

Ancient Athens

Main Archaeological Sites

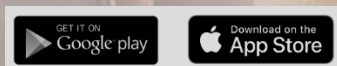
- Acropolis area
- Pnyx, Ancient Agora and Hephaestus temple
- Hadrianic monuments

Written for Timetravelrome by Michelle Richards and Kieren Johns



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Acropolis



The Athenian Acropolis was used during the Neolithic Period as a place of refuge. During the Mycenaean period, it was used as a military fortress and religious sanctuary. Two temples dedicated to Athena were built during the 6th century BC. Several caves that line the northern face of the Acropolis were also used as religious sanctuaries. The Persians destroyed the buildings on the Acropolis in 480 BC, and it was not until Pericles's building program in 447 BC that the Parthenon, Propylaea, Braurionion, Arrephorion, temple to Athena Nike, and smaller sanctuaries were constructed. During the Hellenistic period the Stoa of Artemis Brauronia was extended, and many new monumental statues added. On the southern slope of the Acropolis, the Stoa of Eumenes, Theatre of Dionysus, Odeum of Pericles, and the Asclepieion were constructed.

Very few changes were made to the Acropolis during the Roman period. The most important addition was the temple of Rome and Augustus which was built in 19 BC to commemorate the victory of Augustus over Parthia. The temple was a circular arrangement of 9 ionic columns and most likely held a statue of Augustus. A number of statues were also rededicated to Augustus and the Roman general Marcus Agrippa. On the southern slopes, several buildings were re-modelled following damage during Sulla's attacks. Later, the Odeon of Herodes Atticus was built. On the north face, an additional sanctuary cave was founded which the archons used for offerings to Apollo when assuming office. During Pausanias's visit in the 2nd century AD, he recorded the arrangement of a great many bronze and marble statues. One, a statue of Gaia praying to Zeus for rain, had an inscription carved directly into the rock surface. This allowed archaeologists to definitively locate and identify many of the fragmentary statue pedestals that remained on the Acropolis. Around the time of the Herulian invasion of AD 267, the Acropolis walls were strengthened, and a new staircase and the Beulé Gate were constructed at the entrance to the Propylaea to restrict access to the sacred precinct.

Visitors enter the Acropolis via the monumental Roman staircase which leads to the Propylaea and the Temple of Athena Nike. The most prominent buildings are from the Classical Period and include the Parthenon and Erechtheion. The Roman-era temple to Rome and Augustus is no longer standing. Visitors leave the Acropolis through the Beulé Gate. On the southern slopes, the Odeon of Herodes Atticus and Theatre of Dionysus are beautifully preserved.



Acropolis - By Sfetkos - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Acropolis_From_the_top.jpg



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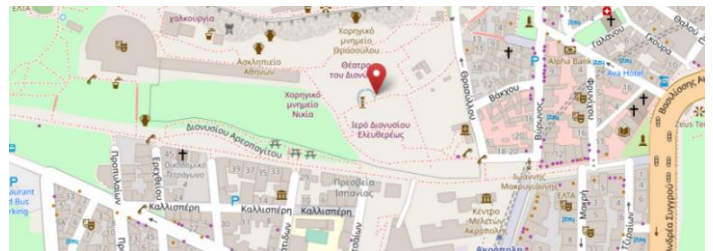
Theatre of Dionysus ★ ★ ★ ★

The Theatre of Dionysus was the first theatre in Athens and has been in use from at least the 5th century BC. It was built along the slope at the base of the Acropolis and was used for public performances associated with the festivals of Dionysus. Under Lycurgus, in 342 BC, a grand stone theatre was constructed to seat 17,000 spectators. The theatre was later re-modelled to add a front row of 67 high-backed, marble seats reserved for illustrious guests, and a grand throne for the priest of Dionysus. The Romans further modified the theatre by adding a mosaic floor and a series of carved reliefs depicting scenes from the myth of Dionysus. In the third century AD, these carved reliefs were relocated to their current position at the front of the stage to create the Bema of Phaidros. The Romans also used the theatre for gladiatorial duels prompting the construction of a balustrade to separate the audience from the orchestra floor. Pausanias described the theatre and its associated temples listing several statues which have not been found.

The theatre is well preserved and clearly shows the grandeur of the Roman-era construction. While the theatre originally extended further up the slope with additional rows of seating, only the lower half is visible today. Visitors can explore the orchestra area and tiered seating. The elaborate carved marble seats remain in situ and inscriptions naming the owner of the seat can still be seen. The throne bears an inscription for the Priest of Dionysus Eleuthereus along with an image of a bunches of grapes. The balustrade and a large portion of the carved reliefs are also accessible, as well as a dedicatory inscription to the emperor Hadrian.



