



Visiting Hours

Winter Time

Opening Time: 08:00
Closing Time: 17:00
Ticket Office Closing Time: 16:30

Summer Time

Opening Time: 08:00
Closing Time: 17:00
Ticket Office Closing Time: 16:30

Open everyday.

* Visiting Hours may vary due to pandemic.

Address: Gaziantep

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RUMKALE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR
CULTURAL ASSETS AND MUSEUMS





Rumkale, near the village of Kasaba in Yavuzeli District of Gaziantep Province; is 62 km from the city center of Gaziantep and 25 km from Yavuzeli, on steep rocks where the Merzimen Stream flows into the Euphrates River. Rumkale is easily accessible by boat from the villages of Kasaba and Halfeti. From ancient times until today, it has had a variety of names such as Şitamrat, Kal-a Rhomayta, Hromklay, Ranculat, Kal-at el Rum, Kal-at el Müslimin, Kale-i Zerrin (Golden Castle) and Rumkale.



Rumkale was founded on a high hill surrounded by steep cliffs rising from the Euphrates and Merzimen coasts. The architecture is so harmonious with nature that Moltke, who visited Rumkale in 1838, stated, "It is very difficult to see where the cliffs end, and the artefacts begin." The castle has two main walls. The first main wall was formed by carving the natural rock to the east, north and west vertically so that a natural fortress wall. The second main wall was built as a fortress wall of hard, hewn limestone over the natural fortress. There are 7 bastions on the northern and eastern fortress wall and numerous embrasures in the north. The rocky extension of the castle in the southern direction was carved 30 m deep and 20 m wide in the 12th century and a rock (moat) was formed. Thus, the direct connection to the castle over the land was interrupted. The castle occupies an area 120 m wide and 200 m long.

Rumkale was located on the bank of the Euphrates River, which once formed the border between Halfeti (Şanlıurfa) and Gaziantep. The Merzimen stream used to connect with the Euphrates, which flowed through the deep and steep valley that passes right by Rumkale. At present it is surrounded on three sides by the reservoir and has the shape of a peninsula. At the foot of the castle was the lower town.



Among the ruins that can be seen today in the castle are the Poet Saint Nerses church, Barşavma monastery, the water cisterns, and the water well. The well, whose steps descend to the Euphrates River level, is 8 m wide and about 75 m deep. It is also rumored that this well, which was built to supply water from the Euphrates River, is a secret passage. A spiral staircase was carved into the rock on the cylindrical inner side of the well. In addition, there are numerous buildings preserved in the castle whose function could not be clarified. Many parts of the structures in the castle were created by carving and leveling the bedrock. Rubble stone was used as the knitting material on the walls and bastions, large-sized smooth cut stones were used as the covering material and cut stones with a brick appearance were used in the arches.

Barşavma Monastery: It is located in the north of the castle. In the 13th century, the Jacobite saint Barşavma built it in his name. Some parts of the two adjacent buildings have survived. A rock mass forms the northern façade. The building with a square ground plan has cross vaults. Again, cut stones were used in the form of large stone blocks on the walls, smooth cut stones in the pillars and the door of the western room, and cut stones with a brick appearance in the arches and the ceiling system. There is also a well nearby.