



AMBOISE  
CHÂTEAU ROYAL

## VISITOR GUIDE



## On the terraces of the Royal Château of Amboise

- ← to your left, the new garden laid out on the site of the former lodge of the seven virtues
- ↑ opposite the ramp, the chapel of Saint-Hubert
- to your right, the 15th and 16th century royal lodges
- ↓ to the rear, the gently sloping gardens and the two impressively large cavaliers 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 1er, his sister Marguerite d’Angoulême and the children of Henri II and Catherine de Medici were raised here.

## 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.



Louis XI



Charles VIII



Genealogy of the Valois

## 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 Beaujeau. 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

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!

### 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 Aragons 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.





## 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.

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



Leonardo da Vinci's tomb

events and entertainment for him during the 1518 royal festivities.

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



## OPPOSITE THE ROYAL LODGE The lower courtyard and trench

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

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.

### Tragic ball game in the château trench

The celebrated chronicler, Philippe de Commines, 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 36 – and without a male heir.





THE GOTHIC LODGE, GROUND FLOOR  
The guard's room, walkway, pillar room



THE GOTHIC LODGE, 1st FLOOR  
The drummers' room



### 1. The Guard's Room

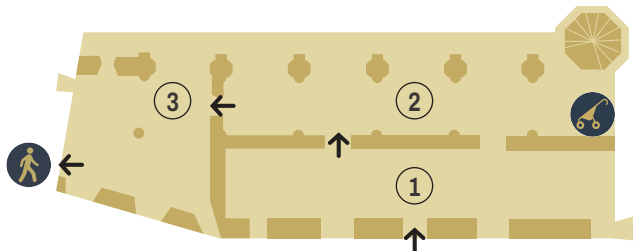
On the right, discover the successive stages of construction of the château over the centuries, thanks to interactive terminals. Video projections reveal the conditions under which Charles VIII's major building project was carried out, and the architectural and decorative wealth of the Sept Vertus' lodge, which has now disappeared. On your left, the tour begins, with a succession of guard rooms controlling access to the noble floors.

### 2. The Guards Walkway

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

### 3. 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.



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



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



Return to the Lodge entrance. Access to 1st floor at the back of the Lodge, garden side. An access ramp, under the Aumale Gallery, gives access to the 1st floor.

King Louis XI (1423-1483) was the first to make occasional stays to the castle's former keep, where his wife and son, the future Charles VIII, lived. During one of these stays, he founded the Order of Saint-Michel, whose longevity of over 360 years far exceeds that of the current French Legion of Honor. He also decided (14 March 1470) to install the royal silk factories in Tours, which brought economic prosperity to the Loire Valley for centuries.

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).

### 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, 1498, †1515), Charles' cousin.

François 1er (1494/1515/†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.



Anne of Brittany





THE GOTHIC LODGE, 1st FLOOR  
**The Great hall**

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.

#### **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 ascending 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.

#### **... 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.



THE RENAISSANCE APARTMENTS - 1st FLOOR  
**The great 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).



*Francis I*



*large Renaissance walnut chest*



*Renaissance-style earthenware  
19th century*

#### **... 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.





## THE RENAISSANCE APARTMENTS - 1st FLOOR The King's Bedroom

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.

### 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.



Catherine de Medici



Henri II



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



## THE RENAISSANCE APARTMENTS - 1st FLOOR The Garderobe

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

### 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

(Not included in collections)



Henry IV



Louis XIII



Louis XIV



Philippe V of Spain

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).





19TH CENTURY ROOM - 2nd FLOOR  
The Orléans-Penthièvre Cabinet



19TH CENTURY ROOM - 2nd FLOOR  
Orleans room

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".

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




Duke of Choiseul



Duke of Penthièvre



Genealogy of the  
Bourbons-Orléans

Louis Philippe, Duc d'Orléans, received the Château from his mother Louise-Marie-Adélaïde 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. He carried out the first restoration of the Saint Hubert chapel, transformed the former lodge of the sept-vertus, ruined by fire, into a roof terrace and added a panoramic lounge to the top of the Minimes tower.



**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.

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.





