Level: A2 Pre Intermediate

Skill: Reading

Turkey's underground city

Deep beneath the famous fairy chimneys of Cappadocia, there's a massive underground city that's been used for thousands of years. This city, called Derinkuyu, is over 85 meters below the Earth's surface and has 18 levels of tunnels. It's the largest underground city in the world and has a rich history, changing hands from different civilizations.

In 1963, a local resident rediscovered Derinkuyu when he lost his chickens, and they disappeared into a crevasse. This led to the excavation of the underground city, revealing a complex network of rooms, food storage, stables, schools, wineries, and even a chapel. It became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1985.

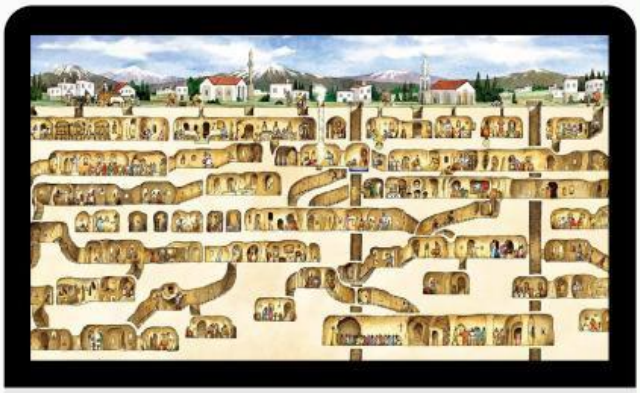
The city's construction date is debated, but it may have started with the Hittites and was expanded by the Phrygians. Its purpose included storage and providing a safe haven from invaders. It saw its peak population during the Byzantine Era with nearly 20,000 residents living underground.

Today, you can visit Derinkuyu and explore its narrow, dimly lit tunnels, designed to deter intruders. The city had a sophisticated ventilation system, and even connections to other underground cities in the region.

While Derinkuyu is the largest, there are more than 200 underground cities in Cappadocia, with some interconnected through tunnels. These cities were used for various purposes and have emergency escape routes.

Some remain unexcavated.

In 1923, the city was abandoned when Cappadocian Greeks left. It was forgotten until the rediscovery by the man searching for his chickens, leading to its current status as a fascinating historical site.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

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Turkey's underground city

Write **TRUE** or **FALSE**

- Derinkuyu is an underground city in Cappadocia, Turkey.
- Derinkuyu is located on the Earth's surface.
- The largest underground city in Cappadocia is Derinkuyu.
- Derinkuyu has 18 levels of tunnels.
- The underground city was originally constructed to house more than 200,000 residents.
- Derinkuyu's existence was never forgotten by the modern world.
- The city's main purpose was as a winemaking center.
- The underground city was used as a safe haven from foreign invaders.
- There is only one underground city in Cappadocia.
- Derinkuyu was rediscovered by a local resident in 1963.

LIVEWORKSHEETS