



AMBOISE
CHÂTEAU ROYAL

VISITOR GUIDE



WELCOME TO THE CHÂTEAU OF AMBOISE

DEAR VISITORS, DEAR HERITAGE FRIENDS

YOUR VISIT TO THE ROYAL CHÂTEAU OF AMBOISE ENABLES THE FONDATION SAINT-LOUIS TO PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE VALUE OF ONE OF FRENCH HISTORY'S EMBLEMATIC SITES.

THIS CHÂTEAU HAS BEEN OPEN TO THE PUBLIC SINCE THE 19TH CENTURY. ITS RECEPTION STAFF, IDENTIFIABLE BY THEIR BADGES, ARE AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE ANY HELP YOU MAY NEED.

AS YOU LEAVE, WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THOUGHT OF YOUR VISIT ON THE TERMINAL, LOCATED AT THE TOP OF THE TOUR DES MINIMES CAVALIER RAMP.

ENJOY YOUR VISIT



Essential Information

Accessibility



For visitor comfort, we advise that pushchairs be parked on the guard's walk (near the fence), before climbing up to the higher floors. You will be able to collect them from the same location at the end of your visit. After visiting the Lodge: a gentle walk in the gardens (see map on guide cover). There is a 10% gradient slope in certain places.



Upon your arrival, the following adapted visitor devices are available to you:
A Histopad© in 12 languages or a bilingual, French-English, audio-descriptive device (no additional cost) with an adapted route for sight-impaired visitors.



Braille signs are available in the Guard Room at the Lodge entrance. The audio guide suggests orientation points, in French and English, at the start of each sequence. In the Lodge, you can obtain permission from staff to touch certain pieces in the collection.



Upon your arrival, ask to be met by a staff member in the Royal Lodge. They will show you the Royal Lodge's ground floor and first floor access points. A wheelchair can be made available for you (subject to availability). The Histopad© will enable you to remotely activate the inaccessible 2nd floor 'collections discovery' sequences. For your comfort, there are benches in the royal apartments. At the end of the Lodge visit: Gentle walk in the gardens (see map on guide cover). There is a 10% gradient slope in certain places (visitors must be accompanied).



Specially adapted toilet facilities are available in the orangery, access via the lift from the grooming courtyard (level 1). This lift will also enable you to reach the café and food outlets, the ticket office, the Histopad© point and the shop (Level 0).



Dogs must be carried in the Lodge



Dogs must be kept on the lead in the gardens



Dogs not allowed in the basements



Facilities available



Security cameras



No drones or drone fly-bys



bag checks



Pushchair checks



Large bags and suitcases not permitted



Minors remain the responsibility of accompanying adults



Around the ramparts: no shouting, no climbing, items thrown from the ramparts put people in danger.



No Smoking



Evacuation in event of fire: sound and light alarms; staff will assist



There is a 10% gradient slope in certain places (see map on guide cover)



Backpack on your arm in the Lodge



No flash photography



For your convenience and safety



Gift shop



Adapted toilet facilities



Please keep noise to a minimum in the Lodge



Coats of Arms Gallery

upward view of coats of Arms Gallery

You will enter the interior of the Royal Château of Amboise via the former foot soldiers' passage, which was originally defended by a first draw-bridge and portcullis. This gallery is decorated with the coats of arms of the château's successive owners, from the 11th century to the 19th century.

FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP OF THE RAMP, ON THE LEFT:



Foulques Nerra, Count of Anjou (970-1040)



Philippe-Auguste (1165-1223), king of France



The Lords of Amboise and Louis of Amboise (1392-1469)



Charles VII (1403-1461), Louis XI (1423-1483), Louis XII (1462-1515), François 1er (1494-1547), Henri II (1519-1559), François II (1544-1560), Charles IX (1550-1574), Henri III (1551-1589)



Gaston, Duke of Orléans (1608-1660), brother of king Louis XIII



Duke of Choiseul (1719-1785)



Duke of Penthièvre (1725-1793)



Pierre-Roger Ducos (1747-1816)



Louis Philippe 1er (1773-1850) and of his descendants until 1883



Descendants of Louis-Philippe, from the unbroken Bourbon-Orléans line from 1883, the date when the oldest line of the Bourbons died out.

FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP OF THE RAMP, ON THE RIGHT:



Charles VIII (1470-1498), king of France and of Jerusalem



Henri IV (1553-1610), Louis XIII (1601-1643), Louis XIV (1638-1715) then Louis XV (1710-1774), kings of France and of Navarre



Orangery: The café and digital area



Before reaching the château's terraces, visitors can discover the château in all its incarnations, from the Middle Ages to today, in the château's newly-renovated orangery. 3D models have been created from Lucie Gaugain's university thesis, and the 1495 and 1496 construction accounts from the château of Amboise, recently restored by the National Archives. Interactive terminals and large screens enable visitors to get an idea of this monument's magnitude, the first major construction phase for which began in the late 15th century, under the reign of King Charles VIII, who was born in Amboise in 1470. Thus, visitors can learn how, contrary to 19th century beliefs, 75% of the château built during his reign has survived to this day. A video projected on a large screen shows the exceptional speed of the works ordered by the king of France between 1491 and 1498 (date of his untimely death at the age of 28), and shows where the tufa limestone was extracted, how it was moved by waterways and on land, and the quantities of materials used in the building, more than were used to construct the Arc de Triomphe in Paris!



Video showing Charles VIII's building works "75% of Charles VIII's castle still remains"

Orangery: The facilities area



Drinks and snacks throughout the year; café & light meals from 1/04 to the Heritage Days (September)

On the terraces of the Royal Château of Amboise

You are here

Step onto the terraces and you are presented with a panoramic view across the Loire Valley: 15th and 16th century buildings, gently sloping gardens and the two impressively large cavalier towers.

