

Precious Museums

- *Heraklion Archaeological Museum*

The Heraklion Archaeological Museum is a museum located in Heraklion on Crete. It is one of the great museums of Greece and the best in the world for Minoan art, as it contains the most notable and complete collection of artifacts of the Minoan civilization of Crete. The museum began in 1883 as a simple collection of antiquities. A dedicated building was constructed from 1904 to 1912 at the instigation of two Cretan archaeologists, Iosif Hatzidakis and Stefanos Xanthoudidis. After three destructive earthquakes in 1926, 1930, and 1935, the museum nearly collapsed. The director of the Heraklion Museum was then Spyridon Marinatos, who made tremendous efforts to find funds and persuade the locals and the central government alike that a new solid building was needed. In 1935, Marinatos succeeded in engaging Patroklos Karantinos to build a sturdy structure that has withstood both natural disasters and the bombing that accompanied the German invasion in 1941. Although the museum was damaged during World War II, the collection survived intact and again became accessible to the public in 1952. A new wing was added in 1964.

Besides the Minoan collection, the museum covers other periods of Cretan history, with artifacts from the Neolithic to the Greco-Roman period. The museum is currently under renovation, but a temporary exhibition is open in the main building.

- *Cretaquarium*

The Cretaquarium project was conceived by employees of the former Institute of Marine Biology of Crete (IMBC) to create the first large aquarium in Greece, as part of a marine park for research, education, culture and recreation. Its construction was co-financed by the European Investment Bank and the Greek state. Cretaquarium first opened its doors in December 2005 and went through a major expansion during the winter of 2008-9, when 25 new tanks were installed. The aquarium is currently operated by the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, a public research institution. Its exhibits focus on the marine fauna of the Mediterranean region and include sea organisms from over 250 species in more than 60 tanks.

Cretaquarium is located on the site of the former USAF Heraklion Air Station.

- *Historical Museum of Crete*

The Historical Museum of Crete is a museum in Heraklion, Crete, Greece. The Museum presents a comprehensive view of Cretan history

from early Christian times to the present day. It was founded in 1953 by the Society of Cretan Historical Studies, which had been established two years earlier. The founders' goal was to collect and preserve valuable archaeological, ethnographic and historical material deriving from the medieval and modern periods in Cretan history. The museum is housed in a two-storey neoclassical building, which was constructed in 1903 on the site of an earlier mansion.

The Museum exhibits a number of notable works of art, such as the *Modena Triptych*, a 1568 painting by the artist El Greco, who was also known as *Doménikos Theotokópoulos*.

- *Natural History Museum*

The Natural History Museum of Crete (NHMC) (Greek: Μουσείο Φυσικής Ιστορίας Κρήτης, ΜΦΙΚ) in Heraklion, Crete is a natural history museum that operates under the auspices of the University of Crete. Its aim is the study, protection and promotion of the diverse flora and fauna of the Eastern Mediterranean region. The museum is based in a restored industrial building that used to house an electricity power plant. Natural History Museum

- *The Battle of Crete and National Resistance Museum*

The Municipal Museum of the Battle of Crete and the National Resistance is a historical museum in Heraklion, Crete, Greece.

- *Nikos Kazantzakis Museum*

The Nikos Kazantzakis Museum is a museum in Myrtia village in the Heraklion Prefecture of Crete, in Greece. It is 20 km South of the town of Heraklion and it is dedicated to the life and work of the famous writer Nikos Kazantzakis.

- *Lychnostatis Open Air Museum*

Lychnostatis Open Air Museum is a museum in Hersonissos, Heraklion, Crete, Greece. It is an autonomous private foundation, established in July 1992, based on private collection owned by ophthalmologist Yiorgos Markakis. The Markakis and local workers were responsible for the building of the museum between 1986 and 1992. In March 1994, the Association of Members of the Museum was established, to obtain sponsorships and grants to operate the museum.

The museum contains a variety of artifacts and structures related to Cretan folk tradition and ethnology, economic activity and culture, nature and the environment. Notable assets include traditional Cretan farmer and merchant houses, wine and olive presses, a distillery,

weaving and ceramic workshops, a herbarium and fruit and cactus gardens, a folk art gallery, library, a mineral and stone exhibition, a 150 seat auditorium and a 250 seats theatre as well as a cafe and shop. A number of performances are put on in the auditoriums including the "Traditional September" annual event as well as Greek dancing performances, and grape and wine-tasting events.

- *Collection of Agia Aikaterini of Sinai*

The Collection of Agia Aikaterini of Sinai is a museum in Heraklion, Crete, Greece.

- *Museum of Visual Arts*

Museum of Visual Arts is a museum located on Nymphon Street in Heraklion, Crete, Greece.

The museum was established in order to support cultural and artistic activity and to promote the work of Cretan artists.

The museum organizes educational seminars and lectures on art, as well as conferences, concerts, and publications.