

# State Castle Opouchno

## Tour 1



**zámek Opouchno**

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**Hello and welcome to Opočno Castle.**

**Please do not touch anything, do not sit down on anything  
and only keep within the delimited area during the tour.**

# 1. African Hall



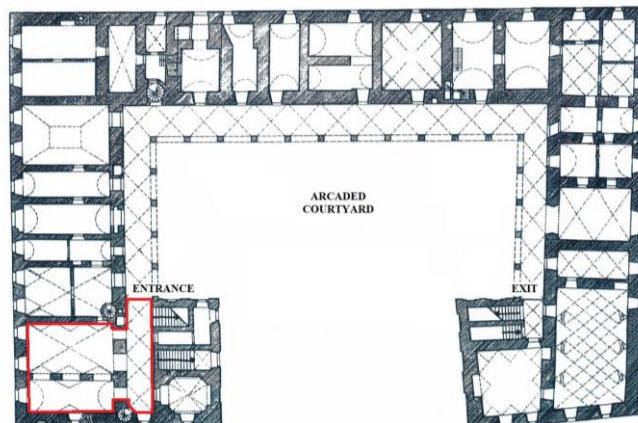
The African Hall was built by Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld (1866-1957) at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This man will be with us throughout the tour and you will gradually learn about his complete life story.

Approximately at the age of forty, Joseph went on two hunting expeditions in Africa and two in North America. Such travels became very fashionable among the nobility in the early 1900s and Joseph was one of the first to undertake something like that. Thanks to his travels he became the founder of one of the oldest ethnographic collections in Bohemia, which is located here at Opočno Castle.

His first two expeditions in 1901 and 1902 took him to Africa, namely to the area of today's Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, from where he brought hunting trophies, such as four shot lions, different antelopes and the African buffalo placed above the fireplace, as well as the body parts of different animals, such as an elephant tail, python skin and turtle shell.

Apart from that, Joseph also brought numerous articles of daily use from the indigenous people. These included different vessels, jewellery and weapons.

On his next two expeditions (in 1904-1905 and 1905-1906), the Prince travelled to North America, accompanied by his first wife, Princess Lucy Yvonne. They visited, for instance, Yellowstone National Park and Grand Canyon. From these journeys he also brought home many hunting trophies, which you will see in the Game Room on the first floor, as well as the Native Americans' clothes, children's toys, and snow shoes, which were indispensable for hunting in Alaska.



## 2. Staircase and hall on the first floor



In the first part of the staircase there are two paintings in which you can see our castle and the summer residence in the park. The weapons represent only a fraction of the Opočno collection, which includes over two thousand items and which you can enjoy during the tour of the second floor, where the armouries are situated.

Opočno was first mentioned in writing in the *Chronica Boemorum* and the reference to it is connected to the year 1068. Therefore, the town belongs among the oldest towns in the Czech Republic.

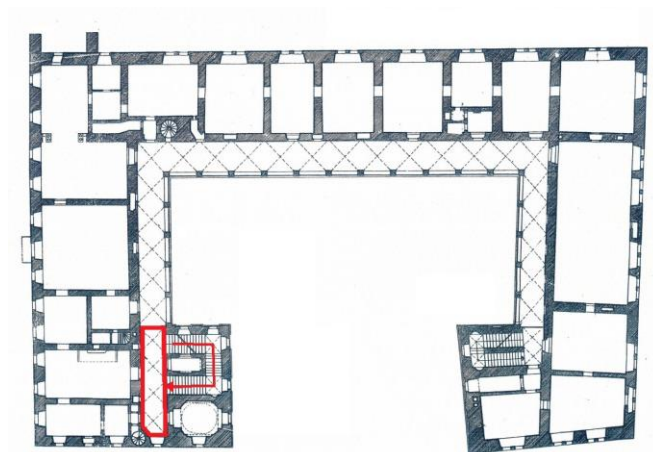
The first documented owners were the Drslavic family. The Drslavices converted the original wooden fortified settlement into a Gothic castle, which was burned during the Hussite wars. A milestone for Opočno was the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when the castle became the property of one of the wealthiest noble families of East Bohemia, the Trčkas of Lípa. The Trčkas remained at Opočno for 140 years, refashioning it, at high costs, into a Renaissance-style family residence. At that time the arcades were created which you probably admired in the courtyard. All parts of the palace were connected by alures.

In the early 1700s, the Trčkas' wealth became immense. Jan Rudolf Trčka of Lípa supported humanist poets, and his wife, Marie Magdalena, focused on lending, buying and exchanging property. Due to her single-minded and uncompromising manners, she was dubbed the "Mean Manda" by the commonalty. After the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, the Trčkas wealth was only surpassed by that of Albrecht von Wallenstein.

Marie Magdalena and Jan Rudolf's son was Adam Erdman Trčka of Lípa (in the painting opposite the stairs). He belonged among Wallenstein's closest confidants and was murdered along with him in Cheb in 1634. As a result, the noble family of the Trčkas became virtually extinct.

Opočno Castle became the property of the Emperor's favourite, one of Wallenstein's murderers, Rudolf Collredo (next to the door leading to the arcades).