During the Renaissance, the king made a palace out of this château. It was a symbol of his power, a centre for political, economic and artistic activity. It also stands in memory of an historical turning point, when different styles and trends from Flanders and Italy mixed. Italy, coveted by France during the entire first half of the 16th century, was also admired for its artistic vitality. Monarchs thus invited to Amboise many Italian artists and writers whose influence blended with French tastes to create the original style of the “Early French Renaissance”. Heart of royal power in the Renaissance, this château was a place to live and stay for all the Valois and Bourbon kings. It was the stage for numerous political events in the kingdom: births, christenings, aristocratic marriages, conspiracies and peace treaties. This formidable fortress ensured the royal family's safety. In the absence of the royal couple, it provided a “kindergarten” for French kings: Charles VIII was born here, François Ier, his sister Marguerite d'Angoulême and the children of Henri II and Catherine de Medici were raised here.



3D bird's eye view south of Catherine de Medici's château

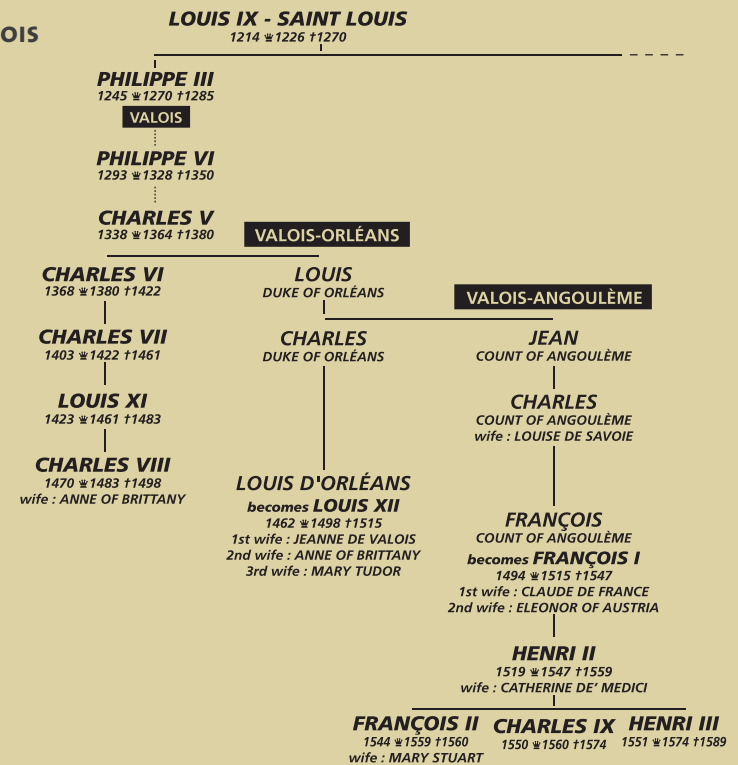
FROM ITS ORIGINS TO THE RENAISSANCE

Occupied since Neolithic times, Amboise became the main settlement of the Turones, a Celtic people. The first fortifications were built on the rocky spur and favoured the development of the Gallo-Romanesque style. **In the 4th century AD**, the first trenches of the château were dug to defend the residences built above the town. **In 503**, Clovis, King of the Franks, met Alaric, King of the Visigoths, on the Ile d'Or (Golden Island), opposite the northern ramparts. The fortress was fiercely disputed during Medieval times, against a backdrop of rivalry between the counts of Anjou and Blois.

1214, Philippe-Auguste, king of France, moved to Touraine; the lord of Amboise became his vassal.

1431, Lord Louis d'Amboise was sentenced to death for plotting against King Charles VII's (1403/1422/1461) favourite, La Trémouille. He was finally pardoned, but forced to renounce the Château of Amboise, which was confiscated for the Crown. Charles VII stationed archers there. His successor Louis XI (1423/1461/1483) commissioned the building of an oratory close to the keep, for his wife Charlotte of Savoy. It was here that **in 1470**, his son, the prince and heir Charles, future Charles VIII (1470/1483/1498) was born.

GENEALOGY OF THE VALOIS



Portrait of Charles VIII

Anne of Brittany

THE FRENCH KINGDOM AT THE BEGINNING OF CHARLES VIII'S REIGN

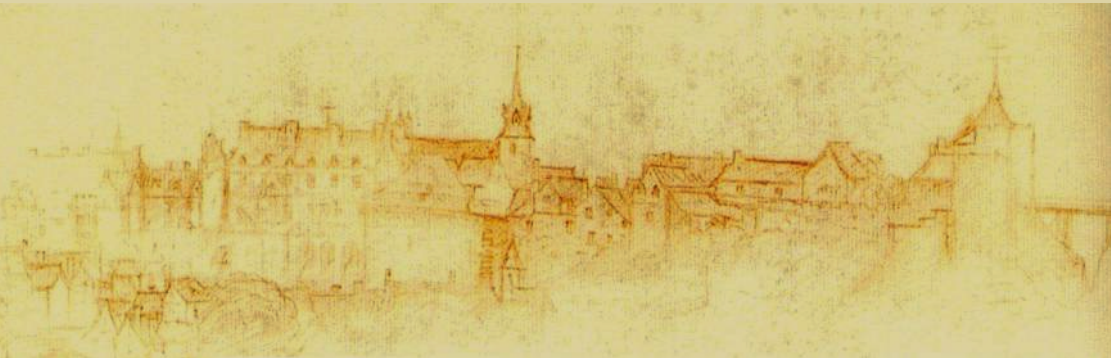
Political instability

The Dauphin, or heir, Charles, still a minor when his father Louis XI died, was temporarily placed under the regency of his sister Anne de Beaujeu. His authority was disputed by his cousin, the Duc d'Orléans, opportunely aligned to the Duc de Bretagne (1484) and Emperor Maximilian of Austria (1486). Thus began the Mad War against the French king (1486-1488).

Marriage to Anne of Brittany

Anne of Brittany was the heiress of François II, Duc de Bretagne. This duchy was the source of rivalry between the Imperial Hapsburg dynasty and that of the French Valois kings. The Duc de Bretagne's death (1488) brought the Mad War against the French king to an end. The latter obtained an annulment of the duchy's heir's marriage with Maximilien of Habsburg and broke off his own engagement with Margaret of Austria, the Emperor's daughter, to marry Anne of Brittany on 6th December 1491. Thereby sealing the personal union of France and the duchy of Bretagne, which finally became part of the kingdom in 1532. Anne lived at Amboise, home to the royal couple. The new Queen of France had three boys and a girl, but all died young. However, despite these bereavements, the queen stamped her personality on the court. She increased the standing of women by forming around her a group of around a hundred honourable women from good families. She also surrounded herself with talented artists like the Touraine painter Jean Bourdichon, author of the famous illustrated manuscript the Book of Hours, and the sculptor Michel Colombe.

