

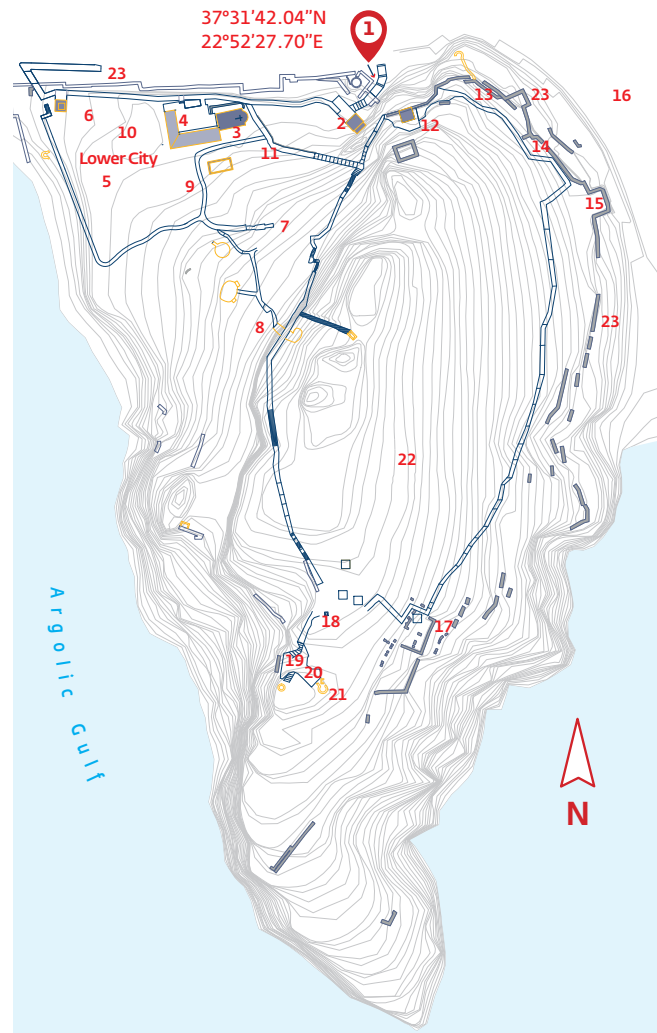
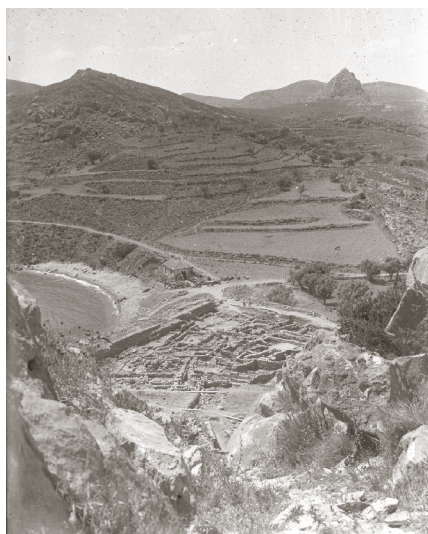
The room, which is dated to Hellenistic and Roman times, functioned as a press for processing agricultural produce. Most probably the wooden mechanism for the system of crushing the fruit was affixed to the base at the centre. The liquid released trickled down the sloping floor and ended up in the two tanks.

Italian pillbox (21)

Located on the southside of the "Terrace of the polygonal wall" and concealed in the rocky environment, this building had full surveillance of the Argolic Gulf. Decorated with a pebble floor, it still preserves traces of incised Italian inscriptions—graffiti.

Front cover: The "Lord of Asine", Mycenaean period. Archaeological Museum of Nafplion. © Ephorate of Antiquities of Argolida / Ministry of Culture and Sports – Archaeological Receipts Fund.

Below: View of the Lower Town at the time of Swedish excavations. © Archive of the Swedish Institute at Athens.



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| 1 Gate | 13 Stoa |
| 2 Ticket office – shop | 14 East Gate |
| 3 Church of the Dormition of the Virgin | 15 East Tower |
| 4 Multimedia hall | 16 Karmaniolas plot |
| 5 Lower Town | 17 The Prince's Tower |
| 6 House G | 18 Pressing installation |
| 7 Cistern | 19 Terrace of a polygonal fortification wall |
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You can tour the site by using the diagram. To listen to or download the file of the audio-guide, scan with your cell phone the QR code on the left or type in the link: <http://www.archaeology.wiki/innoetics/98764.mp3>

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ANCIENT ASINE

Georgia Ivou



On the west coast of the Argolid, between the Bay of Tolo and the Plaka beach at Drepano, the headland of Kastraki, which has been identified as the Asine of Homer, Strabo and Pausanias, thrusts into the sea. To the northwest it is joined to the mainland by a smooth slope. Here, in the "Lower Town", as the archaeologists call it, investigations have brought to light dense habitation levels of different periods. Settlement, cultic and mortuary remains have been excavated on the top of the hill, the "acropolis", and at points around this.

