIKI



The museum was built in 1962 to plans drawn by the architect Patroklos Karadinos and in 1980 it acquired a new wing, which housed the exhibits from the Vergina tombs until 1997. It is in a transitional stage at present, because it will be closed to the public from the beginning of 2001 for general restorations.

At present, the collection of Archaic to Late Roman sculptures from Thessaloniki and Macedonia in general is displayed in the central section of the museum. They illustrate the history of Thessaloniki from prehistoric times to Late Antiquity. These rooms display architectural members from an Ionic temple of the 6th century bc, sculptures of all periods from Macedonia, exhibits from the excavations in the palace complex built by Galerius in Thessaloniki city centre, a reconstruction of the facade of the Macedonian tomb in Ayia Paraskevi, Thessaloniki prefecture, with genuine architectural members, and finds (mainly gold artefacts) of the Archaic and Classical periods from the Sindos cemetery. In all these rooms, certain important exhibits have been singled out and further information about them is given to help visitors appreciate the importance of each exhibit and of the area and the period from which it comes.

Apart from its permanent displays, the Archaeological Museum also hosts major temporary and thematic exhibitions. In the Manolis Andronikos Room, for instance, there is an exhibition titled *The Coins of Macedonia from the 6th Century to 148 bc*, with examples of coins that were circulating in Macedonia in that period. A showcase in the lobby of the museum displays some finds from the excavation of the Neolithic settlement at Makriyalo in Pieria, accompanied by information about the progress of the excavation.

The new wing hosts two exhibitions: *The Gold of Macedon* and *The Thessaloniki Area in Prehistory*. The former includes finds from numerous excavations in Central Macedonia. Taking the history of gold as its central theme, it presents the culture of Macedonia from the 6th century bc to 148 bc, discussing the use of gold (jewellery, sartorial decoration, gilding of objects and vessels, coins), the technology of the manufacture of gold jewellery, and the techniques of gold mining. There are also numerous finds from the cemeteries of Macedonia (Sindos, Ayia Paraskevi, Nea Filadelfia, Makriyalo, Derveni, Liti, Serres, and Evropos), and their role in the burial customs is described.

The point of the *Thessaloniki in Prehistory* exhibition is to recreate a picture of the Thermaic littoral before the city of Thessaloniki was built. It presents the first excavations, which were carried out during the First World War by British and French troops, and finds from the most important prehistoric settlements in the area (Thermi, Vassilika, Stavroupoli, Oraiokastros, Assiros, Toumba, and Kastana) divided into three chronological groups (Neolithic and Early and Late Bronze Age).

The Museum of Thessaloniki is a place of culture and learning, open to everyone!



View from outside



Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic sculptures from Thessaloniki



Exhibition the of the gold of Macedon



Finds from tombs at Sindos



Marble statue of Augustus



Sculptures and honorary, votive and grave reliefs of the Roman period

CHURCH OF SAINT DIMITRIOS

Saint Dimitrios was born in 280 AD in Thessaloniki and died a martyr to his Christian faith about 303 AD. When Constantine the Great gave an end to the persecutions of the early Christians (324 AD), a small church was built at the place of his martyrdom, near the ruins of the old Roman baths and near the stadium of the city. As thousands of pilgrims were coming to genuflect there, in 413 AD a big church was built, overlooking the entire city. This church, with some restorations and extensions, survived until the 3-days big fire of 1917 that destroyed the centre of Thessaloniki. Later it was rebuilt keeping exactly the same style.

Saint Dimitrios is the patron saint of Thessaloniki. In 1912, during the First Balkan War, the Greek army entered the city on the day of his memory: the 26th of October, offering double glee to the Greek population of Thessaloniki.

Some architectural elements and artistic mosaics of the old church have been preserved in the new church.



The underground crypt of the church that used to be Roman public baths. Down there took place the martyrdom of St Dimitrios. Today the Crypt houses a small museum of articles found in and around the church. The entry is from inside the church, a marble staircase to the southeast part.



LEYKOS PYRGOS – WHITE TOWER

Lefkos Pyrgos (=White Tower) is the landmark of Thessaloniki. It was part of the Walls of the city that were pulled down in 1867. It was built during Turkish occupation by Venetian architects in 1536. Its height is 30m and internally has 6 stages. It was used as prison and torture place, that's why it had the name "Blood Tower" (Kanli Kule). The prison was abolished in 1878 and the Tower was painted white, taking its present name. Today it is restored to its original form and is used as a museum.