The grand architectural project of the King of Amboise



View of the château's southern rampart, a 1517 sketch from Leonardo da Vinci's workshop (not in our collections)



3D bird's eye view south-east-north-west of Charles VIII's château in 1498

Charles VIII, recently married to Anne of Brittany in 1491, decided to set up court in his childhood château, Amboise. The following year, he launched the extension project for the medieval Lodge, the Saint Hubert Chapel, finished in 1493. Then in the following years, construction continued apace: the 'Seven Virtues' Lodge to the south and the Royal Lodge to the north. This construction, ordered before the King's departure for Italy, channelled the flamboyant Gothic style. The King returned in 1496, accompanied by numerous Italian artists. He entrusted them with the creation of the Lodge's interior and a garden inspired by Italian villas. The greatest innovation of the royal project was above all the construction of two impressively large cavalier towers.

On Charles VIII's death in 1498, the château's construction was certainly unfinished, but massive changes had been achieved, in just 5 years!

Charles VIII's formal entrance into Naples



The French King's military campaigns in Italy and the first Italians' arrival in Amboise

On the death of King Ferrante I of Naples, Charles VIII claimed his kingdom, ignoring Charles du Maine, last Comte de Provence and the "rightful" heir to the kingdom of Naples, occupied by Aragon since 1442. So in 1494, Charles left to take possession of this kingdom, leading 30,000 men. The French army arrived in Naples in February 1495. Thus began Italian campaigns that led Charles VIII, Louis XII and François 1er successively to the kingdom of Naples and the Duchy of Milan. Despite many victories (the best-known being Marignan in 1515) and many periods of French occupation, in the end these expeditions did not benefit the kings. In 1559, Henri II signed the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, bringing to an end French claims on the Italian peninsula. These Italian campaigns evidently sharpened the sovereigns' taste for the Italian Renaissance. They invited to Amboise certain literary men and artists from this country, such as the painter Andrea del Sarto and the famous artist-engineer Leonardo da Vinci.

1. THE ST HUBERT CHAPEL

The chapel, dedicated to St Hubert, the patron saint of hunters, was constructed in 1493 on the foundations of the ancient oratory built under Louis XI. This chapel, designed for the sovereigns' private use, is built in flamboyant Gothic style. It is famed as the resting place of Leonardo da Vinci, who died in Amboise on 2nd May, 1519.

- Limestone friezes sculpted by the Flemish masters represent interlaced plant and animal shapes (frog, serpent, monkey...)
- Stained glass windows: illustrations of the life of King Louis IX (St Louis) from the Max Ingrand studio in 1952



Wooden stag decoration dedicated to St Hubert, patron saint of hunters, 19th century



On the exterior lintel above the chapel door: St Anthony of Alexandria, a hermit; St Christopher carrying the Baby Jesus, St Hubert's conversion (end of 15th century); above, scene showing Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany.



View from below of the vault in the chapel nave.

Leonardo da Vinci's burial place (1452-1519)

The great Italian master left his eternal mark on the Château, as King François 1er granted him the privilege of being buried here in 1519. He arrived in Amboise in 1516, aged 64, already celebrated after a glittering career in Florence, Milan, Mantua, Venice, Rome and Bologna. It was there that he met King François 1er. The sovereign gave him the Manoir du Cloux, now known as Clos Lucé, called him "first painter, engineer and king's architect" and gave him an annual pension of 700 crowns. Leonardo devoted his time to drawing and teaching, notably in the field of canals, town planning and architecture. Some authors attribute to him the Romorantin town planning project and certain sections of the Château de Chambord. Very close to the King, he created several events and entertainment for him during the 1518 royal festivities.



Leonardo da Vinci's tomb



Self-portrait of Leonardo da Vinci (not in our collections)

02. THE LOWER COURTYARD AND TRENCH, OPPOSITE THE ROYAL LODGE

Now, walk towards the Royal Lodge, parallel to the Loire, where you will find the trench, to the left of the entrance.



Keep trench, detail from a Jacques Androuet du Cerceau engraving.



A game of real tennis (not in our collections)

Tragic ball game in the château trench

The celebrated chronicler, Philippe de Commynes, recounted this sombre episode: 7th April, 1498, King Charles VIII was heading to the Haquelebac Gallery with Queen Anne of Brittany, to watch a game of real tennis. Taking the trench that linked from north to south the 'Seven Virtues' Lodge and the King's Lodge (filled in during the 17th century this trench was partially cleared in the 19th century) he hit his head on a door lintel. Within hours he was dead, aged just 28 – and without a male heir.

Amboise, first architectural expression of the Renaissance in the Loire Valley



Royal Lodge



From left to right, Gothic gable windows (Charles VIII Lodge) and Renaissance gable windows (François 1er Renaissance Lodge).

In the days following Charles VIII's death, the second cavalry tower, the Heurtault tower, which leans against the south rampart and the gallery along Dom Pacello's garden, was completed during the reign of his successor King Louis XII (1462/1498/1515). On his death, the new sovereign François 1er (1494/1515/1547) also renewed the fiscal privileges accorded to the town, in memory of his youth spent in Amboise, and raised the wing perpendicular

to the Loire. Its gable windows with pilaster decorations bear witness to the Italian influence and were a departure from the Charles VIII Lodge's gable windows, parallel to the Loire, whose pointed pinnacles are in the flamboyant Gothic style. Henri II had another Lodge built, further East, parallel to the Renaissance wing of the Royal Lodge. This gives an idea of the scale of this construction, which contained up to 220 rooms.

The Gothic Lodge

03. ROYAL LODGE ENTRANCE, GUARDS' ROOM

This floor houses a succession of rooms assigned to the guards who defended access to the noblemen's floors. The King's bodyguard were made up of Scottish and Swiss companies, and later French Musketeers.

