

The site of Ancient Pellanas is situated on the tumbling slopes of the Taygetos Mountains, midway between Sparta and Megalopolis. [beauty hacks](#) The steep, rugged and difficult terrain, surrounding the fertile Evrotas valley, gave Pellanas a unique strategic position. The Ancient Spartans recognised its strong location, defending one of the few passes, and constructed a defensive tower, called Charakoma. The remains of this citadel are still visible to the south of the village.

Professor Th. Spiropoulos, the last person to undertake major excavation work on the site in the 1980's, was convinced that the site is of huge historical importance. He postulated the hypothesis that Pellanas was the ancient capital of Lakedamonia, and possibly the entire Peloponnese. The main evidence to support his theory was excavation of the ancient tholos tombs outside the village.

THE THOLOS TOMBS OF ANCIENT PELLANAS

The Tholos tombs of Ancient Pellanas, are the biggest clue to the nature and importance of the entire ancient site, due to their extremely unusual construction and size. To understand this uniqueness, it is necessary to study the construction style of tholos type tombs in Greece, especially during the Mycenaean period (1580 – 1100 BC).

Tholos tombs (plural tholoi) were used, in late Bronze Age Greece, as burial places for royalty and important dignitaries. The majority of tholoi, scattered across the Hellenic world, were constructed with masonry. This method of construction provided a false dome and gave the tombs a characteristic 'beehive' shape.

The sheer size and complexity of these tholoi, indicates that they were crafted for the richer classes of society. Lesser citizens were interred in one of the simpler 'chamber tombs', roughly hacked from the bedrock. This basic structure is found in large numbers across the entire eastern Mediterranean.

Tholoi, before and during the Mycenaean period, were invariably built with a tripartite structure. An increase in complexity and refinement continued throughout the period, as the techniques were honed and refined of [beauty hacks](#). The typical design plan consisted of a beehive chamber (tholos), nearly always corbelled with slabs of stone, the passageway (dromos) and the entrance (stomion).

Like modern tombs, the stomion allowed ostentious displays of grandeur and wealth. The Treasury of Atreus, in Mycenae, is a prime example of a tholos tomb, albeit on a massive scale.

The Ancient Pellanas tholos tombs are situated one kilometre outside the modern village, and possess an unusual design and construction. These tombs were painstakingly chiselled from the bedrock, instead of exhibiting the more typical masonry construction.

One large tomb, with a chamber of nearly 10 metres diameter, is flanked on either side by two smaller tombs. The walls of the greater tomb's dromos converge gradually

towards the roof, forming a false dome. This practice was not widely adopted until the 13th century BC, giving the first clue to the likely age of the tombs.

The interior of the tholoi structures housed burial pits, containing a few interesting finds, but they were robbed at some point in antiquity. These finds, consisting of pottery fragments, amber beads and scraps of gold foil, further date the tomb complex to around 1500 BC

The structure of the Ancient Pellanas [beauty hacks](#) is interesting. Why were they carved out of the rock, when their contemporaries were either stone-built tholoi or simple carved chamber tombs? These burial places are cut like chamber tombs but share the shape and complexity of a tholos. It is obvious that the builders of these tombs understood the tholos style, but chose to carve chambers. One possibility is simplicity, although it is no easier to carve stone than to build with masonry. In addition, this type would be more common, if it was merely a 'cheaper' option.

Similar tombs are very rare and have only been discovered in Thebes, Messinia and Arkadia. The tholos tombs in Thebes and those around the palace of Nestor in Messinia are certainly royal tombs. This is the first proof in the process of proposing Ancient Pellanas as an important ancient site. It is reasonable to suggest that tombs, of this age and type, were reserved solely for royalty.