

Derinkuyu – Large and Impressive

Of the many underground cities in the extensive area of Cappadocia in Turkey, the Derinkuyu underground city has stood out as the biggest and deepest with its massive floors and depth which exceeds 70 meters. According to many visitors it is one of the wonders of the ancient Cappadocia.



Derinkuyu, the largest excavated underground city in Turkey, is one of the few underground complexes which are open to public, although only about half of the city is accessible to tourists. Other cities are considered not safe for visitors as there is danger that the structures may collapse.

What sets the multi-level city of Derinkuyu aside from other underground cities in the region is that as one of the oldest and largest underground structures there, Derinkuyu has massive depths of up to 70 meters and 8 floors with each floor having its own opening and stone door. It was probably built in the 8th–7th centuries BC.

The main reason of building this impressive city under the ground was to use it as a means of protection for Christians who suffered under persecution. The city is so huge that it is estimated that it can hold up to forty thousand people with their livestock and belongings included!

Apart from that the Derinkuyu city was built with its own chapel with social amenities such as toilets inside. Each wall was secured by massive stone doors and what's more astonishing are the travel tunnels which the Christians built to connect the city with its neighboring underground cities such as Kaymaklı. The travel tunnels are several miles long; some even reach up to 50 miles.



The residents also built amazing storage rooms inside, stables, cellars and wine and oil presses. The city has eight floors and on the second floor there is a spacious room which historians argue was used as a religious school of some sort. Private studies were normally conducted in the other rooms adjacent to this one. This shows that no matter the tension at that time, the Christians still held their faith dear.

The chapel is located aside from other rooms and a vertical staircase leads to this magnificent church. There are holes which were used as windows to let in some fresh air and light during the service. They were a sort of air conditioning for the chapel. Every floor was perfectly ventilated with the help of 52 air shafts.

Its doors were made of huge stones and could only be opened from the inside but could be closed from both sides. This was to ensure that any enemy from outside could not have any access to the inside.



The store rooms provided enough storage of food for the people and also the city had internal wells which provided water to the population. You will also note that there are escape routes on each floor showing the residents were prepared for any raid.

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