- Ribbed vaulted ceiling.
- Arms: swords, rondache (shields), halberds, armour, 16th century uniforms.
- Models: tactile model of the actual château; relief maps of the château in the 16th century, by Jacques Androuet du Cerceau.



04. THE SENTRIES' WALK

From this open gallery, guards could observe boats on the Loire and the river crossing.



All visitors



Visit continues: To the left.

Leave your pushchair near the barrier on the right of the gallery. You can collect it from here at the end of the visit.

05. THE PILLAR ROOM

The domestic staff and guards used this room to move between the keep's former gallery, looking out over the trench, and the Royal Lodge. A staircase provided the means to serve King Charles VIII's dressing room, nowadays called the Drummers' Room.



From left to right :

- Château view: drawing from the work "The finest buildings in France" by J. Androuet du Cerceau (1576). The remaining buildings are shown in black.
- Ribbed vaulted ceiling.
- Central pillar, or "Gothic Palm", holds up the room.
- 19th century copies of 16th century armour.



Visit continues at the end of the room, via the staircase.



Return to the Lodge entrance. Access to the 1st floor at the back of the Lodge, garden side (see map on guide cover). An access ramp, under the Aumale Gallery, gives access to the 1st floor.

06. THE DRUMMERS' ROOM

This room was once the location of King Charles VIII's dressing room. The court was often nomadic; where it travelled the furniture went too. The name 'Drummers' (musicians') room' evokes the many festivities and dances held at the Château. It was thus named during one of King Louis XIV's stays in Amboise (1661).



From left to right:

- 15th century style terracotta floor tiles decorated with fleur de lys.
- Cardinal Georges d'Amboise's (1460-1510) bishop's chair. He organised the wedding of Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany in 1491 and was named prime minister under the reign of Charles' successor in 1498.
- Early 14th century corbelled statue of St Louis (Louis IX).
- Late 16th century Flemish tapestry showing the Darius family paying homage to Alexander the Great.
- Chest dating from Charles VIII's reign.
- Book of hours (compilation of prayers and religious holidays) belonging to Charles VIII, modelled on the 1484 original preserved at the National Library in Madrid.
- Wooden door, courtyard side, opening onto the exterior suspended gallery (no longer in existence) which served the adjacent rooms and exterior spiral staircase.
- Portraits of King Charles VIII and Queen Anne of Brittany
- Gothic dresser
- Portrait of Maximilian of Austria

The family of Darius paying homage to Alexander the Great, Flemish tapestry, late 16th century.



Brittany's Union with the French Kingdom (1532)

Through the marriage of the king of France Charles VIII with the sole heir of François II, duke of Brittany, Anne of Brittany (1491), the duchy entered in the first instance into a personal union with the kingdom. Not having a living heir when Charles VIII died (1498), the marriage contract obliged Anne of Brittany (†1514) to marry the new King of France, Louis XII (1462, D1498, †1515), Charles' cousin.

François 1er (1494/D1515/†1547), Louis XII's successor, became usufructuary of the duchy by way of his wife Claude de France (†1524), daughter of Louis XII and Anne of Brittany, then by his sons François and Henri. In 1532, the year the Dauphin François came of age, the Estates of the Duchy accepted union with the Kingdom of France.

07. THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

During the Renaissance, the King of France spread his power progressively throughout the kingdom, notably by ensuring the loyalty of his governors, officers and clerical dignitaries. He also insisted that senior lords lived for many months by his side, accompanied by their wives. Thus women entered the Royal Court. The Council Chamber is one of the first of this size to serve as a setting for these events. It adjoined the courtyard, where in 1518 royal festivities were organised for the baptism of the dauphin prince and the marriage of the nephew of Pope Lorenzo II de Medici with Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne. This union contributed to the rapprochement of François 1er, crowned in glory after his victory at Marignano, with the Holy See and the main European courts, particularly Italian.



Illustration of the battle of Marignano
(not in our collections)

From left to right:

- The first fireplace (to the left of the entrance) gave comfort during the cold season. It boasts a trapezoid hood, still bearing the marks of the Gothic tradition. Hood decorations made up of a flamboyant or palmate sword, Charles VIII's emblem.
- The central pillars: decorated with fleurs de lys and ermine flecks, royal emblems of France and the Duchy of Brittany.
- Throne decorated with a fleur de lys dais (on the river side)
- Portrait of François 1er by Jean Clouet, 1515
- On the ceiling: monograms of Charles VIII (interlaced C) and Anne of Brittany (letter A).
- The second fireplace (at the other end of the room) perfectly illustrates Renaissance style.
- The wooden panel at the back, to the left of the exit, features the Salamander, emblem of François 1er.
- Wooden door, courtyard side, opening onto the exterior suspended gallery (no longer in existence) which served the adjacent rooms and exterior spiral staircase.
- Large chayères, benches with backs decorated with Gothic style linenfold motifs.
- 16th century style bust of François 1er on sideboard (righthand wall, last bay)

François 1er (1494/☿1515/†1547), Great French Renaissance patron of the arts

Louis XII chose Amboise to welcome his cousin and presumed successor, François d'Angoulême. The latter arrived at Amboise aged 4, accompanied by his mother Louise de Savoie and his sister Marguerite. He spent his childhood in the Château before acceding to the throne in 1515. His fascination for the Renaissance made him a great patron of the arts. Most notably he became a protector of French literary figures like Budé, Marot, du Bellay, Ronsard and Rabelais and surrounded himself with Italian artists like Andrea del Sarto, Leonardo da Vinci and Benvenuto Cellini. He raised the Renaissance wing of Amboise's Royal Lodge, decorating it with Italian style gable windows.



Portrait of King François 1er,
by François Clouet . 1515

The Affair of the Placards...

and the Amboise conspiracy, beginnings of the Wars of Religion

François 1er made his authority over the Church known by the Concordat of Bologna (1516). While he was in favour of Church reform, he kept himself at a distance from the controversial theories of the theologians. However, "placards", or posters, decrying the "terrible, great and unacceptable abuses of the papal Mass" were posted during the night of 17th to 18th October 1534 in the Kingdom's main towns and on the door of the King's chamber in Amboise. This provocation put a stop to the process of moderate reform envisaged by the sovereign. Between 200 and 300 people were arrested. Dozens of suspects convicted of heresy were burnt alive.

