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The tapestries

The tapestries on show at the château de Pau are, by virtue of their number and quality, one of the most valuable collections in France. They were specially chosen among the most beautiful hangings retained by the royal furniture repository, in order to complete the decoration created by Louis-Philippe's architects. Most of these tapestries date from the reign of Louis XIV and Louis XV. They represent mythological scenes (The story of Psyche, The Marriage of Flora and Zephyr) or aristocratic ones (The Hunts of Maximilian) which create, along with the furniture, a singular atmosphere.

Between Dream and History

All the ingredients of a very popular myth are already brought together in the 18th century and form a fictional presence of Henri IV. It gave rise to numerous objects in various styles which reproduce, untiringly, those formulae associated with the memory of a jolly, heroic king. With its testimony to the Pyrenean dream of Gaston Fébus, the Navarese hopes of Henri IV's grandparents, his own success and legend, 19th century "troubadour" reverie, at the meeting point of roads and styles, the Château de Pau offers its visitors a deep insight into the heart of History.



Château de Pau

english

INFORMATIONS

Address

Musée national du château de Pau
64000 Pau
Tél. : 05 59 82 38 00
Web-site : www.musee-chateau-pau.fr

Open

Every day, except January 1st, May 1st
and December 25th

Hours*

From September 16th to June 14th:
9.30 a.m to 11.45 a.m and 2 p.m to 5 p.m
From June 15th to September 15th:
9.30 a.m to 12.15 a.m and 1.30 p.m to 5.45 p.m

*Is subject to modification

Visit

One hour-guided-tour only in French
Ask the guide for an English paper translation.
Guided tour in english by booking only (15 people
minimum) : (33) 5 59 82 38 07)

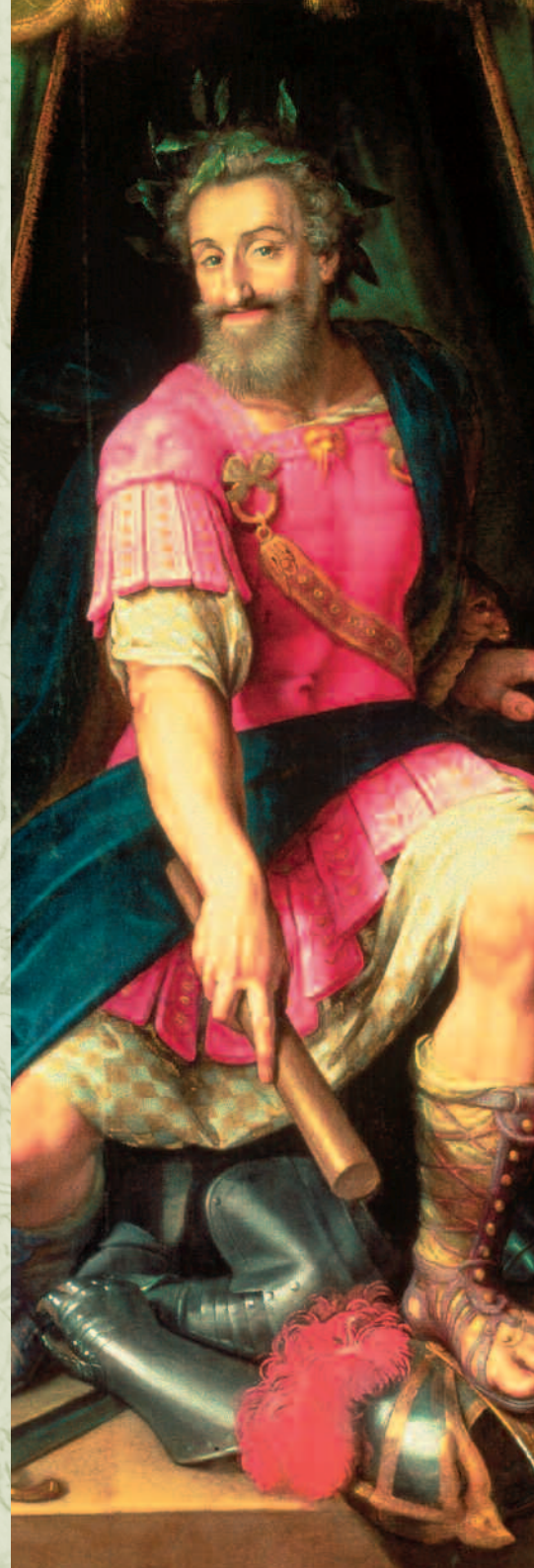
Prices list*

Full price : 5 €
Reduced price : 3.50 € (18 to 25 years included)
Free under the age of 18
Global price : 77 € (20 to 30 pax)
Free entrance every first Sunday of the month