Theatre of Dionysus - By Berthold Werner - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://shorturl.at/egF89>



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Temple of Athena Nike



This small Ionic temple (measuring only 8 x 5.5 meters) dedicated to Athena Nike was built around 426 BC. It sits on a raised platform made of tufa to the right of the Propylaea. It consists of four monolithic columns, a central cella and a small pronaos. The overhead frieze originally depicted battle scenes between the Greeks and Persians, with the Olympian gods assembled to watch.

Pausanias described the temple as being dedicated to the Wingless Victory (Nike means victory in Greek). The temple's cult statue of the goddess is said to have been wingless to ensure she would never leave Athens. During the fifth century AD, the temple was converted into a Christian church. The temple was demolished in the 17th century by the Turks, then re-erected in the 19th century and completely restored in 2010.

Visitors entering the Acropolis via the Propylaea will see the Temple of Athena Nike sitting on top of the projecting bastion. The restored remains of the open sanctuary are accessed from the summit. The battle-scene frieze is in the Acropolis Museum with replicas on display in situ.



Temple of Athena Nike - By Jebulon - Own work, CC0 1.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Temple_of_Athena_Nike_Acropolis_Athens_Greece.jpg



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Parthenon



A temple was first built here in the early Archaic period. Called the Hekatompedon temple, it was built from limestone and measured 46 meters in length. The pediment was decorated with several sculptures including two lions devouring a bull, and Herakles fighting Triton. The temple held an olive-wood statue of Athena Polias. This early temple was demolished to build a larger temple (known as the Older Parthenon) in 480 BC. This short-lived temple was destroyed by the Persians in 490 BC. Construction of the later Parthenon began with Perikles's building reforms in 447 BC and was completed in 438 BC. It was designed by the architects Kallikrates and Iktinos. The Parthenon features 136 fluted Doric columns which are wider at the base and lean inwards to create an illusion of balance and symmetry. The famous Parthenon frieze, as well as the ivory and gold statue of Athena, were made by the sculptor Pheidias.

The Parthenon frieze is high-relief marble sculpture that runs along the upper portion of the cella. It has been traditionally interpreted as showing an idealised Panathenaic procession, although a modern reading suggests a mythological interpretation with the sacrifice of the Erechtheids. The east pediment shows the birth of Athena from the head of Zeus, and the west pediment shows the contest between Athena and Poseidon to become the patron deity of Athens. While these sculptures are undecorated today, they were originally painted in vibrant colours.

No changes were made to the Parthenon during the Roman period. However, during Nero's visit to Athens around AD 61, a large honorific inscription in metallic letters was added to the Parthenon's entablature. The inscription was removed following Nero's death in AD 68 leaving behind a series of small holes. The holes allowed the inscription to be deciphered in 1896. The inscription read – "The Council of the Areopagus and the Council of the Six Hundred and the Athenian People honour the Greatest Emperor Nero Caesar Claudius Augustus Germanicus, son of a God, when Tiberius Claudius Novius, son of Philinus, was Hoplite-General for the eighth time, as well as Epimelete and Nomothete, and the priestess of Athena was Paulina, daughter of Capito."



Parthenon - By Peulle - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parthenon_ruin.JPG



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The Parthenon is one of the most famous monuments on the Acropolis. While access inside the temple is not permitted, visitors can see the Parthenon from all angles. The columns, pediment sculpture, and location of the inner cella are also visible. A series of small holes under the triglyphs on the eastern entablature show where Nero's honorary inscription was located.

Surviving architectural elements from the earlier temples, a reconstruction of the entire Parthenon frieze and statuary from the later Parthenon are on display in the Acropolis Museum.

Erechtheion



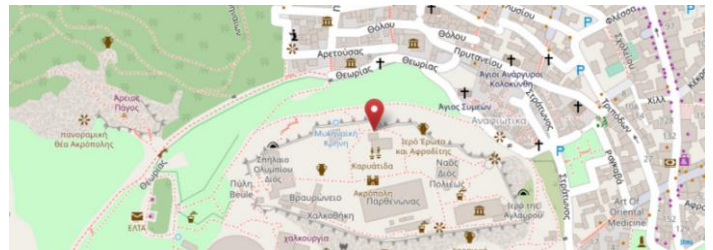
The Erechtheion was built between 421 and 406 BC from Pentelic marble with friezes in Eleusinian black limestone. It is arranged with several inner rooms, an Ionic porch to the east and north, and the famous Porch of the Caryatids to the south. The Erechtheion was one of the most important religious sites for the ancient Greeks being associated with the contest between Poseidon and Athena, and being the burial place of the mythical kings Erechtheus and Kekrops. The temple was extensively damaged by Sulla during his attack on Athens around 86 BC, and was repaired during the Roman period.