In 1560, the new King François II, oldest son of Henri II and Catherine de Medici, turned 16. The previous year he had married Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots. Power was ensured by the latter's uncles, the Guise family, followers of repressive policies towards Protestants. The latter attempted to remove François II from the Guises' influence on 27th and 29th March 1560 by kidnapping him from the Château d'Amboise. The conspirators were arrested and judged before being executed in public. Some were even hung from the Château's balcony "as an example". Armed confrontations between the Kingdom's powerhouses reached a climax during the bloody night of St Bartholemew on 24th August 1572.



Engraving of the Amboise conspiracy (1560)

Portrait of Mary Stuart, queen of France (1542-1587)
(not in our collections)



Portrait of King François II (1544-☿1559-†1560),
(not in our collections)



The Renaissance apartments

08. THE MAIN CHAMBER

This room was originally a state room where the king received his entourage. It now houses a collection of furniture and objects linked to the king's table. Medieval trestles were replaced with "Italian style" tables. They were richly decorated and could be extended. The art of dining evolved slowly with the tentative use of two-pronged forks (knives and spoons remained more popular until the time of Henri III).

*Queen Esther's banquet.
Aubusson Royal manufacture, 17th century.*



- From left to right:
- Gothic furniture: a "dresser" (also known as a credenza or buffet), a chest, two chairs.
 - Renaissance furniture: "Italian style" tables and large walnut chest, chairs, arcebanc (bench).
 - Bust of François 1er by Girolamo della Robbia (1488-1566)
 - Faïence from Gien and Blois with Renaissance decoration. 19th century.
 - Large Renaissance style platters
 - French 17th century Aubusson tapestries created from Le Brun cartoons..

INTRODUCTION OF THE RENAISSANCE PERSPECTIVE

In terms of furniture, the late 15th century Gothic style was characterised by the use of linenfold motifs and pointed arches. During the Renaissance, the antique perspective, also called Trompe l'Oeil, was rediscovered. It gave great depth to furniture decoration and tapestries.



Linenfold motif



Renaissance Décor

09. THE KING'S CHAMBER

This room was the bedchamber of King François 1er (1494-1515-1547) and his son Henri II (1519-1547-1559). It was occupied by his wife Catherine de Medici (1519- 1589) who, after his tragic death, played an active role in the affairs of the kingdom during her sons' successive reigns. The room's interior perfectly illustrates the introduction of perspective into 16th century decorative arts.



Henri II, by François Clouet and Catherine de Médici'

- From left to right:
- Early Renaissance settle
 - Portrait of Henri II, king of France.
 - The ornate Henri II style bed is impressively large (2.18 m. x 1.82 m)
 - The jewellery chest has a false base.
 - Portrait of Catherine de Medici, queen of France.
 - Late 16th and 17th century door curtains and tapestries from Brussels and Tournai.



- From left to right:
- Large Renaissance chair
 - Bust of Leonardo da Vinci, sculpted in Carrara marble by Henri de Vauréal (1865). CNAP collections
 - 'Conversation chair' (with armrests)
 - Painting "The Death of Leonardo da Vinci" painted by François-Guillaume Ménageot (acquired by King Louis XVI in 1781), Town of Amboise collections.
 - Henri II style table
 - Painting "The Holy Family" by Raphael, 19th century copy of the original given as a gift to the French royal couple by the Pope, on the occasion of the baptism of the dauphin prince in Amboise in April 1518.

Leonardo da Vinci, a leading exponent of the arts

Leonardo da Vinci impressed the court of France with his eclectic knowledge and varied talents. His aura certainly contributed to the glory of King François 1er, «patron of the Arts and Literature». Thus in June 1518, the French sovereign acquired several famous portraits from the master, including "St. Anne", which even decorated one of his chapels. Leonardo da Vinci's success grew even during the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1781, the painter François-Guillaume Ménageot (1744-1816), created the painting "The Death of Leonardo da Vinci". This shows François 1er receiving the dying breaths of the great Tuscan master in Clos Lucé, the residence he was given close to the royal Château. Though this scene never took place because the king was detained in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, it nevertheless highlights the privileged relationship between the patron king and the Florentine genius. This work was then bought the same year by King Louis XVI to help with the creation of a tapestry destined for one of the galleries at Versailles. In 1818, this same scene was also brilliantly re-imagined by the painter Jean- Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867). Which means that the painter Ménageot was one of the precursors of the Troubadour style that shone throughout the 19th century. Numerous engravings inspired by this scene were to be found in middle class homes, thus contributing to popularising the king and the artist as two eminent Renaissance figures.



Painting "The Death of Leonardo da Vinci" painted by François-Guillaume Ménageot, on loan from the town of Amboise, Municipal Museum

10. THE WARDROBE

This room, refurbished in the 19th century, housed the king's or the queen's garments in close proximity to their bedchamber.



From left to right:

- Statue of St Michael vanquishing the devil. Spain, 17th century.
- Chimney breast: interlaced ropes, symbol of the Franciscan order; chain of the Order of St Michael.
- Portrait of the king of France, Henri IV (1553/1589/1610) by Pourbus.

Statue of St Michael vanquishing the devil.

CREATION OF THE ORDER OF ST MICHAEL

In 1469, King Louis XI (1423/1461/1483) established the first order of French knights: the Order of St Michael. This ceremony took place at the château of Amboise in the St. Florentin collegiate, which no longer exists. The knights of the order were involved in the main displays of royal power (formal entrances; religious ceremonies)



THE CHÂTEAU'S CHAOTIC DESTINY

From Henri III's reign, monarchs stayed more rarely at Amboise. The court finally left the Loire Valley for the Ile de France (Paris region) under Henri IV.

SOVEREIGNS WHO STAYED AT AMBOISE IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

From left to right :

(Portraits not in our collections)
Henri IV by the Flemish painter Franz Pourbus V.
Louis XIII by Philippe de Champaigne.
A young Louis XIV by Lebrun.
Philippe V of Spain by Jean Ranc.



