

Kids & Schools Tools

The Acropolis of Athens, Athens, Greece

The Acropolis is one of the 21 finalist candidates in the campaign to choose the New 7 Wonders of the World. The winners of this unique vote will be announced on July 7, 2007 – 07.07.07 and will become part of history. They will be recognized as monuments that have truly global meaning—they are part of our common cultural heritage. We can all be proud of the 21 finalists, since each of them is a unique monument that belongs to its particular culture and country in a very special way.

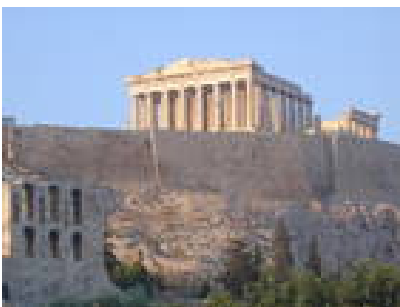
This large *acropolis* (which means “high city” in Greek) was built on top of what is known as the “Sacred Rock” of Athens, and it was supposed to radiate power and protection for its citizens. It was also known, in ancient times, as *Cecropia* in honor of the legendary serpent-man, Kekrops or Cecrops, the first Athenian king. A large temple dedicated to Athena Polias (Protectress of the City) was probably built here by the mid-6th century B.C. This Doric limestone building was referred to as the “Bluebeard” temple, named after the three-bodied man-serpent sculpture that was part of it, whose beards were painted dark blue. Whether this temple replaced an older one or simply was built where there had been a sacred altar is not known. Later this century (6th century B.C.), yet another temple was built, usually called the *Archaio Naos* (Old Temple).

Much of the original Acropolis, including the Older Parthenon, was destroyed by the invading Persians in 480 B.C. Once the Persian Wars were over, the Athenians fixed the sacred place up, first ceremonially burying objects of worship and art that could not be used any more—this group of articles is the richest archaeological treasure found on the Acropolis, having been protected from further destruction through the ages by the rebuilding of the temples on top of it.

Most of the major temples were rebuilt under the leadership of Pericles during what is called the Golden Age of Athens (460–430 BC). Phidias, a great Athenian sculptor, and two famous architects, Ictinus and Callicrates, were mostly responsible for the reconstruction of the great monument. During the 5th century B.C., the Acropolis gained its final shape. After an interruption caused by the Peloponnesian War, the temple was finished during the time of Nicias' peace, between 421 and 415 B.C.

The temples of the Acropolis have become some of most famous architectural landmarks of ancient and modern history. Today, the Parthenon in particular is an international symbol of Greek civilization. A graphic illustration of the temple also appears in the UNESCO logo, representing culture and education.

The Acropolis is a great symbol of Civilization & Democracy!



If you want to find out more about the exciting campaign to name the New 7 Wonders of the World, please go to the New7Wonders website at www.new7wonders.com.

07.07.07
Official Declaration of the New 7 Wonders of the World
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