

Ancient Stageira

Information

Address:

Olympiada, Municipality of Aristotle, Prefecture of Chalcidice
Tel. 23760 51283

Ephorate of Antiquities of Chalcidice and Mount Athos

5 Konstantinoupoleos str., 631 00 Polygyros

Tel. 23710 22060

7 Ippodromiou str., 546 21 Thessaloniki

Tel. 2310 285163

E-mail: efachagor@culture.gr

Web page: odysseus.culture.gr

Opening hours:

Wednesday to Monday 8:30 - 15:30 Tuesday closed

FREE ENTRANCE

Particular features / difficulties:

Many stairs

Some points are inaccessible to the elderly

Trolleys are difficult to move on most routes

Nearby points of interest:

Ancient Akanthos (36 km)

Necropolis of ancient Akanthos (Ierissos) (36 km)

Archaeological Museum of Polygyros (71 km)

Basilica church of Agios Stefanos Arnaia (45 km)

Arnaia Folklore Museum (45 km)

Arnaia (45 km)

Ottoman Hamam of Sidirikausia (29 km)

Oranoupoli Tower (51 km)

Zygos Monastery Ouranoupoli (53 km)

Mount Athos (Ouranoupoli 51 km)

Amphipolis (43 km)

Redina Castle (21 km)

Edited by:

Ephorate of Antiquities of Chalcidice and Mount Athos

Text-Graphic design:

Constantinos Papastathis, archaeologist

Terpsichore Xanthopoulou, visual artist

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of Chalcidice and Mount Athos

Konstantinos Ntarakis, archaeologist

1. EARLY CLASSICAL FORTIFICATION
2. ACROPOLIS
3. MAIN WATER SUPPLY CONDUIT
4. CLASSICAL - HELLENISTIC HOUSES
5. WATER CISTERN
6. PORTICO
7. ARCHAIC BUILDING REMAINS
8. AGORA
9. BYZANTINE FORTIFICATION WALL
10. BYZANTINE TOWER- ARISTOTELEION
ARCHAIC FORTIFICATION WALL
AND GATE-MARBLE PAVED FLOOR
11. BYZANTINE CITADEL
12. ARCHAIC TEMPLE
13. LATE CLASSICAL FORTIFICATION WALL
14. ARCHAIC TEMPLE
15. THESMOPHORION
- 🏠 SOUTH ENTRANCE- RECEPTION- WC
- 🏰 NORTH ENTRANCE

🔴 main route
🟢 alternative route



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and Mount Athos

ANCIENT STAGEIRA



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Stageira, perched on the slopes of a small peninsula in North East Chalcidice, was founded in the 7th century BC by colonists who arrived from the island of Andros, in a search for mineral deposits. Being an independent city it issued its own coins, adorned with a boar (Capros). The name of the sacred animal and emblem of Stageira, Capros, had also been given to the port of the city and to the islet across the peninsula.

After the Persian wars, Stageira became member of the Athenian League. During the Peloponnesian war, in 424 BC, the city seceded from the Athenians and in the aftermath of the Peace of Nicias, in 421 BC, it regained autonomy. Shortly afterwards, it joined the Chalcidian League, a powerful federation of cities of Chalcidice.

In 384 BC Aristotle was born in Stageira. He was orphaned at a very young age and moved to Asia Minor, where the care of his upbringing was taken over by his relatives. In the age of eighteen, the man who was to become the most influential philosopher in human history, arrived in Athens to attend Plato's Academy.

In 349 BC the Macedonian king Phillip II destroyed Stageira but he rebuilt it a few years later in return for Aristotle's tutoring of his son, Alexander. Nevertheless the city declined gradually and by the time of Christ it was already deserted.

Thousand years later, a medieval castle was built on the ruined city, bearing the name "Lipsasda", a word that paraphrases the name Olympiada, mother of Alexander the Great, who was exiled there.

Excavation and enhancement of the archaeological site

Excavations by the archaeologist Kostas Sismanides in the decade 1990-2000 brought to light public edifices, sanctuaries, houses, the wall and the acropolis.

Restoration and enhancement works made Stageira an attractive archaeological site in a beautiful landscape.

A tour in the archaeological Site

The top of the south hill is dominated by the acropolis, a triangular citadel with outposts and towers. When the population increased in the 5th century BC, the city expanded to the south hill and a strong wall surrounded it. Its length is 2 km and it is strengthened with towers. Along its inner side there was a wooden circuit serving for the guard.

Notice the shading, the flickering and the contrast of the colors. The sophisticated aesthetics of the walls, probably was the occasion for a comment of Aristotle:

"not only must walls be put round a city, but also attention must be paid to them in order that they may be suitable both in regard to the adornment of the city and in respect of military requirements".



Acropolis. Round tower

The agora is marked by a monumental portico, the political center of Stageira, where the citizens were assembled for public debates. A downhill paved road leads from the portico to the coast passing in front of storerooms and shops. Notice the cavities into the rock. They served as a kind of fridge, where large storage jars were put.



Portico

From the agora to the sanctuaries

A Classical house on the north hill consists of a courtyard, a storeroom, the living room with the hearth, the kitchen and the **andron** (room for men). A narrow uphill alley passes between this and the neighboring house, reminding the traditional villages of the Aegean islands.

The sanctuaries are on the rocky edge of the north hill. The archaic, dating back to the 6th century BC, belonged to a female deity. South of it a round temple, the Thesmophorion, was dedicated to goddess Demeter and became the center of the cult in the 4th century BC.



Archaic sanctuary - Thesmophorion



House

From the sanctuaries to the agora

The archaic temple of Zeus Soter and Athena Soteira lie in ruins on a terrace of the north hill. Part of its material was used in the 10th century AD for the construction of the medieval castle at the top of the hill as well as of a byzantine cross-wall.



Temple of Zeus and Athena - Medieval castle

An apsidal building dominates the area outside the cross-wall, which has been interpreted as the "Aristoteleion", Aristotle's grave-heroon, where the ashes of the philosopher were transferred, after his death at Chalkis in 322 BC.



Apsidal heroon - Aristoteleion

Dear visitor,

Visiting ancient Stageira, you walked on the path of Aristotle's childhood. You strolled through walls built by settlers that came from the south, bringing to this land the seed of the basic political unit of the free world, the independent city-state. In its ruins you saw the destruction of the city by the Macedonian king, the decline, as well as the revival during the byzantine era. Stageira, a land of antiquities but also a land of an exceptional natural beauty, provides the conditions for a pleasant tour.

We hope that you enjoyed it.