A lack of maintenance left the Château a shadow of its former self. Its dungeons and towers were still used for enemies of the State (for example Nicolas Fouquet in 1661) and 17th and 18th century prisoners of war. In 1631, Minister Richelieu ordered the demolition of the château's fortifications and that the trenches be filled in to prevent the use of the Kingdom's strongholds against Louis XIII.

The Château of Amboise remained a rest stop for successive sovereigns in the 17th century: Henri IV (1553-1589-1610) in 1598 and 1602, more frequently Louis XIII (1601-1610-1643) and Louis XIV (1638-1643-1715) in 1650 and in 1660.



INACCESSIBLE STAIRCASE

The Histopad© enables visitors to follow a virtual visit of the 2nd floor (ask the room staff for one if needed) in the Council Chamber. Afterwards, the room staff will also help you access the ramp to the Aumale gallery. (station No.15, crossover point with the end of the standard visitor route).

The Orléans apartments

In 1763, the Duke of Choiseul (1719-1785) obtained Amboise from King Louis XV, which he then elevated to a duchy. But he abandoned the château in favour of nearby Château de Chanteloup (no longer in existence). On his death, the château was bought (1786) by the Duc de Penthièvre (1725-1793), Louis XVI's cousin and legitimate grandson of King Louis XIV. In 1789, he restored the Royal Lodge and installed new English style gardens, whose winding paths have been preserved. On the western tower, known as "Garçonnet" (little boy), an octagonal pagoda was

built in the Chinese style which was in vogue in the 18th century.

Confiscated during the Revolution, the château suffered a fire then many phases of demolition organised by Pierre-Roger Ducos, senator consul during the Empire. At the Restoration, the château was returned to the Duc de Penthièvre's sole heir, Louise-Marie-Adélaïde de Bourbon (1753-1821), Duchesse d'Orléans, widow of Louis-Philippe Joseph, Duc d'Orléans (1747-1793) known as "Equality".



View of the Château of Amboise around 1740, by Jacques Rigaud

11. THE ORLÉANS-PENTHIÈVRE STUDY

The study houses a succession of late 18th century portraits showing the maternal grandfather and parents of the future French King Louis Philippe 1er.

From left to right:

- Portrait (on the left at the end of the room), Grand Admiral of the Kingdom, Louis-Jean Marie de Bourbon, Duc de Penthièvre (1725-1793), son of the Comte de Toulouse and King Louis XIV's grandson.



- Empire-style commode and Chinese vases.
- Bronze bust of King Louis XVIII (1755-1814-1815-1824).
- 19th century bureau.
- Portrait of Louis-Philippe Joseph d'Orléans (1747-1793) known as "Philippe Equality", Louis-Philippe 1er's father.
- Bust of Louis-Jean Marie de Bourbon, Duc de Penthièvre (1725-1793) (on the mantelpiece of the fireplace).
- Portrait (to the right of the fireplace) of Adélaïde de Bourbon-Penthièvre (1753-1821), Duchesse d'Orléans, widow of Louis-Philippe Joseph d'Orléans (1747-1793), who inherited the Château of Amboise in 1793. Portrait by Louise Vigée Lebrun (1755, 1842).
- Louis-Philippe chairs.
- 18th century chairs with Chinoiserie decoration, signed Boulard, either side of the fireplace. Château of Amboise furniture manufactured (around 1787-89) by order of the Duc de Penthièvre.
- Engravings by Rigaud, showing the château of Amboise around 1740, taken from "Maisons Royales de France" (Royal Houses of France).

Globe XIX



12. THE ORLÉANS CHAMBER



From left to right:

- Official portrait of Louis-Philippe 1er (1773-1850).
- Mahogany semainier, 7-drawer chest, Louis Philippe style lattice openwork chairs
- "Louis-Philippe" style furniture: mahogany "semainier" (chest with seven drawers, one for each day of the week), latticework chairs.
- Empire style furniture: sleigh bed or "Récamier"; desk; guéridon or pedestal table; mahogany-covered chest of drawers; writing desk.
- Crib (restoration)
- Bust of King Louis-Philippe 1er.
- Portraits of Ferdinand-Philippe d'Orléans (1810-1842), Duc d'Orléans (eldest son of Louis-Philippe 1er and Marie-Amélie de Bourbon-Siciles) and Hélène de Mecklembourg-Schwerin (1814-1858), Duchesse d'Orléans, by Franz-Xaver Winterhalter.
- Painting "Louis-Philippe and his sons" leaving Versailles on 10th June 1837, by Horace Vernet (1846).

Louis-Philippe, King of the French

Louis-Philippe was the head of the younger branch of the Bourbons descended from Philippe d'Orléans, King Louis XIV's brother. He espoused the first revolutionary ideals before exiling himself in various European countries and the United States of America. In July 1830, King Charles X abdicated under the pressure of three days of insurrection known as the "Les Trois Glorieuses" or the Second Revolution. Louis-Philippe's advanced ideas and great popularity pushed him towards the throne.



Louis Philippe, Duc d'Orléans, received the Château from his mother Louise-Marie-Adelaïde de Bourbon-Penthièvre in 1821.

The future King of France (1773, 1830, 1850) acquired 46 houses around the Château to demolish them, thus freeing the ramparts. The King's Lodge was decorated in the style of the époque.

Thus began the 18-year reign (1830-1848) better known as the "July Monarchy". Having pledged allegiance to the revised constitutional charter, he became Louis-Philippe 1er, King of the French. Economic prosperity at the start of his reign gave way to a severe economic and social crisis. His refusal to carry out electoral reform crystallised discontent until the "Campagne des Banquets". The banning of a Paris banquet degenerated into a riot and pushed the King to abdicate on 24th February, 1848. He died in exile in England in 1850.

13. THE MUSIC ROOM

Louis-Philippe furnished the château as a holiday retreat for the Orléans family, a few souvenirs of which are assembled here. In 1843, the sovereign entrusted his eldest son, Ferdinand-Philippe, with the task of overseeing construction of a panoramic room on the roof of the Tour des Minimes adjacent to this room.

