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**Discover Crete's Hidden Treasures**

**By Rod Ritchie**

Many people take a holiday on the Greek island of Crete and enjoy the fantastic beaches, charming villages and endless sunshine. But Crete offers the visitor much more than this.

As if welcoming people, charming mountain villages, rocky bays, sandy beaches and one of Europe's best climates were not enough reasons to visit Crete, it is also a historian's and an archaeologist's paradise. Its fascinating archaeological ruins and world-class museums are surely a bonus. And in the far northwest, east and south of the island, away from the tourist trail, you can expect to see some really excellent smaller Minoan sites that are hardly visited.

But before heading for the archaeological ruins, check out the stunning collection of the Iraklion Archaeological Museum in Heraklion, the capital of the island. Home to the world's finest collection of Minoan art and culture in the world, the twenty rooms and galleries provide the perfect introduction to 5,000 years of island history from the Neolithic to the Graeco-Roman era.

The famous Minoan Palace of Knossos, just south of Iraklion, was one of Europe's finest buildings during Bronze Age (2800–1100 BC) with around 1,400 rooms. Staircases with shallow alabaster steps lead to upper or lower floors and lovely frescoes, with scenes from everyday life, decorate the Palace walls. The King's and the Queen's apartments feature blue dolphins, while the throne room contains the oldest throne in Europe, the alabaster throne of King Minos.

If you are feeling more adventurous head for remote Central Crete's prehistoric site of Gortys, once the largest city in Crete. Besides being the first city to accept Christianity, and with a history as far back as the Minoan period, Gortys was occupied by the Romans in 68 BC and destroyed by the Arabs 900 years later. This layer on layer of civilization brings history to life as you discover an ancient past that helps explain the present.

The great thing about Crete, the largest of the Greek islands, is that it's big enough to get away to places that are not teeming with visitors all the time. As well as resorts and nightlife you can also enjoy simple pleasures such as sipping a coffee at a roadside café in a mountain village. But, whatever you do, be sure to soak up the island's history through the archaeological remains of the past civilizations.

And remember, entrance to all archaeological sites, museums, archaeological collections and monuments is free on Sundays and public holidays between 1 November and 31 March.

Rod Ritchie, a travel writer and editor, writes for many publishers including AA Publishing and Fodors. Visit Sunisle Holidays

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## **The Hidden Word**

**By Joyce C. Lock**

### **The Hidden Word by Joyce C. Lock**

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

When righteous men do rejoice, there is great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.

Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.

Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time,

even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

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Joyce C. Lock is a published author, poet, and columnist. In addition, she founded and maintains the e-mail ministries "Heavenly Inspirations" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HeavenlyInspirations/> and "Share a Smile" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/smilesaring/>. Joyce's writings encourage us in our relationship with God and each other.



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