



Projet Erasmus+ Namur - Marsala

" Patrimonia "



A la découverte du patrimoine historique, architectural et culturel

Modave Castle



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ABSTRACT



General presentation

Located on a rocky peak 60 meters above the Hoyoux river valley, a tributary of the Meuse river, the "Castle of Modave", also called "Castle of the Marchin Counts", offers an exceptional view on the surrounding nature constituting a 450 hectares natural reserve.

This is one of the rare examples in the Liège region of a style that perfectly evokes French 17th century architecture. Baroque Mosan style, Castle Modave has a classic facade that gives the appearance of an elegant mansion whose once French-style landscaped gardens extended its amenity. It is classified in the Major Heritage of Wallonia since October 25, 1946.



Another particularity of the castle is that it was equipped with a water wheel dating from the 17th century, attributed to Renkin Sualem and intended to bring the water from the Hoyoux river about fifty meters higher to the castle. The tower above which the water was rising still exists in the upper part of the park.

One of the rooms of the Castle is dedicated to the evocation of this wonder. That is undoubtedly served as a model to the famous Marly machine designed to bring the water from the Seine river to the Versailles Palace.

Some facts ...

Many prehistoric remains found in the area prove that the area was already occupied a long time ago.

More recently, the Gauls honored their goddess "Viradectis" at the very spot where flows today Ste-Geneviève fountain and the current name of many localities, due to their Roman appellation, attests to the Romanization of the region.

Then the Merovingians settle in the vicinity of Modave and create most of the current hamlets. That's why in the 13th century, in the surroundings, one can find a lot of fiefdoms. Their castles proudly dominate the rocky outcrops overlooking the Hoyoux river Valley (Barse Castle, Vierset Castle, Strée Castle, Roiseux square dungeon and the dungeon of Modave Castle).

The building of Modave Castle probably dates back to the earliest times of the feudal regime, when the lords were forced to build solidly fortified dwellings to defend their power and security, to protect their property against enemy's incursions.

From the thirteenth century to the middle of the sixteenth century, Modave's family, native on the spot, owns the land and the fortress. Over the centuries, the fiefdom and the castle pass from hand to hand, are sold, bought or conquered by weapons.

Fired by the Lotharingian troops in 1651, Count Jean-Gaspard-Ferdinand from Marchin, Lord of Modave, inspired by the great French architecture of the beginning of Louis XIV's reign, rebuilt the castle as it is today . Modave castle turns into a residential castle but is still surrounded by some defence works.





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