

Drawing 30: Kaymakli Underground City Plan (adopted from L. Giovannini)



Visiting Hours

April 1 - October 31
 Opening Time: 08:00
 Closing Time: 19:00
 Ticket Office Closing Time: 18:15

October 31 - April 1
 Opening Time: 08:00
 Closing Time: 17:00
 Ticket Office Closing Time: 16:15

Open everyday.

Address: Eşref Ayhan Cad. Cami Kebir Mah. Kaymaklı/Neveşehir

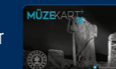
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KAYMAKLI UNDERGROUND CITY



Cappadocia, where nature and history meet, is almost the evil eye bead of Anatolia with its unique images and fairy-tale beauty. The visitors to this region, which astonishes from the moment you step in with its surprising nature and the image of natural shapes called Fairy Chimneys reminding the scenes from ancient times, can be considered the luckiest people of the world. Fairy Chimneys appear different during the day and at night, so much so that it is easy to immerse yourself in the rhythm of time while dancing with the light and the night.

Kaymaklı Underground City, which was called "Eneğüp" in ancient times, is one of the settlements typical to this region. This Underground City, 19 km from Nevşehir, has been open to visitors since 1964. The main detail that makes this region interesting is that the underground cities are connected to all the houses in the region by secret passages. This detail, which adds an air of mystery to Kaymaklı Underground City, brings the city into prominence in terms of having different cultural characteristics. The settlement area, which was built by carving into tuff rocks, turns into a city in the Roman and Byzantine periods. The earliest known history of Kaymaklı, which dates back to 3000 BCE, is a unique cultural heritage that the Hittites left to this geography by building 8 floors. The Underground City is named after the dry cream unique to the region. The flavor of Misli and Budovası steppes makes this cream unique to the region.

The underground cities, whose numbers are around 150-200 in the Cappadocia region, were built to temporarily shelter the people of the region who were exposed to various attacks in case of danger, and were built by digging soft tuff rocks, especially on the valley and plateau slopes, so that their entrances would not be noticed from the outside. Over time, these settlements were expanded by making corridors, rooms and cellars, and enormous underground cities emerged. Another remarkable issue here is the different layers of the underground cities, various carving styles of these layers and the fact that the tools and accessories found here are not similar shows that they were used by different tribes in different periods.

The answers to the first two questions that come to mind about the underground city settlements indicate that the architectural understanding here is not ordinary. That is, the chimneys built for ventilation and communication were accepted as the center and the structures were shaped around these chimneys, and the wells used to meet the water need were built in a way that they would not be connected to the earth despite the risk of poisoning. In addition, the holes located in different points of the rooms are designed both for communication and for taking defensive measures quickly in an unusual situation. It is known that the ground floors were used as barns because it was difficult to bring the animals down, and tandoors were built to bake bread.

Kaymaklı Underground City is slightly different from other underground cities with its narrow and sloping passages. In addition, 4 floors were unearthed today and the first floor was used as a barn. Another important settlement belonging to this place is the church that we come across after a passage closed with sliding stone and the cemetery where the people who served here are thought to be buried. On the third floor of the underground city, there are kitchens, food warehouses, rooms and wineries where grapes are processed and coppersmithing workshops. The jars and supply warehouses on the fourth floor show that this city is in a relatively better condition economically. Although only 4 floors have been uncovered yet, the diversity of the ruins here shows that many people once lived as the inhabitants of this city.

A philosopher says, "People underground have attained the highest knowledge". While visiting the Kaymaklı Underground City, we see once again how accurate this definition is the legend of the "City of Angels" passed down by the people of the region from generation to generation enough to explain who built this mysterious underground city so perfectly? It is rumored that while the angels who built this underground city were living happily here, they were attacked by uninvited evil guests and they found a way out by hiding in these underground shelters.

Regardless of its story, this extraordinary underground city, which makes one say that there is a completely different country underground in the Cappadocia region, will continue to "whisper its secret to the darkness" for centuries as a living space designed in a way that more than 30 thousand people can live together with its barns, churches, cellars, food warehouses, ventilation shafts, communication areas, rooms, corridors and interconnected "tunnels".

