

# DELPHI

FOKIDA



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



World Heritage  
Convention



The sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi extends over a series of terraces in the foothills of Mount Parnassos, between two enormous rocks, called the Phaidriades. For many centuries this was the religious and spiritual centre of the ancient Greek world. According to tradition, Delphi was the geographical centre of the world, the *omphalos* (navel), the meeting point of two eagles dispatched by Zeus from the ends of the universe to find the centre of the world.

The first traces of inhabitation in the region of Delphi go back to Mycenaean times (14th-11th c. BC). At this period, the main deity worshipped at the small settlement was Ge (Earth). In the following period (11th-9th c. BC) the cult of Apollo became established at Delphi, when the god installed himself there, having first killed the Python, the snake that guarded the oracle of Ge. During the 8th and 7th c. BC, the sanctuary of Delphi took shape. The first stone temples were built towards the end of the 7th c. BC, one dedicated to Apollo and the other to Athena.

At the beginning of the 6th c. BC Delphi became a member of the Amphiktyony – a union of city-states with common political aims –, which protected the sanctuary from the designs of conquerors. With the passage of time, the Delphic Amphiktyony acquired the major responsibility for the administration of the sanctuary of Apollo, and in 582 BC it reorganised the Pythian games, which were held every four years thereafter in honour of Apollo, to commemorate his victory over the Python.

The period from the 6th to the 4th c. BC was a flourishing one for the sanctuary at Delphi, which was adorned with buildings and a large number of votives dedicated to Apollo by the Greek cit-



ies and private individuals. Worshippers and *theopropoi* (public messengers sent to inquire of an oracle) flocked from all over the ancient world to seek the advice of the god and an oracle whenever they were about to take a serious decision or initiative. They purified themselves in the Kastalia spring, paid a set tribute, the *pelanos*, and sacrificed an animal on the altar of Apollo. The god's oracles were uttered by the Pythia, the priestess of the shrine, and were interpreted by the priests of Apollo. The formal procedure for the functioning of the oracle acquired its final form in the 6th c. BC and remained unchanged until the reign of Hadrian (2nd c. AD).

The main entrance to the sanctuary was at the south-east corner of the built enclosure wall encircling it. From this point visitors followed the Sacred Way leading to the temple of Apollo, which was at the centre of the sanctuary. Three building phases can be discerned in the remains visible at the present day; the latest dates from between 373 and 330 BC. To the left and right of the Sacred Way, the Greek cities erected their dedications: statues, multfigurial sculptural groups, small buildings in the form of temples (treasuries) in which to keep their dedications, and so on.

Dramatic and lyric contests were held in the sanctuary theatre, which dates from the 4th c. BC, and the stadium was home not only to the athletic games, but also to musical events.

To the south-east of the sanctuary of Apollo is the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia. The most important buildings in it are the Athena's two temples, dating from the 5th and 4th c. BC and the Tholos, which was built about 380 BC.





## THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

The Delphi Museum houses what has survived of the vast number of dedications that adorned the panhellenic Delphic sanctuary: bronze vessels, figurines, statues, architectural sculptures from the temples and treasuries, and minor artworks made of precious materials (gold, silver and ivory).

### Beginning of the Sanctuary and Early Dedications

Mycenaean figurines and bronze dedications of the Geometric and Archaic periods: tripods, human and animal figurines, either from the east or created under eastern influence (7th c. BC), jewelry, weapons. A Daedalic kouros (second half of the 7th c. BC).

### Early Archaic Period (Large-Scale Sculpture – the First Treasuries)

Two Archaic kouroi (Kleobis and Biton, about 580 BC), metopes from the treasury of the Siphnyonians (560 BC), terracotta decoration from the roofs of Archaic treasuries.

### Storage Pits in the Sacred Way

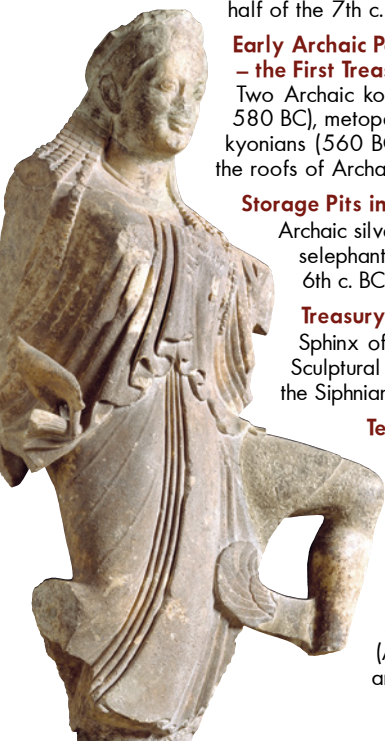
Archaic silver bull, fragments of three chryselephantine statues, ivory plaques (7th–6th c. BC).

### Treasury of the Siphnians

Sphinx of the Naxians (about 560 BC). Sculptural decoration from the treasury of the Siphnians (525 BC). Kouroi and Korai.