When Pausanias visited the Acropolis in the 2nd century AD, he described the Erechtheion as having an altar to Zeus where cakes were sacrificed, an altar to Erechtheus, another to Poseidon, Hephaestus, and to the hero Butes. Inside he mentions a cistern containing sea-water which made the sound of waves whenever a south wind blew, and the outline of a trident which appeared as evidence of Poseidon's claim to Athens.

This sacred Greek temple is moderately well-preserved with the inner structure and porches still standing. The north entrance has a propylon with four Ionic columns, and visitors can also see into the cella from the southeast. Athena's olive tree (planted in modern times) is located on the western side of the Erechtheion. The Porch of the Caryatids is visible on the southern side. Lord Elgin removed one of the Caryatids, which he later sold to the British Museum. The other five original Caryatids are in the Acropolis Museum, with exact replicas now supporting the ceiling of the Porch.



Erechtheion - By Jebulon - Own work, CC0 1.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erechtheum_Acropolis_Athens.jpg



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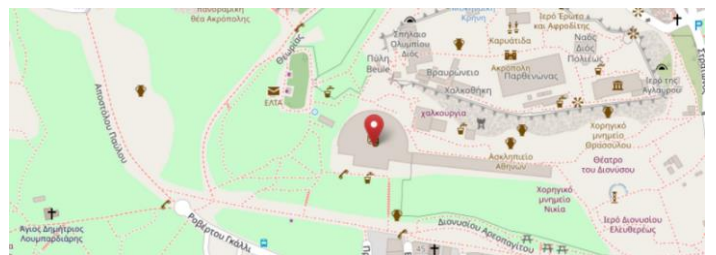
Odeon of Herodes Atticus ★ ★ ★ ★

The Odeon of Herodes Atticus was built in 161 AD by the politician (later Roman consul) Herodes Atticus in memory of his wife Aspasia Regilla who died the previous year. It was the third Odeon constructed in Athens. The semicircular auditorium measured 76 meters in diameter, and was hewn out of the slope of the Acropolis. The 32 rows of marble-lined seats could hold 5,000 spectators. The orchestra (also paved with white marble) had a diameter of 19 meters. The rear wall was three stories high with arched upper openings and a lower portico with niches for statues. Overhead, the entire odeon was roofed in expensive cedar panels from Lebanon. Pausanias commented on the Odeon being the finest in Greece. The Odeon was almost entirely destroyed by the Heruli in AD 267.

The Odeon of Herodes Atticus lay in ruins until the 1950s when the entire complex was fully reconstructed. Today it is used for musical performances and is the main venue of the yearly Athens Festival. Access to the Odeon is restricted to ticket-holders, however the best view into the Odeon is along the walkway to the Acropolis. The reconstructed façade, orchestra (now paved in black and white), and seating are all visible with an awe-inspiring view over Athens.



Odeon of Herodes Atticus - By Georg Zumstrull - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://shorturl.at/lopqX>



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Philopappos Monument ★ ★ ★ ★

The Philopappos Monument is the funerary monument and mausoleum of Gaius Julius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappos, located on Mouseion Hill, just to the south west of the Acropolis. Philopappos was a prince of the Commagene Kingdom (an ancient Greco-Iranian kingdom), living in Athens during the late 1st and early 2nd century.

He, and his family, were some of the most prominent Greeks in the empire at this time; his sister, Julia Balbilla, was a poet and close friend of the Hellenophile emperor Hadrian, and his wife Sabina.

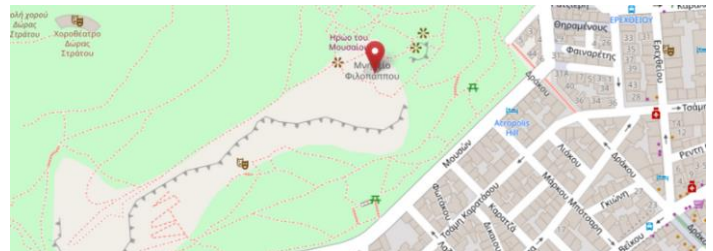
Upon Philopappos' death in AD 116, this monument was erected at the behest of his grieving sister, but its size and prominence attest to the high regard of the people of Athens for this prince from Commagene. The Roman traveller Pausanias dismisses it as "a monument built for a Syrian man".

