

Kahal Kadosh Gadol

When the Sephardim came to Rhodes after the Turkish conquest in 1523, they found a synagogue building already in existence. They called this Kahal Kadosh Gadol (The Holy Great Congregation) or in Spanish, Kahal Grande. It had been built during the late 1400s after the Turkish siege of 1480. It was built



The **Kahal Grande** today

replacing an existing Jewish Synagogue that was built earlier which was destroyed by cannonballs during the conflict of 1480.

Authorization was given by Pope Sixtus IV to Grand Master d' Aubusson, to permit the construction of the synagogue, considering that during the previous siege the Jews had “courageously” contributed to the defense of the citadel.

It was understood that this synagogue was attended by the Greek-speaking Romaniot Jews. After the arrival of a large number of Sephardic Jews in the 1500s the synagogue eventually utilized the Judeo-Spanish “Ladino” language and rituals.

In 1944 during World War Two, being so close to the central port, was accidentally damaged by air raids of the Allies targeting German ships. Although heavily damaged, the structural walls of the Kahal Grande synagogue remained standing for several more years. During the next twenty years, the walls collapsed and the area filled with rubble. In 2003, the Archaeological Department in Rhodes cleared away the 4 feet debris

which had accumulated exposing the synagogue foundation of the perimeter wall, floors, and other features.

The Kahal Midrash Camondo



Where the Kahal Midrash Camondo was located

The Camondo Synagogue was one of the minor synagogues. It was so-called because it had been built in 1865 (with some nearby houses for the needy families) thanks to the generous support of Count Abraham Camondo, a great banker and noted philanthropist of Constantinople.

It became known as a synagogue that had shorter religious services than another synagogue. It was located upstairs above the vault area of the street, known by the community as “La Kayeja del Talmud Torah” or “Kayeja de Havra”, today Vizantiou street. The religious elementary school Talmud Torah was located across the street from the synagogue’s entryway.

The Kahal Tikkun Hazot



Front entry of the Kahal Tikkun Hazot with a circular stairway leading up to the women's prayer room

The Tikkun Hazot was another minor synagogue built in the 1870s. The name means “midnight service” and refers to the beginning of services at dawn. It was located on Gavala 8 Street. As the Synagogue was attended by the wealthier families of the community (mainly by the members of the wealthiest in Rhodes family Alhadeff), it was also called as “El Cal de Los Ricos” the Synagogue of the rich people and the same name was given to the street “la Kaye de Los Rikos”, the street of the rich people