Orléans Family Souvenirs



From left to right:

- Model of the "Belle Poule", vessel commanded by the Prince de Joinville, during the return to France of Napoléon 1er's ashes, after his death on the island of Sainte Hélène.
- Portrait of Madame Adélaïde (1777-1847), King's sister, painted by Court.
- Portrait of François d'Orléans (1818-1900), Prince de Joinville, 3rd son of Louis-Philippe 1er and Marie-Amélie de Bourbon-Siciles.
- Portrait of Françoise of Braganza (1824-1898), Princesse de Joinville, daughter of Emperor Pierre 1er of Brazil (Pierre IV of Portugal).
- Restoration style secrétaire, or writing desk.
- Erard Rio rosewood-covered grand piano (19th century).
- Erard harp (19th century).
- Portrait of Queen Marie-Amélie (1782-1866), Louis-Philippe's wife, with two of her sons, the Duc d'Aumale and the Duc de Montpensier.
- Busts of Queen Marie-Amélie (1782-1866) and Adélaïde (1777-1847), the King's sister.
- Empire style chaise longue.
- Mahogany chairs with back bars, signed Jacob.
- 19th century painting representing the Château Lodge, seen from the garden, by Gustave Noël.

Souvenirs of the Emir Abd al-Kader

After Louis-Philippe 1^{er} was exiled, properties confiscated from the Orléans family were sequestered by the Republic's provisional government. The château was effectively put at the disposal of the Ministry of War, which was at the time seeking a suitable residence for a State prisoner, Emir Abd al-Kader (1808-1883), who stayed there with his retinue from November 1848 to October 1852.



Close to the wooden fireplace, from left to right:

- Charcoal portrait of Emir Abd al-Kader (1808-1883), by Ange Tissier.
- Photograph of Emir Abd al-Kader (1808-1883) in a château doorway, by Gustave Le Gray (1820-1884), on the easel.
- Portrait of Général Henri d'Orléans (1822-1897), Duc d'Aumale, by Léon Bonnat.



THE CONQUEST OF ALGERIA: ABD AL-KADER, PRISONER OF STATE

The Duc d'Aumale (1822-1897), 5th son of Louis-Philippe, played a decisive role in the colonisation of Algeria, of which he became governor. He met resistance from tribes led by Emir Abd al-Kader, whose nomadic camp, la Smala, he captured in 1843. Having laid down his arms on 24th December 1847, the Emir was transported to Toulon then transferred to Pau. In November 1848, the illustrious prisoner was then assigned the Château d'Amboise as his residence, with his family and retinue

of around 80 people. The Emir spent four years at the Château before being personally freed by Louis Napoléon Bonaparte (1808-1873), Prince President, on 16th October 1852. He left France for Turkey, then Syria. He dedicated the rest of his life to meditation and teaching until his death in Damascus on 26th May 1883. A monument in memory of the members of his household, who died at Amboise, was erected in 1853 in the "Jardin d'Orient" (Garden of the East) in the upper part of the Château grounds.



Upon leaving the Orléans apartments, you reach the roof of the Tour des Minimes

14. TOUR DES MINIMES

On the roof

From the roof of the Tour des Minimes, you look out over the Loire, 40 metres below. The panoramic room built here in 1843 (not in existence today) welcomed Prince President Louis Napoléon Bonaparte (1808-1873) who came to give Emir Abd al-Kader his freedom on 16th October 1852. The top of this tower was entirely restored by the architect Ruprich-Robert at the end of the 19th century.

Tour des Minimes roof



Prince President Louis Napoléon announcing Abd al-Kader's freedom to him, by Ange Tissier (1814-1876).



A staircase allows you to descend to the cavalier tower ramp built during Charles VIII's reign.



At the bottom of the stairs, you can collect pushchairs left by the barrier at the start of the visit.



In the cavalier ramp

An Emperor emerging from the flames

This helix-shaped ramp was an ingenious way to enable the king or emperor's horses to reach the terraces from the town.

It was by the other cavalier tower, the Tour Heurtault, that the Emperor Charles V made his entrance in December 1539 on the invitation of King François 1^{er}. His stay was marked by an incident; a flaming torch set light to a wall hanging as the Imperial convoy came through the Tour Heurtault. Escaping unscathed from the accident, the Emperor carried on his journey to Flanders the next day.

The gallery Aumale is at the top of the cavalier ramp.



15. AUMALE GALLERY



This gallery carries the name of the 5th son of King Louis-Philippe, the Duc d'Aumale (1822-1897), owner of the château from 1895. A military and political man, he was also a great patron, behind the largest private collection in France of books and ancient art, now housed at the Château de Chantilly, under the aegis of the Institut de France.

During the Renaissance, this gallery linked the Royal Lodge (to the right) with Henri II's apartments and those of his children (parallel Lodge, to the left), no longer in existence, which looked out over the gardens.

Junction with the circuit for able-bodied, reduced mobility and wheelchair visitors. As you exit the Royal Lodge, a garden discovery route starts in the Naples Garden (to the left of the Aumale Gallery).



The gardens

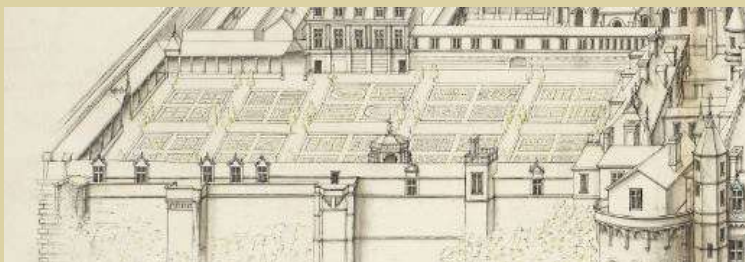


In the history of garden art, the suspended garden at Amboise, created at the very end of the 15th century, marked a significant development. It was on Charles VIII's return from the ephemeral conquest of the kingdom of Naples, while still filled with wonder at his discoveries, that he incorporated a garden space in the huge works project at the château. He entrusted its creation to a Neapolitan priest, Dom Pacello da Mercogliano, who set to work designing a garden in close proximity to the new lodges. The ethos was that of a pleasure garden, a quiet space where the five senses are awakened. The visitor route is designed to draw attention to the botanical diversity and ornithological riches.