The monument, which measures almost 10m in height and over 9m in width, is built of gleaming white Pentelic marble, and comprises a two-storey structure, supported by a base. A frieze on the lower storey shows the life of Philopappos within the Roman Empire; his role as consul is shown, including him riding a chariot being led by the lictors (the magistrates who carried the fasces). On the other hand, the upper story is comprised of three statue niches. These housed statues of Antiochus IV (left), Seleucus I (right) and Philopappos (center).

The Prince's position between these two great Hellenistic kings not only conveyed his standing and lineage, but also communicated the complex cultural networks that existed over the expanses of the Roman empire. An inscription beneath the central statue niche records (in Latin), the glittering career of Philopappos, including his elevation to the rank of Praetorian by the Emperor Trajan, who is designated as Optimus Princeps (Best of Emperors). The other statue niches are accompanied by inscriptions in Greek describing Philopappos' relationship to the individual's depicted; the bilingualism of the monument further attests to the cosmopolitanism of the Empire.



Philopappos Monument - By Guillaume Piolle - Own work, CC BY 3.0, <https://shorturl.at/ah024>



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A good amount of the Philopappos monument remains in a state of good repair, with around two-thirds of the façade intact. However, the tomb chamber to the rear of the structure has unfortunately been destroyed.

In the early 2000's the area of the Philopappou Hill (which includes Mouseion Hill, the Hill of the Muses, the Hill of the Nymphs, and the Pnyx Hill) was designated an archaeological park. Visitors are thus free to climb the slopes of Mouseion Hill, keeping their eyes open from some of the impressive indigenous birds that call this area home (including peregrine falcons and, of course, the Athenian owl), to explore the Philopappos monument.

Pnyx Theatre

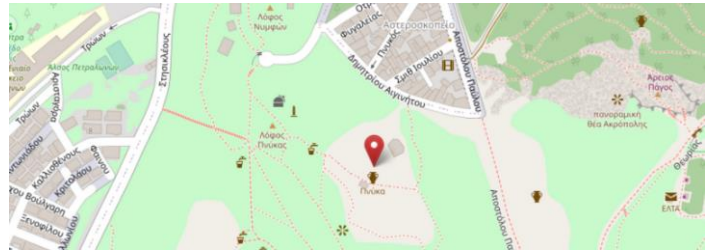


Located on a hill to the west of the Acropolis, the Pnyx was a place of assembly for the Athenian citizens first used in the early 5th century. A bowl-shaped, open-air theatre was carved out of the rock to create a place large enough for several thousand citizens to gather. This area was later modified with a stepped terrace to accommodate a raised platform for the speaker. During a third phase, the Pnyx was further enlarged with retaining walls, and a new speaker's bema. The function of the Pnyx later changed and political meetings were held in the Agora. Several stoas and a Sanctuary of Zeus Hysistos were later built on the hill. While dates for the Sanctuary are uncertain, it appears to have been constructed during the 1st century AD. The site continued to be used as a religious center during the Roman period.

Access to the Pnyx Theatre is unrestricted, and visitors can explore the area including the stairs to the speaker's platform and rock-cut seats, as well as stand on the bema for a view across the rocky outcrop over Athens. The foundations of the stoa and the Sanctuary of Zeus Hysistos are visible, as are a number of niches carved into the sanctuary wall which date to the Roman period.



Pnyx Theatre - By George E. Koronaios - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://shorturl.at/rvW12>



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Ancient Agora



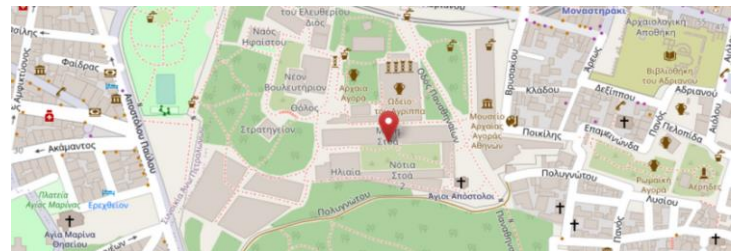
The Ancient Agora was established in the 5th century BC as a new center for commerce, religious cult, and political assembly in Athens. While Greece was considered a Roman province following the destruction of Corinth in 146 BC, Athens attempted to maintain independence until Sulla's siege in 86 BC. Caesar instigated the construction of a Roman Agora to the east of the ancient Athenian Agora. While this new center became the primary place for business and commerce, the buildings throughout the ancient Agora continued to be used, including the famous Stoa of Attalus. During the Roman period a number of new monuments and buildings were constructed, which show a focus on the Agora's use for cultural pursuits.

