A Time Capsule Beneath the Waves

เรือที่จมเก่าแก่ที่สุดในโลก อายุราว 4,400–4,700 ปี ถูกพบนอกชายฝั่งตุรกี

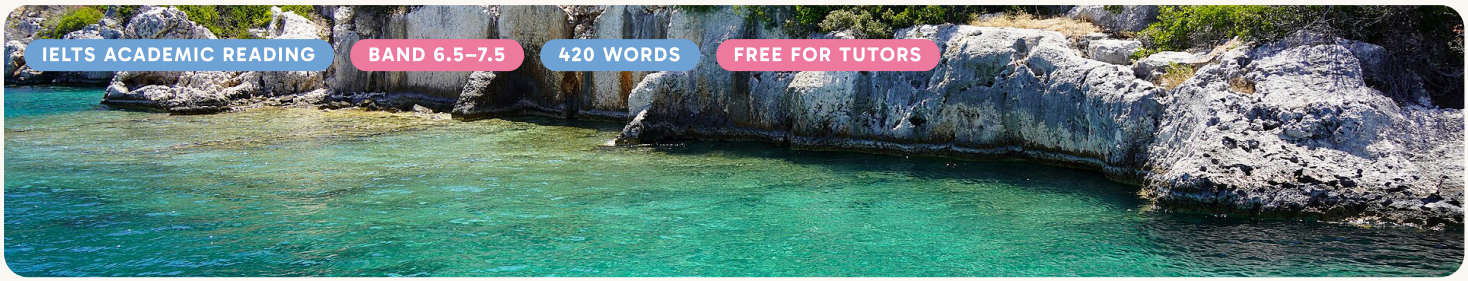


Photo: Kekova coast (Sunken City ruins), Antalya · JamesDavidShoots · CC BY-SA 4.0 · Wikimedia Commons

A Archaeologists working off the southern coast of Turkey have announced the discovery of what is now believed to be the **oldest shipwreck ever found**. Located close to the shore of Kekova Island in Antalya province, the wreck lies roughly 30 meters below the surface, its artifacts scattered across an underwater slope. Researchers estimate that the vessel sank between 4,400 and 4,700 years ago, during the Early Bronze Age – roughly the same era in which the Great Pyramid of Egypt was under construction.

B Unusually, none of the ship's wooden hull has survived. This absence **posed a considerable challenge**, because radiocarbon dating, a technique that measures a form of carbon in organic material, could not be applied. Instead, the team relied on the cargo itself. More than 30 ceramic storage jars, known as amphorae, were recovered alongside three large stone anchors; ships of the period carried spare anchors on long voyages. The jars have a **distinctive** design – two handles, a ridge around the middle and a flat base – which closely **resembles** amphorae **unearthed** in Egypt and the Middle East that are known to date from the same period. On this basis, expedition leader Professor Hakan Öniz of Akdeniz University described the Early Bronze Age date as certain.

C Perhaps the most striking finding concerns what remains inside the jars. Dr. Karin Sowada of Macquarie University, who examined the recovered amphorae, was astonished to discover that several **intact** vessels still contained a thick, glossy **residue**. Possible contents include olive oil, wine or tree resins, although she cautions that the residue may reflect repeated reuse, since such large containers were typically emptied and refilled over many years. Work is now under way to identify exactly what the jars held.

D The discovery also **sheds light on maritime** trade in the ancient Mediterranean. The researchers believe the ten-meter vessel set sail from the eastern Mediterranean coast and was heading either to the city of Troy, in present-day north-western Turkey, or to the Minoan civilization on Crete. The waters around Kekova were **notoriously hazardous**: strong currents and winds have claimed hundreds of ships there. Because of the depth, divers could remain at the site for only 30 minutes at a time.

E The find **displaces** the previous record holder, a wreck off the Greek island of Dokos dated to about 4,200 years ago. The recovered artifacts, which are now undergoing careful conservation, are expected to go on display at the new Mediterranean Underwater Archaeology Museum in Antalya when it opens in the coming months.

Source: BBC News, "World's oldest shipwreck found off coast of Turkey", 14 October 2026 (Alison Francis, Rebecca Morelle & Kevin Church). Passage rewritten by London Learner for teaching.

KEY VOCABULARY

unearth v. ขุดพบ, ค้นพบ
Builders unearthed Roman coins beneath the car park.

distinctive adj. มีเอกลักษณ์, โดดเด่น
The bird has a distinctive red crest.

intact adj. สมบูรณ์ ไม่เสียหาย
Despite the storm, the roof remained intact.

shed light on phr. v. ช่วยให้เข้าใจ, ไขความกระจ่าง
The letters shed light on the writer's early life.

notoriously hazardous collocation อันตรายจนขึ้นชื่อ
The mountain pass is notoriously hazardous in winter.

pose a challenge collocation ก่อให้เกิดความท้าทาย
Rising costs pose a serious challenge to small schools.

resemble v. คล้ายคลึงกับ
The new design closely resembles the original.

residue n. สารตกค้าง, คราบที่เหลือ
Wipe away any soap residue after washing.

maritime adj. เกี่ยวกับทะเลและการเดินเรือ
Singapore has a long maritime history.

displace v. เข้าแทนที่
Streaming has largely displaced DVDs.

TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Do the statements agree with the information in the passage?

1. Radiocarbon dating was used to confirm the age of the wreck. ____
2. The ship was carrying more than one anchor. ____
3. The amphorae were made in Egypt. ____
4. The residue in the jars may not come from the ship's final voyage. ____
5. The Dokos wreck still has some of its original timber. ____

Answer key: 1 F (B) · 2 T (B) · 3 NG · 4 T (C) · 5 NG