

**Phaistos** is located 62 km south of Iraklion and, administratively, is part of the **Municipality of Kamilari**

. It was the second biggest city of the

**Minoan Crete**

and it is built on a hill, at an altitude of 100 m from sea level, in the fertile

**valley of Messara**

.

The valley is surrounded by mountain ranges and in the south extends the Libyan Sea.

The exact location of **Phaistos** was first determined in the middle of the 19th century by the British admiral Spratt, while the archaeological investigation of the palace started in 1884 by the Italians F. Halbherr and A. Taramelli. After the declaration of the independent Cretan State in 1898, excavations were carried out by F. Halbherr and L. Pernier in 1900-1904 and later, in 1950-1971, by Doro Levi, under the auspices of the Italian Archaeological School at Athens.

```
{AG thumbWidth="160" thumbHeight="100" thumbAutoSize="none" arrange="priority"
background-color="ffffff" foregroundColor="808080" highlightColor="14b5ff" frame_width="620"
frame_height="300" newImageTag="1" newImageTag_days="7" paginUse="0"
paginImagesPerGallery="10" albumUse="0" showSignature="0" plainTextCaptions="0"
template="classic" popupEngine="slimbox"}festos{/AG}
```

Although many inscriptions were found by the archaeologists, they are all **in Linear A code which is still undeciphered**

, and all we know about the site, even its name are based to the ancient writers and findings from

**Knossos**

.

According to mythology, **Phaistos** was the seat of king **Radamanthis**, brother of king **Minos**. It was also the city that gave birth to the great wise man and soothsayer

**Epimenidis**

, one of the seven wise men of the ancient world.

Excavations by archaeologists have unearthed ruins of the Neolithic times (3.000 B.C.).

During the **Minoan times**, **Phaistos** was a very important city-state. Its dominion, at its peak, stretched from Lithinon to Psychion and included the Paximadia islands. The city participated to the Trojan war and later became one of the most important cities-states of the Dorian period.

**Phaistos** continued to flourish during Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic times. It was destroyed by the Gortynians during the 3rd century B.C. In spite of that, **Phaistos** continued to exist during the Roman period.