Additional stoas and speaking platforms were constructed as well as the Odeion of Agrippa (15 BC), the Library of Pantainos (AD 100), several temples dedicated to worship of the imperial family, a statue of Emperor Hadrian, and a basilica (2nd century AD). The Herulian raid in AD 267 saw extensive damage to much of the Ancient Agora. The late-Roman fortifications were built following this raid from architectural pieces scavenged from the destroyed buildings.

The Athenian Agora is open for visitors to explore the ancient ruins. While the Stoa of Attalus has been restored, many of the Roman-era buildings are fragmentary with only statues, partially standing columns, and the foundations or lower walls to show the original arrangement of the Agora. Of the Imperial-era temples, only scattered architectural elements and foundations remain. The torso portion of the statue of Hadrian is on display. The partially excavated ruins of the Library of Pantainos are visible to the south of the Stoa of Attalus, and show the foundations and lower walls. The later Roman defensive wall was built over the rear library rooms. Much of the late-Roman fortified wall remains with its interesting mix of marble blocks, statue bases, Ionic and Doric columns, and inscribed plaques. A museum is located in the Stoa of Attalos. While many of the displays focus on the earlier Classical or Hellenistic periods, there are also exhibitions of Roman-era artefacts and prominent citizens.



Ancient Agora of Athens - by DerHexer - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4033550>



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Temple of Hephaestus ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Located on a hill to the west of the Ancient Agora, inside the Agora excavation fence, the Temple of Hephaestus is the best preserved Doric temple in the world, its walls standing since it was built beginning before 450 BC but not finished until the 420s or after. The temple is built of Pentelic marble, with Parian marble. It measures just under 32 x 14 meters with thirteen columns on each long side and six columns on each end.

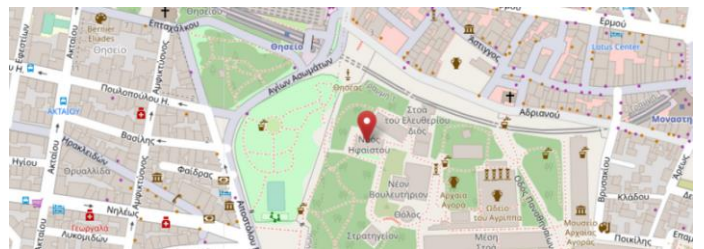
The interior has an additional order of Doric columns with a cella, pronaos (front vestibule) and an opisthodomos (rear porch). Decorative reliefs show the Labours of Hercules, and the deeds of the hero Theseus – for centuries, the building was called the Theseion as archaeologists interpreted the temple as being dedicated to this Athenian mythic hero. According to the Roman traveler Pausanias, the temple was dedicated to two gods: Hephaestus, the protector of metal workers, and Athena Ergane, protector of craft workers. Pausanias described statues to these gods that he saw during his visit to Athens in the 2nd century AD. Workshops were also located a short distance from the temple. From the 3rd century BC, a fully landscaped garden surrounded the temple.

The temple continued to be used during the Roman period. It was converted to a Christian church of St. George in the 7th century.

The inside of the building is not accessible, however visitors can see the temple from all four sides from the surrounding decorative garden. The original columns, supported entablature with triglyphs and metopes, the inner colonnade, cella, and decorative frieze panels showing Hercules and Theseus above the pronaos and opisthodomos are all visible.



Temple of Hephaestus - By Guillaume Piolle - Own work, CC BY 3.0, <https://shorturl.at/awAP7>



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Hadrian's Library

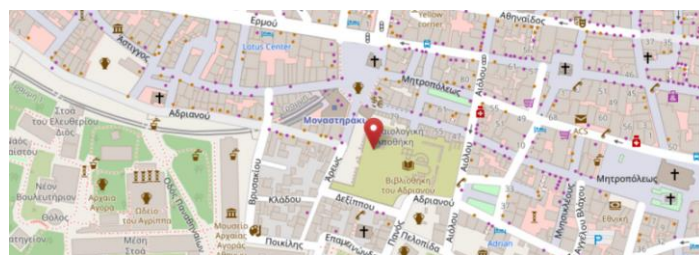


In AD 132, Emperor Hadrian constructed this center for academic study between the Agora and the Acropolis. In addition to Hadrian's Library, the area included rooms for teaching, a large portico where philosophical discussions were held, and beautiful courtyard garden area with a pool. The walled complex had a single entrance on the western end which was decorated with a row of Corinthian columns. Inside, the courtyard was surrounded by columns which Pausanias described as "a hundred pillars of Phrygian marble". Beyond this, on the eastern end, a two-story building contained a series of rooms that housed the book scrolls and were also used for reading rooms and study. The library complex was heavily damaged during the Herulian raid of AD 267. It was later repaired, and, in the 5th century AD, a tetraconch (religious building featuring four connected apses) was built in the courtyard.

