

Ancient tunnel to cope with drought is nicknamed 'the sunken palace'

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This water tank is also known as the 'sunken palace', located on the ancient Istanbul peninsula, which was once the capital of the Eastern Roman empire, built by order of emperor Justinian I to solve the problem of drought. of the city.



The bunker is a giant underground room with a length of 143m and a width of 70m, capable of storing a maximum of nearly 100,000 tons of water. The basement ceiling is supported by 336 marble columns, creating extremely beautiful domes like famous cathedrals in Europe.

After the 10th century, silos were no longer used because maintenance was too expensive. When the capital Constantinople fell to the Ottoman empire in 1453, this water tank system was forgotten. Over the years, the cellar has been covered by tons of mud.

In 1545, Petrus Gyllius - a French archaeologist, discovered the 'underwater palace' Basilica Cistern. Since its rediscovery, the basement has been reinforced several times and has become a famous tourist attraction in Istanbul.

In 1990, a wooden platform system was installed by the city government on a portion of the water area to create an area for visitors to walk inside the tank. In 2022, after a thorough two-year restoration process, Basilica Cistern reopened and welcomed 15,00 visitors per day.

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