16. THE NAPLES TERRACE,

A few years ago, this terrace to the left of the Minimes Tower exit was planted along the entire length with lime trees. This layout wiped out all traces of the château's first garden, created in 1496 according to the wishes of Charles VIII, on his return from Italy. The garden designed by Dom Pacello carried in it the seeds of French Renaissance gardens, open to the landscape and visible from all rooms in the lodge.

Detailed view of the gardens. Engraving by Jacques Androuet du Cerceau.



THE UPPER TERRACE planted with arbours along the medieval rampart on the north-eastern side of the domain. This hillock, created for defensive reasons, was converted into a belvedere, in the bottom of which was a small room adorned with sculptures of King Louis XII's symbolic animal: the porcupine. The belvedere's position made it possible to see beyond the eastern ramparts to the large ditches and the counterscarp.

Porcupine, emblem of Louis XII, under the Porcupine Belvedere, on the Naples terrace level.



17. THE LANDSCAPED GARDENS



Turning your back to the river facing south, paths weave through the former Romantic era grounds. Over the past few years, it has been replanted with holm oaks, boxwood, cypress trees, star jasmine, vines, grasses, perennial geraniums and cardoons.

The park's central alley forms the main axis from which the secondary alleys lead off. This paved pathway leads to the lodge from the historic entrance, a slatted wooden gate. From this precise point, visitors can enjoy a remarkable panorama of the park, with their view drawn to the landscape in the distance, past the successive, varied elements of the château (chapel, pool, tower roofs, etc.).



On the South-East terrace looking out over the Lebanese cedar, the Jardin d'Orient, created in 2005 by the artist-sculptor Rachid Koraïchi, honours the memory of the Emir Abd al-Kader's companions who died at Amboise. The geometric layout of the stela, stone slabs, is broken by a green line



Oriental Garden

In the welcoming shade of the majestic **Lebanese cedar** planted in the time of King Louis-Philippe, a **pool** made it possible to recreate an important element of the garden's features, a cool spot. It is impossible to think of a garden without the presence of water as much for its vital properties as for its aesthetic qualities.



Lebanese Cedar, 1840

Sheltered from the cold wind, the Midi garden stretches out across the park's southern slope. In this garden, diagonal rows of Italian immortelle (more commonly known as the curry plant), criss-cross. The resulting diamond shapes are planted with simple, highly-scented, white rose bushes.



Opposite the second cavalry tower, the "Heurtault" tower, rows of lavender bloom on either side of the path towards the lodge. The spirit of the place is in keeping with the total symbiosis between the garden and the landscape, which is why the Château d'Amboise was awarded 'Remarkable Garden' status in February 2017.

18. BUST OF LEONARDO DA VINCI

In the lower part of the gardens, the bust of Leonardo da Vinci sculpted in Carrara marble by Henri de Vauréal marks the original location of the St. Florentin collegiate (11th century Roman building) where, according to his wishes, he was initially buried.



statue of Leonardo da Vinci

The first burial place of Leonardo da Vinci

On 23rd April 1519, Leonardo dictated his last will and testament to the lawyer Guillaume Boureau, who noted, “The testator” wishes to be entombed in the St Florentin church, Amboise, and that his body be carried there by the chaplains thereof. On his death, 2nd May 1519, he was buried there. This 11th century collegiate was demolished between 1806 and 1810 (The bust of Leonardo da Vinci marks the spot in the château grounds). Excavations were undertaken in 1863, led by Arsène Houssaye, inspector general of Fine Arts, and notably brought to light a skeleton close to a tombstone bearing fragments of the artist’s name and St. Luke’s, the patron saint of painters. The finds amassed, notably Italian and French coins from the start of François Ier’s reign, enabled Arsène Houssaye to identify these remains as those of Leonardo da Vinci. These bones were finally transferred to the St. Hubert Chapel in 1874.



St. Florentin Collegiate, in the centre. Extract from the work by Jacques Androuet du Cerceau “The finest buildings in the kingdom of France”

- Photographic credits :
- Léonard de Serres : p.2, 4, 6, p.14-2, p.17-3 à 5, p.23-1, p.24-3 à 5, p.25, p.26-1, p.27-3
- 100 million de pixels : p.5-1, p.24-1
- FSL : p.5-2 et 3, p.8-2 et 3, p.10-1, p.18-3, p.19-1, p.23-4, p.27-2
- Stevens Frémont : p.6-1, p. 9-3, p.11-3, p.12-3, p.16-2, p.23-3
- Coll. Windsor RL : p.8-1
- Amilcar Beato : p.9-4
- Eric Sander : p.9-1, p.13-1, p.14-1, p.18-1 et 2, p.19-2, p.20 à 22
- Marc Jauneaud : p.10-3,
- Jean-François Le Scour : p.10-4, p.11-1 et 2, p.13-2, p.16-1,3 et 4, p.24-2
- Laurent Massillon : p.27-1
- Marc Métay : p.12-1
- Agence photographique de la Réunion des musées nationaux RMN-Grand Palais (Château de Versailles)/Franck Raux : p.23-2
- DR : p.7, p.9-2, p.10-2, p.12-2, p.15, p.17-1 et 2, p.18-4 à 7, p.20-2



ADL Touraine - JC. Couta

Exits



Exit 1: During the day, via the former stables (shop) and the Heurtault Tower



Follow the site’s natural slope to reach the main ramp leading to the orangery (location of toilet facilities), then follow the ramp to the former stables(Histopad© counter and shop) that you can cross through.



From there you will reach the château’s second cavalry tower, the Heurtault tower, with its superb décor of amusing late 15th century “grotesques”. Follow the cavalry ramp back into the centre of town.

Humorous carvings, Tour Heurtault interior



EXIT 2 : At the end of the day, after the former stables have closed (shop)

Follow the site’s natural slope to reach the main ramp leading to the orangery (location of toilet facilities), then follow the ramp to directly reach the Coats of Arms gallery, through which you entered.



EXIT 3 (PRM): (Reduced Mobility)
Via the private entrance that you used if you have a vehicle



+ 00 33 (0)2 47 57 00 98



AMBOISE
CHATEAU ROYAL

WWW.CHATEAU-AMBOISE.COM
PHONE +33 47 57 00 98
CONTACT@CHATEAU-AMBOISE.COM



Gentle walk