Hadrian's Library stands within an archaeological area located near Monastiraki Square. The stepped propylon entrance is preserved along with a large section of the original west wall which formed the entrance to the library complex. A number of Corinthian columns remain standing along the wall. Past this entrance, the outline of the courtyard is visible, along with the foundations of the later tetraconch church. Remains of many architectural elements from the stoa which surrounded the courtyard remain on site. A stone inscription honouring Hadrian is also visible. At the rear of the complex the lower walls of the actual library and reading rooms can still be seen. Scaffolding supports the remains of the two-story rear wall.



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Athena Archegetis Gate ★ ★ ★ ★

Located on the western side of the Roman agora, the Gate of Athena Archegetis was built around 11 BC, funded in part through donations made by Julius Caesar and the Emperor Augustus. Originally, this monumental entranceway comprised of an architrave atop four large Doric order columns built on a solid marble base. All these architectural elements of the gate were carved from gleaming Pentelic marble. The name Archegetis refers to Athena in her guise as the Leader.

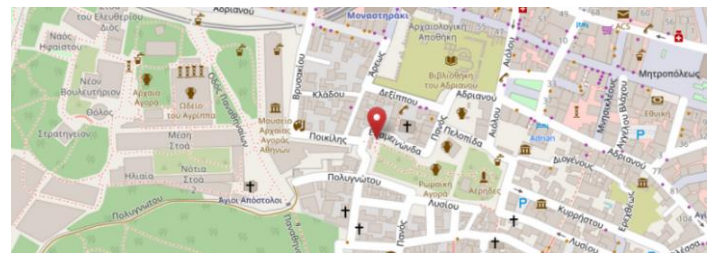
The dedicatory inscriptions makes clear the role of the Romans in dedicating this wonderful monument, a token of the city's relationship to the emperor of client to patron.

The inscription, recorded as IG II3 4 12 reads (in translation): 'The People of Athens from the donations offered by Gaius Julius Caesar the God and the Reverend Emperor son of God To Athena Archegetis, on behalf of the soldiers of Eukles from Marathon, who curated it on behalf of his father Herod and who was also an ambassador under the archon Nicias, son of Sarapion, from the demos of Athmonon) It was a monument dedicated by the Athenians to their patroness Athena Archegetis'.

Along with the Horologion of Andonikos Kyrrehestes, the Gate of Athena Archegetis remains the most impressive monument in the Roman Agora at Athens. Today, it still stands in a state of excellent preservation, with the architrave and columns prominent.



Athena Archegetis Gate - By George E. Koronaio - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=89807296>



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Roman Agora



Located to the around 100m east of the ancient Greek agora, the Roman agora at Athens should be understood as the overflow urban center of the ancient city. An array of Roman structures began to encroach on the original agora, often dedicated to members of the imperial family.

Notable amongst these was the so-called Odeon of Agrippa. Built by Marcus Agrippa, the right-hand man of the emperor Augustus, in around 15 BC. Ostensibly a gift to the people of Athens, an early instance of imperial benefaction, this auditorium for around 1,000 spectators, actually partially obstructed the old agora. This didn't seem to bother the locals however, who promptly awarded Agrippa a statue in the original agora.

Progressively, the new Roman agora absorbed the functions of the old Athenian urban center, a transition that was confirmed by the construction of Temple of Ares. Other notable structures here included most prominently the so-called Tower of the Winds (also known as the Horologion of Andonikos Kyrrehestes), an octagonal Pentelic marble clocktower, which features a combination of sundials, a wind vane, and a water clock, leading to its consideration as the world's first meteorological station. The agora is reached through the monumental Gate of Athena Archegetis.

Although the Roman agora has not been fully excavated, it still represents yet another wonderful conglomeration of ancient remains to explore in the heart of Athens. The overall shape and scale of the ancient urban center is attested by the fragmentary remains of columns and foundations which are still visible. The most impressive monuments here remain the Horologion and the Gateway.



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Tower of the Winds ★ ★ ★ ★

Built in the Roman Agora during the 2nd century BC, the Tower of the Winds was also known as the Clock of Andronicus Cyrrhestes. Built using Pentelic marble, the tower is octagonal in shape and stands at 13.5 meters high on a stepped platform. The ancient Romans believed that winds blowing from different directions held special properties and could either bring disease or be restorative to the spirit. Vitruvius (On Architecture 1.6.4-7) describes the nature of the eight winds and the usefulness of Andronicus's clock tower. Each of the eight sides of the Tower of the Winds are carved in relief depicting the various wind deities facing the direction from which their wind blows – Boreas (N), Kaikias (NE), Eurus (E), Apeliotes (SE), Notus (S), Lips (SW), Zephyrus (W), and Skiron (NW). The top of the tower originally featured a weather vane in the shape of a Triton whose rod would point towards the picture identifying the nature of the prevailing wind. Nine sundials were also originally present around the outer walls. Inside, the tower contained a water clock which ran on water from the Acropolis spring.

