

**Knossos**, the famous **Minoan Palace** lies 5 kilometres southeast of **Heraklion**, in the valley of the river Kairatos. The river rises in

**Archanes**

, runs through Knossos and reaches the sea at Katsabas, the Minoan harbour of

**Knossos**

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In Minoan times the river flowed all year round and the surrounding hills were covered in oak and cypress trees, where today we see vines and olives. The pine trees inside the archaeological site were planted by **Evans**.

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The first settlement in the **Knossos** area was established circa 7000 BC, during the **Neolithic Period**

The economic, social and political development of the settlement led to the construction of the majestic

**Palace of Knossos**

towards the end of the second millennium BC.

**Knossos** was the seat of the legendary **King Minos** and the main centre of power in Crete.

This first Palace was destroyed circa 1700 BC. It was rebuilt and destroyed again by fire, this time definitively, in 1350 BC. The environs of the Palace were transformed into a sacred grove of the goddess Rhea, but never inhabited again.

The **Palace of Knossos** is the monumental symbol of **Minoan civilisation**, due to its

construction, use of luxury materials, architectural plan, advanced building techniques and impressive size.