### Temple of Apollo

Figures from the pedimental compositions of the Archaic temple built by the Alkmeonidai (510 BC, arrival of Apollo at Delphi on the east pediment and a Gigantomachy on the west), and of the 4th century BC temple (Apollo, seated on the tripod, and Muses on the east pedi-





ment, and Dionysos kitharodos between Thyiades (Mainads) on the west); Archaic akroterion in the form of a winged Nike, Archaic and Classical simas.

### Treasury of the Athenians

Metopes from the building, depicting the labours of Theseus and Herakles (about 490 BC). Sculptures from the east pediment, metopes and akroteria, and orthostats from the building inscribed with the musical notation for two hymns to Apollo (128 BC). White kylix with a representation of Apollo pouring a libation (about 480 BC).

### Dedications of the 5th c. BC

Sculptures from buildings in the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia.

Bronze statuettes (incense-burner support in the form of a woman wearing a peplos, flute-player, group of two athletes, etc.) and remains of large-scale bronze sculpture. Terracotta decoration

of buildings (temple of Athena Pronaia, hall of the Knidians).

### Tholos

Architectural members and fragments of the sculptural decoration from the monument (380 BC).

### Late Classical and Hellenistic Dedications (4th-2nd c. BC)

Group of statues depicting eminent members of the family of the Thessalian hieromnemon Daochos (336-332 BC). Column with the dancing girls and the *omphalos* (about 330 BC). Family dedication with statues of Dionysus and figures of a male, female and child (about 300 BC). Statue of seated Apollo (second half of the 4th c. BC). Sleeping Eros, two figures of children.

### Sculptures of the Roman Period (2nd c. BC-2nd c. AD)

Round altar from the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia (second half of the 2nd c. BC). Frieze of the stele of Aemilius Paulus with scenes of the battle between the Macedonians and Romans at Pydna (168 BC). Frieze from the proscenium of the theatre, depicting the



labours of Herakles (1st c. AD). Cult statue of Antinoos (AD 130-138). Portrait thought to be of the Roman general Flamininus (early 2nd c. BC).

### **Charioteer**

Bronze statue of the Charioteer, from the dedication by Polykallos, the tyrant of Gela of Sicily, for his victory in the Pythian games (478 or 474 BC). Parts of the horses and chariot, and the base of the group with the votive inscription.

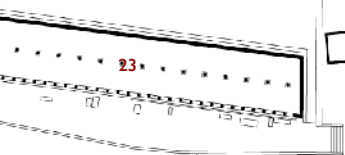
### **End of the Sanctuary**

Hermaic stele in honour of Plutarch, philosopher and priest at Delphi (AD 50-125). Two Roman portraits (3rd, 4th c. AD). Inscription of the Roman proconsul Gallion (AD 52).