19TH CENTURY ROOM - 2nd FLOOR  
**Abd-El-Kader room**

### Abd-el-Kader and the beginning of the conquest of Algeria

In the spring of 1827, a diplomatic incident between the chief of the government of Algiers (called the “Dey”) and the French consul gave rise to great tension between the Regency and France, leading in June 1830 to the landing of troops from the French fleet on the outskirts of Algiers. French garrisons were established in all the port areas. The Dey of Algiers and the governor of Oran, representatives of the Ottoman sultan, went into exile. In the province of Oran, Abd-el-Kader's father played a leading role in the resistance to the conquest. At his side, Abd-el-Kader experienced first war experiences in early 1832. Then, at the age of 24, he was placed at the head of a confederation of tribes and given the title of ‘emir’ (‘commander’).

### The Princes of Orléans on the Campaign trail

The participation of King Louis-Philippe's five sons in the Algerian campaigns enhanced the prestige of the Royal Family. The Duke of Nemours took part in the capture of Constantine on 13 September 1837. The crown prince, the Duke of Orléans, crossed the Portes de fer (Iron gates, in Bibans mountains) in autumn 1839. On 16 May 1843, in the presence of the young Duke of Aumale, French troops captured the Smala, the mobile capital of the Emir Abd-el-Kader. Despite his young age (25), this victory led to the Duke of Aumale being appointed Governor of Algeria in September 1847. The Prince of Joinville was appointed Rear-Admiral and commanded the naval bombardment of Tangier and Mogador in 1844. The Duke of Montpensier distinguished himself at the battle of Biskra (1844) and then in the fighting against the Kabyles (1845).

### The captivity in Amboise of the Emir Abd-el-Kader (1848-1852)

After 15 years of fighting against the French armies, Abd-el-Kader decided to lay down his arms and leave definitively the Algeria, on condition that he was allowed to join an Islamic land. This condition was accepted by the Duke of Aumale, then Governor General of Algeria, and on 24 December 1847 Abd-el-Kader embarked with his family and friends. However, the promise made to the Emir was not endorsed by the government in Paris, and Abd-el-Kader learned when his ship called at Toulon that he was considered a captive. Despite the revolution of 24 February 1848, his fate remained unchanged: the Emir and his relatives were taken captive to the Chateau of Pau (south west of France) and then to the Chateau of Amboise, where they arrived on 8 November 1848. They remained there for 4 years. During these years, the Emir's captivity gave rise to numerous protests in France and abroad, and the tide of public opinion in favor of Abd-el-Kader's release continued to grow. Prince Louis Napoléon Bonaparte, then President of the Republic, came to Amboise on 16 October 1852 to demand the Emir's immediate release. The Emir then went to Paris, where he received expressions of sympathy and respect, before leaving France to settle in the Ottoman Empire, not far from Damascus, as he had planned. In July 1860, Abd-el-Kader heroically offered his protection to thousands of Christians threatened with death at the gates of Damascus. His generous gesture was hailed the world over and Emperor Napoleon III elevated the Emir to the dignity of Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor. The Emir returned to Amboise for the last time on 29 August 1865 and was celebrated by all the people of Amboise.



**Minimes Tower**

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.

*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 1er. 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 Aumale Gallery is at the top of the cavalier ramp.*

### The Aumale Galerie

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.





## 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.

*(map on the back of the leaflet)*

### 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.



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.

### 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 gardens

**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

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.

**Opposite the second cavalry tower**, the "Heurtault" tower, rows of lavender bloom on either side of the path towards the lodge.

**On the right, in the direction of the chapel, the garden of the sept-vertus**, made up of 3 patios bordered by mulberry trees in pots, marks the site of the lodge of the same name, which has now disappeared. The mulberry tree is one of the emblematic trees of the site. In a letter signed at the Château d'Amboise on 14 March 1470, Louis XI ordered the installation of silk factories in Tours. The Loire Valley was rich in silk until the 19th century.





## 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.

### 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.



### Facilities available



Security cameras



Minors remain the responsibility of accompanying adults



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



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

### 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.



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



Arms gallery

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



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Gentle walk  
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Porcupine Gate

Charles VIII wing

Garçonnet Tower

Minimes Tower

Aumale Gallery

LODGE ENTRANCE

Renaissance wing  
Louis Philippe apartment

St Hubert Chapel

Start  
Guided visits

ENTRANCE

Access ramp

"Sept Vertus"  
garden

Orangerie

Box  
Topiaries

Lebanese Cedar

Bust of  
Leonardo da Vinci

Landscaped gardens

Lions Gate

Farmer stables

Histopad

Heurtault Tower

Oriental  
Garden

Naples Terrace