The area was inhabited as early as the Early Helladic period. Important are the remains of the settlements of Middle Helladic, Mycenaean and Geometric times. After 700 BC, Asine fell into decline as it became the target of neighbouring Argos, which attacked the settlement and drove out its population as fugitives. The city was to flourish again from the late fourth century BC, in which period the still impressive fortification walls were built. The natural fortification of the site, its proximity to the sea and its protection from prevailing winds continued to be an incentive for settlement during the Christian era too. The Hellenistic walls of the city were reinforced and repaired by the various claimants of the Aegean, a recent example being the transformation of the promontory into an Italian fort during the Second World War. The extensive fortification works of that period caused serious destruction of the ancient remains, which Swedish archaeologists had uncovered a few years earlier.

Ancient Asine is reached via the rural road between Nafplion and Tolo. Just beyond the modern village of Asine, signposts direct visitors to Kastraki/Ancient Asine, leading to in front of the walls of the ancient city.

House G (6)

The largest Mycenaean house at Asine was brought to light in the north part of the Lower Town in the 1920s. Its nucleus was a hypostyle hall with two central columns and an antechamber, features that class it among the houses of megaroid type. It acquired its final form with the addition of rooms around the central space, creating a complex of rooms

that were used more intensively in the Middle and Late LH III period.

In the northeast corner of the hypostyle hall, in association with a built bench, a number of objects of most probably cultic use was found. Among these was the famous clay head of the "Lord of Asine", today displayed in the Archaeological Museum of Nafplion.

Cistern (7)

In the southeast of the Lower Town, a tripartite rock-cut cistern was constructed in Hellenistic or Roman times. Today, its interior is reached along a narrow passage which was opened during the Italian Occupation, when the monument was used for storing military equipment.

Successive coats of hydraulic plaster on the surface of the walls ensured that the cistern was waterproof. There was a mouth in the ceiling of the central chamber. The floor was set with pebbles and sloped downwards towards a settling basin in which the sediment collected. On the surface, next to the mouth, is a built rectangular basin.

House B (9)

This is preserved at the low level of its foundation, in the east part of the Lower Town, and is dated to the Middle Helladic period. It is of irregular, rather trapezoidal plan, with 13 long and narrow rooms. Its socle was stone-built and the walls were of mudbrick. The narrow rooms meant that the building could be covered by a flat roof. In all probability there was also an upper storey. From the many entrances it is concluded that the building was inhabited by more than one families, which seem to have had a rudimentary degree of autonomy, judging by the existing inside the building of several points for preparing food and storing products.

Bath (10)

This was built in the late fourth–early fifth century AD, directly north of the Middle Helladic "House B". It comprises four main chambers, aligned on the North–South axis. The warmer chambers were to the south, so as to secure the best possible exploitation of the sunshine.



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- 01 The Late Roman bath viewed from the southeast, today.
 02 The east tower.
 03 Terracotta female figurine from the Lower Town, 3rd c. BC. Archaeological Museum of Nafplion. © Ephorate of Antiquities of Argolida / Ministry of Culture and Sports – Archaeological Receipts Fund.
 04 Clay kantharos with representation of birds, from a Geometric grave, 730–690 BC. Archaeological Museum of Nafplion. © Ephorate of Antiquities of Argolida / Ministry of Culture and Sports – Archaeological Receipts Fund.

- 05 Double vase. 1700–1600 BC. Archaeological Museum of Nafplion. © Ephorate of Antiquities of Argolida / Ministry of Culture and Sports – Archaeological Receipts Fund.
 06 Burial pithos. 1900–1700 BC. Archaeological Museum of Nafplion. © Ephorate of Antiquities of Argolida / Ministry of Culture and Sports – Archaeological Receipts Fund.
 07 Clay pyxis of the Geometric period. Archaeological Museum of Nafplion. © Ephorate of Antiquities of Argolida / Ministry of Culture and Sports – Archaeological Receipts Fund.

Exhibition of the excavations (12)

A small exhibition entitled "Excavating ancient Asine" is housed in the small, single-room Italian building to the north of the acropolis. Tools, equipment and objects from the time of the first excavations complement the texts and photographs of the information panels describing the process of excavation, through the example of the Swedish excavations in the 1920s.

On observing the building from the outside, we are certain that the lower part of the back wall is in fact the fortification wall of Venetian times. On top of this, in the course of adding the new wall, the Italians imitated the crenellations or battlements at the top of the Venetian fortification walls, so that the new construction would not be visible from the north.

East tower (15)

During antiquity, the access to the acropolis was defended by two quadrilateral towers on either side, north and south, of the gate. The south tower, which survives to a height of 9.5 m, is to this day Asine's most emblematic monument. It was crowned by a low parapet, very few parts of which are still in situ. Its floor was paved by large flat limestone slabs.

The lowest two courses of the tower are in stepped arrangement, contributing to its stability. Above these, the corners have been cut diagonally and a vertical taenia has been carved on their sharp edges. The diagonal formation of the points where the sides of the tower join was possibly intended to ensure the effective confrontation of battering rams, as possible damage to the corner stones leads to the more rapid collapse of the construction.

Pressing installation (18)

On one of the few flat areas of the crag of the acropolis, before the ascent from the west side of the hill begins, remnants survive of a rectangular room (3.5x5.5 m). In order to build it, the bedrock was leveled and formed part of its floor and walls. At about the centre of the room is an elevated surface of circular plan with rectangular cutting. The floor of the room slopes down towards two tanks opened in the bedrock, the first near the east wall and the second in the southeast corner of the room.