Monemvasia
in Peloponnese

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About Monemvasia

Monemvasia is on a small peninsula off the Peloponnesian east coast. It belongs to the prefecture of Laconia, and it is actually a medieval fortress with a town next to it.

The attraction of this location lies on its interesting ruins, which include not only this defensive structure, but also the many Byzantine churches of the adjacent town. There is a total of 40 churches, scattered along the narrow streets.

Regarding the name Monemvasia, in Greek the word "mone" means "single", while "embassia" means "entrance". However, it is also known as Malvasia, the Gibraltar of the East, and The Rock. This last one is due to the features of its location, as it is built on a rock of 300 m height and 1.8 km long, occupying a steep, rocky islet connected to the coast of Laconia by a low bridge.

Apart from the beauty of the city, the rock itself is also very picturesque, with colours ranging between grey and pink tones. On the south-eastern side of this rock, the village is established, overlooking Palaia Monemvasia bay.

Right in the edge of the bay, next to the castle’s entrance, there is a cemetery where the grave of Giannis Ritsos, a famous Greek poet, lies. Northwest, there is a small hamlet with no more than 10 houses, while on the north, the mentioned fortress is found. The northwest, as well as the top, are covered by a field of grass. Getting to the top can be an interesting stroll in the zig-zagging pathway.

In addition, this is where it lays the plateau, and apart from the ruins of the fortified town, it is also the residence of the Venetian Governor, and there are ancient walls, guardhouses, towers, and large water cistems. Regarding the eastern tip of the rock, this is where the church of Agia Sofia is found.

This octagonal 12th century church is the main monument of Monemvasia, and its charm and magnificence remain untouched.

Apart from the fortress, there is an area called "Nea Monemvasia". It is located at a distance of about 1 km away from the fortress-town, providing all the necessary facilities of a modern tourist town, which makes it a very popular destination among tourists.
**Best Villages in Monemvasia**

**Kastro Monemvasias**

**Location:** On the south eastern side of Peloponnese

**Description:** Kastro (or Palia Monemvasia) is actually the Old Town, built entirely inside a huge rock on the sea. A narrow pathway connects the rock with the mainland.

**Sightseeing:** Archaeological Museum, Church of Agia Sofia, Church of Elkomenos Christos, Church of Panagia Chryssafitissa

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**Best Sightseeing in Monemvasia**

**Church of Elkomenos Christos**

**Location:** Kastro Monemvasias

This nice church is dedicated to "Christ in Pain". It is located in the Castle of Monemvasia and it was built in the 13th century by Byzantine Emperor Andronicus.

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**Church of Agia Sofia**

**Location:** Kastro Monemvasias

The Byzantine church of Agia Sofia is located on the edge of a cliff and gives gorgeous view to the sea. It was built in the 12th century by Emperor Andronicus. When Monemvasia was occupied by the Venetians, it became a catholic cathedral and during the Turkish occupation, when their walls were painted with lime, it was used as a mosque.

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**Credits**

Greeka.com would like to thank the following members for their valuable contribution, as some of the photos included in this guide belong to them.

MSPANAKIS, Migeli, angeliki, gljansen, marijke, milos58, petarbg, popeye, scaletta, sfgirl09, twilight, zwitserw

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