*Is subject to modification

Informations - Booking

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From fortress to château

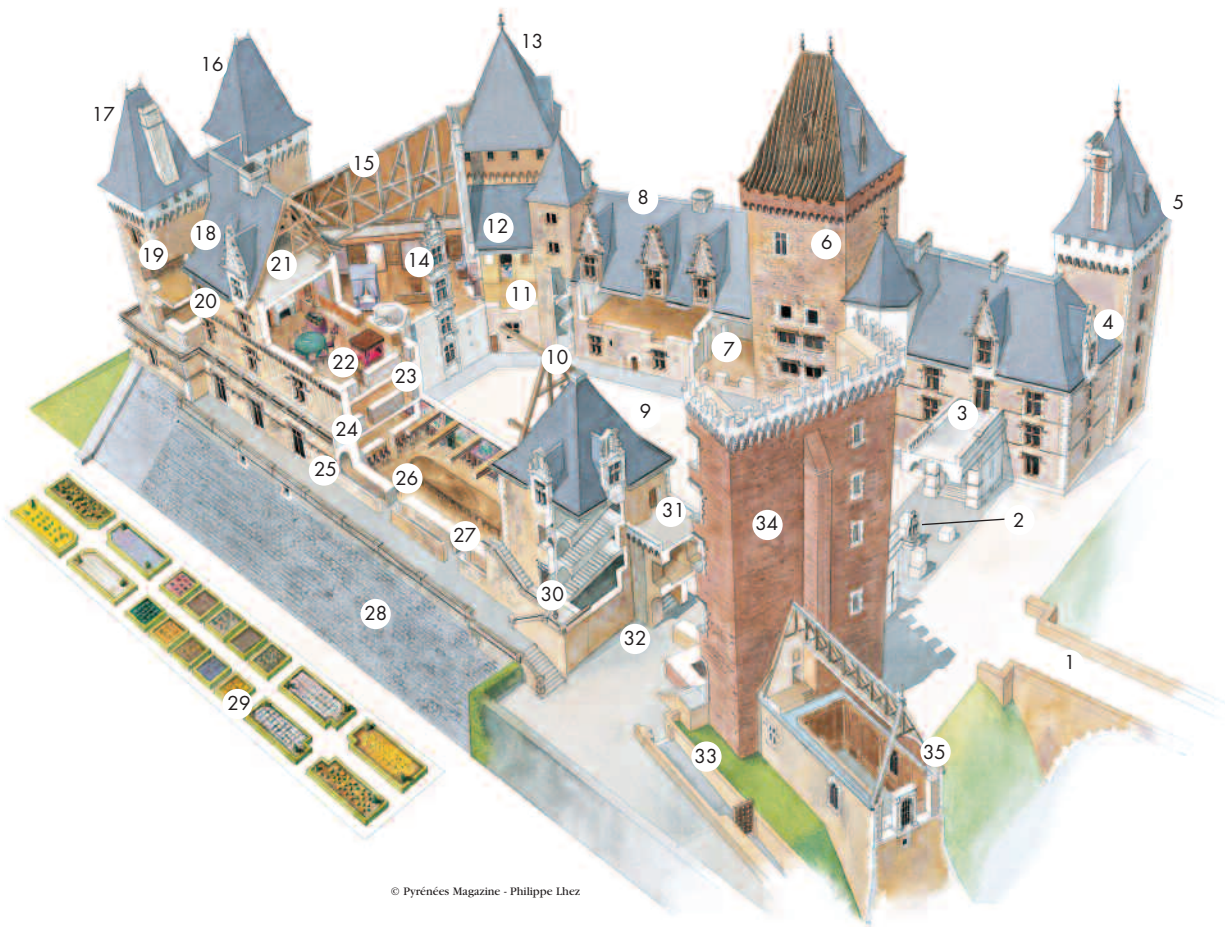
The town of Pau owes its origin to a medieval fortress, which was renovated by Gaston Fébus in the 14th century. Then it was transformed into a Renaissance château by the kings of Navarre, formerly Viscounts of Bearn. In addition, in the 19th century, Louis-Philippe and Napoléon III commissioned architects who were devoted to history to do considerable work on the château. The result is a perfect example of the decoration and furnishing of the years 1840-1860.

Following the trail of Henri IV

Henri IV, otherwise known as « The Bearnais », was born in Pau, on 13th Dec. 1553. He inherited lands from his mother, Jeanne d'Albret, and his grandparents, (whose monogram still adorns the grand Renaissance staircase in the château) Henri d'Albret and Marguerite d'Angoulême, the famous classical storyteller, known for her rendering of the *Heptameron*. These outstanding figures of the political, religious and literary history of the Renaissance, are associated, through the collections of the museum, with that of the first of the Bourbons.

Decor and memory

Louis-Philippe, who held dear the celebration of French historical memorabilia, wanted Pau, so linked to the memory of Henri IV, to be part of this artistic programme, and a major contribution to his political credibility. Himself unable to visit the site, the king kept abreast of the work at his Bearnaise residence, while, their sons, the Dukes of Orléans, Nemours and Montpensier were entertained there with all due ceremony. The important purveyors to the Crown created fitting suite of furniture in the then fashionable neo-gothic and neo-renaissance style for the château de Pau. These furnishings are an example of the authentic decoration of a royal abode under the July Monarchy.



- 1 Castle main-access
- 2 Statue of Henri IV by Barthélemy Tremblay and Germain Gissey, late 18th century
- 3 Napoléon III portico
- 4 Napoléon III wing
- 5 Napoléon III tower
- 6 Montausier tower. Museum reception & administration
- 7 Exhibition room
- 8 Northern wing
- 9 Maincourtyard
- 10 Billère staircase
- 11 19th century painting chamber
- 12 Dressing-room
- 13 Billère tower
- 14 1st floor. Empress' rooms
- 15 Western wing
- 16 Louis-Philippe tower
- 17 Mazères tower
- 18 Southern wing
- 19 Queen Jeanne d'Albret's private chamber
- 20 1st floor. Emperor's private chamber
- 21 Framed structure dating from the 15th century
- 22 2nd floor King's bedroom
- 23 1st floor. Family room
- 24 Ground floor. Servants' room
- 25 Furring
- 26 Ground floor. Hundred guests' dining-room
- 27 Terrace
- 28 Glacis
- 29 Gardens (Renaissance style)
- 30 Main staircase
- 31 Gaston Fébus passage way
- 32 Castle south-access
- 33 Old fortified entrance
- 34 Gaston Fébus keep
- 35 Chapel