The Tower of the Winds has stood virtually intact since its initial construction. It was beautifully restored in 2016, and visitors to the Roman Agora can see both inside and the external carved reliefs showing each personification of the wind. Of the internal water clock, only the channel holes on the floor which lead to the reservoir can be seen.



Tower of the Winds - By Georg Zumstrull - Own work, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://shorturl.at/bpLT6>



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Arch of Hadrian



The Arch of Hadrian was constructed by the Athenians in AD 131 to honour the Emperor. Its design somewhat resembles a small Roman triumphal arch. Hadrian's Arch has an overall measurement of 18m high by 13.5m wide and 2.3m deep, and is fully symmetrical. The monument is made entirely of Pentelic marble. The single arched passageway on the lower level is decorated with Corinthian capitals and an Ionic architrave at each end. The upper level features four columns which create three rectangular openings and support the entablature. This is capped with a triangular pediment resembling an aedicula (Roman shrine). The upper openings may have originally contained statues. The arch was located along an ancient road that ran from the Acropolis and Ancient Agora to the new Roman section of the city and the Olympieion. There are two inscriptions on the arch – the inscription facing the ancient Acropolis reads, "This is Athens, the ancient city of Theseus", while the inscription facing Hadrian's new city reads, "This is the city of Hadrian and not of Theseus".

The Arch of Hadrian is surprisingly well preserved. It is located today at the end of Lysicrates street near the archaeological site of the Temple of Olympian Zeus. While the columns which decorated the lower level are missing, the majestic arch still stands at full height. The inscriptions on the architraves are also visible.



Arch of Hadrian - By Palickap - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Athens,_Arch_of_Hadrian_01.JPG



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Temple of Olympian Zeus ★ ★ ★

The site on which the Olympeion was built was used during prehistoric times as a place of worship of the chthonic deities and mythological Athenian heroes. The tyrant Peisistratus began construction of a monumental temple to Olympian Zeus, the king of the gods, in the 6th century. The temple remained unfinished after his son, Hippias, was overthrown. For over 300 years the temple was deliberately left unfinished. In 174 BC, Antiochus IV Epiphanes contracted the Roman architect Cossutius to redesign and complete the temple. The new layout used 104 Corinthian columns arranged in multiple rows. When Antiochus died in 164 BC, work was still incomplete. When Sulla conquered Athens in 86 BC, he removed columns from the temple for use on the Capitoline Hill in Rome.

The Emperor Hadrian sponsored renewed work on the temple, which dominated the new quarter of Athens marked by Hadrian's Arch. The temple was completed around AD 124, with an enormous ivory and gold statue of Olympian Zeus as the centerpiece. The precinct of Olympian Zeus served as the focal point for a Panhellenic organization of Greek cities, with Hadrian Olympios as its sponsor. Pausanias described the complex as adorned with statues of Greece's imperial benefactor. In the 3rd century AD, the temple was included within the so-called Valerian Wall. The temple was damaged during the Herulian raid of AD 267.

The temple today is within an archaeological site that incorporates the Olympeion and a cluster of sanctuaries along the Ilissos river. The foundations and stepped platform of the enormous temple are visible and measure approximately 100 x 40 meters. Fifteen of the 17-metre high Corinthian columns remain standing today. A fallen column and additional architectural elements lay in ruins around the temple.



Temple of Olympian Zeus - By A.Savin - Own work, CC BY-SA-3.0,2.5,2.0,1.0, <https://shorturl.at/ksW36>



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Lyceum

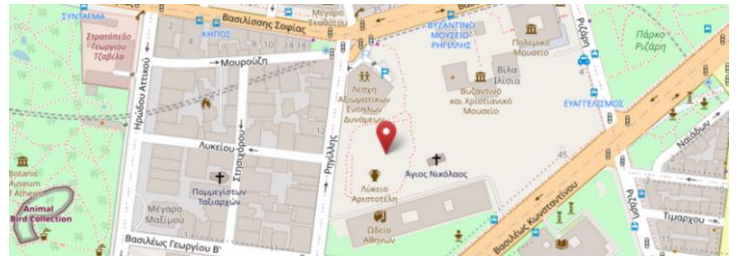


Aristotle's Lyceum was founded in the 4th century BC as a Peripatetic School teaching philosophy, rhetoric, and mathematics. The school functioned under a number of teachers until the 1st century BC when it was destroyed by the Roman general, Sulla. The school was rebuilt during the Roman period and continued to be used as a school and gymnasium. In the 1st century AD, the original baths were remodeled with a symmetrical design incorporating the courtyard and porticos. The school closed following the Herulian raid in AD 267 and the site appears to have been abandoned entirely by the 4th century AD.

