

LEUKASPIS - REMAINS OF AN ANCIENT CITY OPENED FOR TOURISTS



Two thousand years ago Marina was an important city. Nowadays, the Egyptian government supports archeological projects taking place there to make the site more appealing for tourists. The excavations of the ancient city will be opened to public.

Marina is a place where rich Egyptians have their holiday houses on beaches and where the elite relax. **It used to be a prosperous Greek - Roman city 2000 years ago, which was called Leukaspis or Antiphrae back in the ancient times.** The ancient city was almost destroyed by a tsunami in the 4th century. Afterwards, it remained hidden for centuries near the famous battleground of the new era, El-Alamein. Recently, it has almost vanished for good under a modern resort. At present, the authorities want to open the tombs and other excavations to public.

According to Ceskenoviny.cz, the sea was the source of wealth for the ancient city, which used to be a stop on the trade route between Libya and Egypt. However, it was also the sea that later caused its downfall. **Leukaspis was heavily damaged by earthquake and following tsunami in 365 A.D.** The economic situation was deteriorating and the Roman Empire was also losing its power. Both of these factors contributed to the fact that the city almost disappeared. A new development in 1990s destroyed the ancient port and whatever was hidden there was blown out by dynamite.

The Egyptian government, however, has had a more proactive approach towards the preservation of relics from past in recent years. Now **they want to transform ancient Marina into an open air museum for tourists.** The idea is to attract foreign tourists who usually spend their winter holiday in Tunisia. Similar project is in progress not far from here, only 50 km away at the temple of Osiris where a Dominican archaeological team is searching for the burial place of Anthony and Cleopatra.

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