

Israel unveils Roman-era mosaic found during construction

16 November 2015



A partial view of a 1,700-year-old Roman-era mosaic floor in Lod, Israel, Monday, Nov. 16, 2015. Archaeologists found the mosaic last year while building a visitors' center meant to display another mosaic, discovered two decades earlier at the same spot. The authority said the newly discovered Roman-era mosaic measures 11 meters by 13 meters (36 feet by 42 feet) and paved the courtyard of a villa in an affluent neighborhood that stood during the Roman and Byzantine eras. (AP Photo/Ariel Schalit)

Israel's antiquities authority on Monday unveiled a 1,700-year-old mosaic floor that archaeologists found last year while building a visitors' center meant to display another mosaic, discovered two decades earlier at the same location.

The authority said the newly discovered Roman-era mosaic measures 11 meters by 13 meters (36 feet by 42 feet) and paved the courtyard of a villa in an affluent neighborhood that stood during the Roman and Byzantine eras. The scenes include hunting animals, fish, vases and birds.

"The quality of the images portrayed in the mosaic indicates a highly developed artistic ability," said Amir Gorzalczany, who directed the excavation.

The new mosaic was found just a few meters (yards) from the first one, in what is today the central Israeli city of Lod.

The authority said the mosaic discovered in the 1990s covered the villa's living room while the newly discovered one was in its courtyard.

The original mosaic has been displayed at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Louvre in Paris, and the Hermitage museum in St. Petersburg. It is currently on display at the Cini Gallery in Venice, Italy, and is expected to return to Lod after the visitors' center is complete.



An employee of Israel's antiquities authority works on a 1,700-year-old Roman-era mosaic floor in Lod, Israel, Monday, Nov. 16, 2015. Archaeologists found the mosaic last year while building a visitors' center meant to display another mosaic, discovered two decades earlier at the same spot. The authority said the newly discovered Roman-era mosaic measures 11 meters by 13 meters (36 feet by 42 feet) and paved the courtyard of a villa in an affluent neighborhood that stood during the Roman and Byzantine eras. (AP Photo/Ariel Schalit)



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An Arab employee of Israel's antiquities authority works on a 1,700-year-old Roman-era mosaic floor in Lod, Israel, Monday, Nov. 16, 2015. Archaeologists found the mosaic last year while building a visitors' center meant to display another mosaic, discovered two decades earlier at the same spot. The authority said the newly discovered Roman-era mosaic measures 11 meters by 13 meters (36 feet by 42 feet) and paved the courtyard of a villa in an affluent neighborhood that stood during the Roman and Byzantine eras. (AP Photo/Ariel Schalit)



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A visitor takes a photo with his phone of a 1,700-year-old Roman-era mosaic floor in Lod, Israel, Monday, Nov. 16, 2015. Archaeologists found the mosaic last year while building a visitors' center meant to display another mosaic, discovered two decades earlier at the same spot. The authority said the newly discovered Roman-era mosaic measures 11 meters by 13 meters (36 feet by 42 feet) and paved the courtyard of a villa in an affluent

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