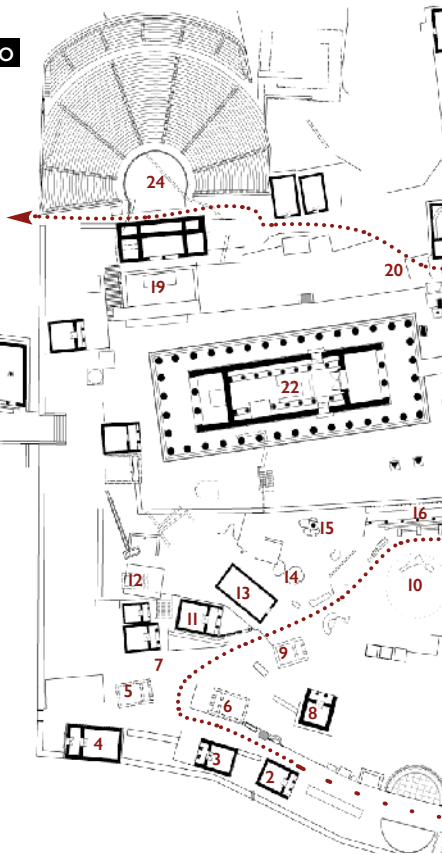


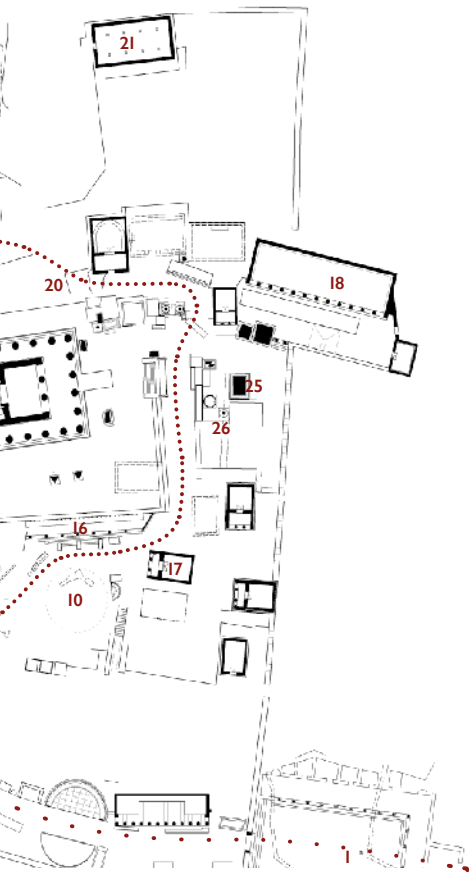
## I. THE SANCTUARY OF APOLLO

1. The Roman agora
2. The treasure of the Sikyonians
3. The treasure of the Siphnians
4. The treasure of the Thebans
5. The treasure of the Boeotians
6. The treasure of the Megarians
7. Navel stone (*omphalos*)
8. Treasure (unknown)
9. The treasure of the Knidians



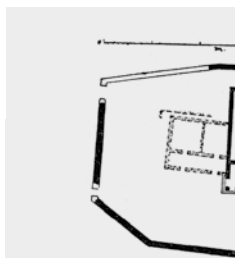
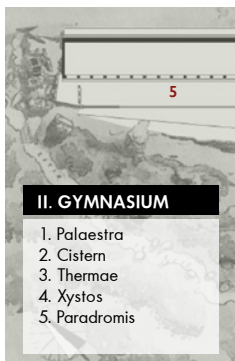
10. The "Halos"
11. The treasure of the Athenians
12. The Asclepieion
13. The Bouleuterion
14. The rock of the Sibylle
15. The Sphinx of the Naxians
16. The stoa of the Athenians
17. The treasure of the Corinthians
18. The stoa of Attalos 1st
19. The offering of Krateros
20. Cassotis
21. The hall of the Knidians
22. The temple of Apollo
23. The great stoa of the Aitolians
24. The theatre
25. Chariot of the Rhodians
26. Tripod of Plataea





ENTRANCE

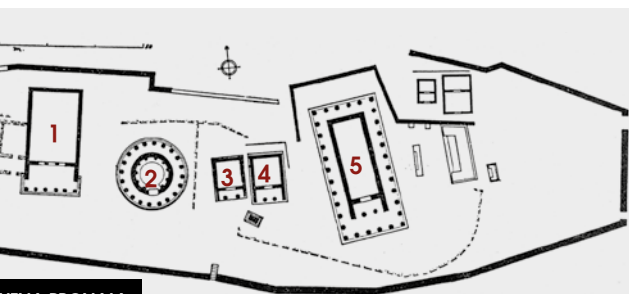
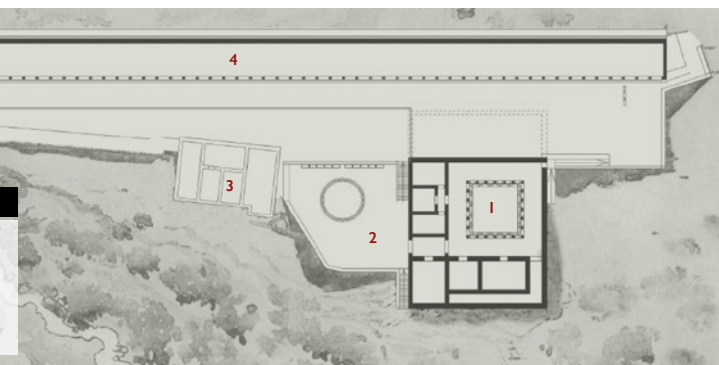
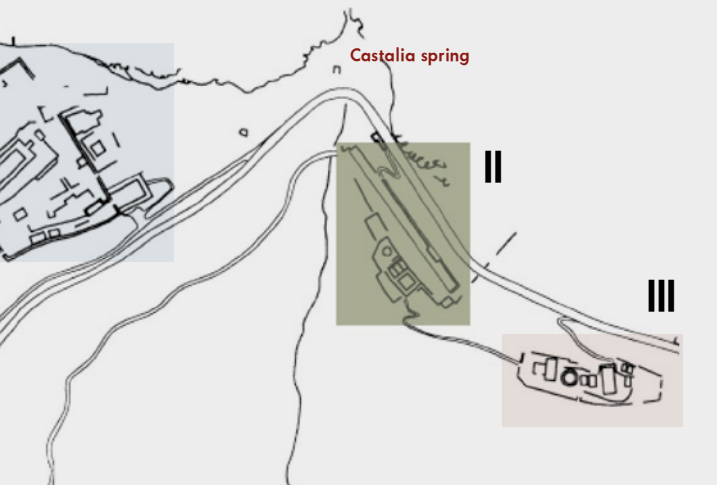
TICKETS



### III. TEMENOS OF ATHENS

1. The latest temple of Athena
2. Tholos
3. The Ionian treasure of Miletus





## ATHENA PRONAIA

Athena

of Massalioians

4. Doric treasure

5. The Archaic temple of Athena



## DELPHI

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