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Armenian and Palestinian sites win UNESCO prize for cultural landscapes



Melina Mercouri

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An Armenian site featuring remnants of buildings from the Bronze Age through Hellenic and early Christian times and a Palestinian village and its surroundings that have seen 4,000 years of cultivation of vines and olives are the winners of a United Nations prize for the preservation of cultural landscapes.

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) [announced](#) today that the Historical and Cultural Museum-Reservation of Garni (Armenia) and the Battir Cultural Landscape (occupied Palestinian territories) are this year's laureates of the biennial Melina Mercouri International Prize for the Safeguarding and Management of Cultural Landscapes. The prize carries the name of the late Greek cultural minister and renowned actress Melina Mercouri.

An international jury recommended the two sites, which will receive the prize and \$15,000 at a ceremony at UNESCO's headquarters in Paris on 24 May.

The jury also awarded a special mention to Wadi Hanifah of Saudi Arabia, a 120-kilometre valley. Part of this site was inscribed on UNESCO's [World Heritage List](#) last year.

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