The site of Aristotle's Lyceum was rediscovered in 1996 in a modern park during construction work. Today, it is an open site covering some 11,500 square meters with parklands and the exposed foundations of the ancient school and gymnasium. Walkways, interpretive signage, and protective canopies have been erected to allow visitors to explore the site.



Lyceum (Classical) - By Ad Meskens - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Athens_Aristotle%27s_Lyceum.jpg



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Aqueduct



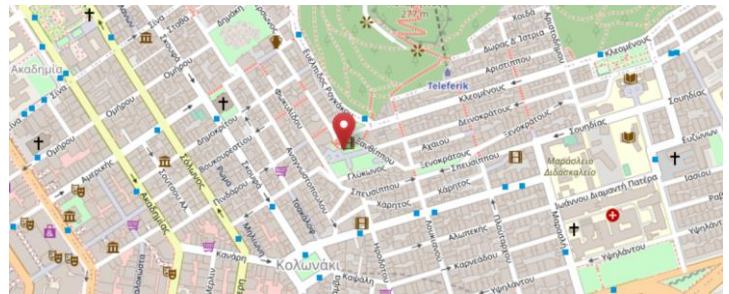
Begun around AD 125, the Hadrianic aqueduct was completed during the reign of Hadrian's successor, Antoninus Pius. The aqueduct is gravity-fed, running through 20 kilometers of tunnels cut in the rock, beginning at the Kithara spring on the slopes of Mount Parnes/Parnitha. The aqueduct was supplemented by branches flowing from other springs. It ended in a large stone reservoir, capable of holding an estimated 450 cubic m of water, on the lower slope of Lykabettos hill in Athens. From there, it fed a network of ceramic conduits.

Though the Hadrianic aqueduct is visible only as inconspicuous service wells, it remains an impressive example of Roman municipal engineering, supplying water to parts of Athens well into the 20th century. Subterranean channels have been excavated all over the city, with notable sites found in both the Athenian agora (the canalized Eridanos river and the Great Drain), and at the modern Olympic village.

Of the grand façade of the ancient reservoir, some steps and column bases remain in Dexameni ("reservoir") Square. Part of the inscribed lintel can be seen in the National Garden in Athens. The dedicatory inscription (CIL 3.549) reads: 'The emperor Caesar Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antonius Augustus Pius, holding consular power for the third time, holding tribunician power for the second time, father of the state, completed and dedicated the aqueduct which had been begun by his father the divine Hadrian in New Athens'.



Section of the Hadrianic aqueduct near the Ancient Agora - By Carole Raddato, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=37881732>



Location of the Dexameni Square and Cistern. © OpenStreetMap contributors. <https://www.openstreetmap.org>

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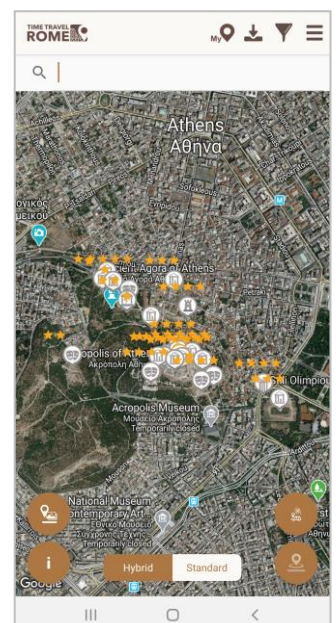
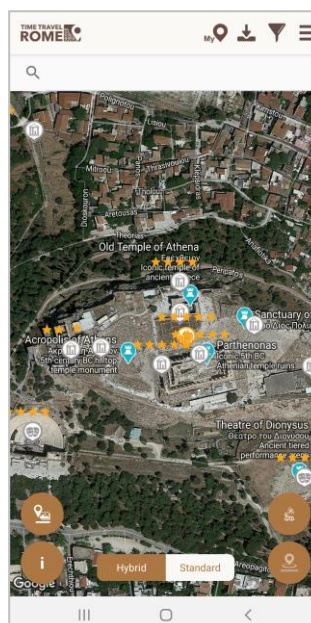
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