Under the Colloredos, the castle underwent many changes. The last significant change was made by Prince Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld, who modernised it (for example, he had modern bathrooms built).

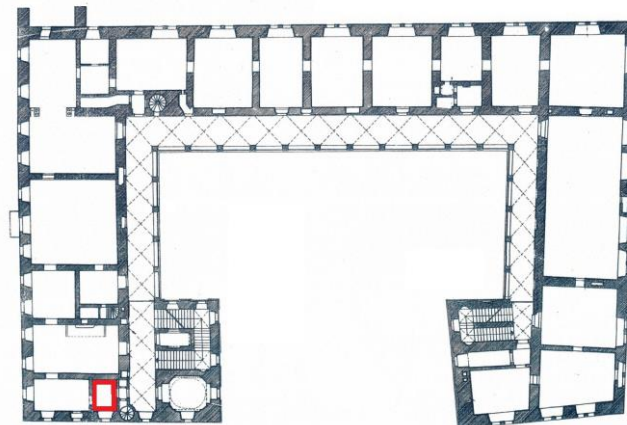


### 3. The Prince's Bathroom



The men's bathroom comes approximately from 1912. It was used as a private bathroom by the Prince in power.

An interesting thing is the shower enclosure with a massaging device by Shanks&Company. The different positions of the lever control enabled the user to run himself a bath, turn on the shower head or the jets in the vertical parts of the partition structure.



## 4. The Prince's Bedroom

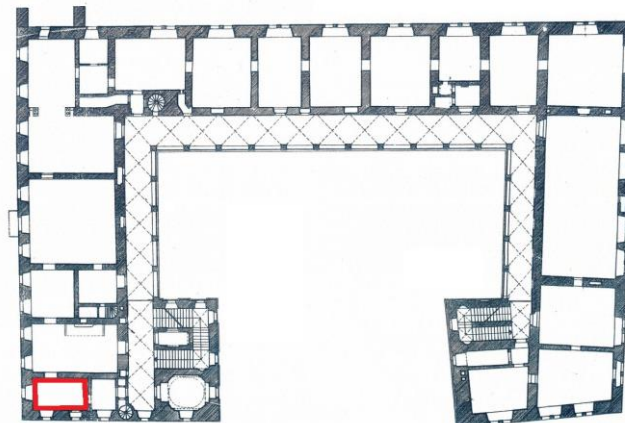


The bedroom was refurbished in Romantic style at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Joseph Colloredo-Mannsfeld was born in Prague in 1866 but grew up at the family's palace in Dobříš. He was brought up by a French governess, who gradually built his close relationship to France, which eventually led to his two marriages to French women. In his childhood, Joseph would only come to Opočno on holiday but grew fond of the castle so much that after taking over the family's property he began to convert it into a prestige family residence.

His father was Hieronymus Colloredo-Mannsfeld, who held many public posts. He was Minister of Agriculture in two Austro-Hungarian governments and a mayor of the town of Dobříš. He died when Joseph was fifteen and after that the care of the family fell upon his wife, Joseph's mother, Aglae Festetics.

The bedroom's furnishings include one of the two American stoves in the castle. It was brought by Joseph from North America.



## 5. The Prince's Salon



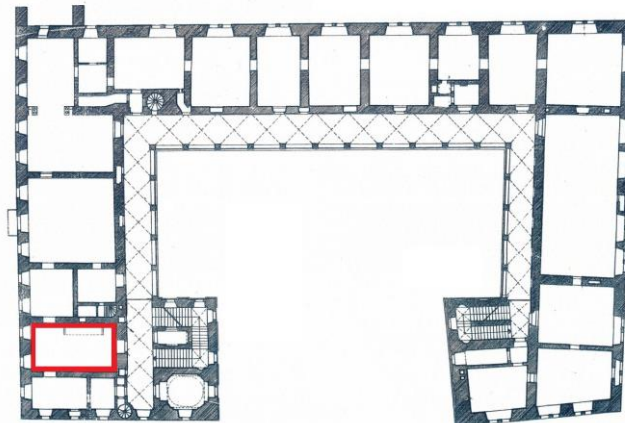
A proper suite included a salon for the Prince to receive both private and business visitors and have discussions with friends.

At the age of fifteen, Prince Joseph Colloredo-Mannsfeld began to be continuously prepared for taking over the family's property. After studying law and completing mandatory military service, he worked in diplomatic service in Berlin and Paris.

A turning point came in 1895, when his grandfather, Joseph Franz Colloredo-Mannsfeld, who had been the head of the family, died. The family's property was taken over by Joseph.

Initially, Prince Joseph Colloredo-Mannsfeld did not spend much time taking care of the family property, enjoying his wealth instead. He collected weapons, paintings, books, coins and other things and travelled to Africa and America. Opočno gradually became the family's treasure house where Joseph started storing his collections.

You can see a photograph of Prince Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld taken in 1903 in the courtyard. He is captured sitting in a Clement-Bayard car, which shows his enthusiasm for motoring and for modern technology in general. He had the castle electrified, had water installed in the bathrooms, flush toilets put in, etc.





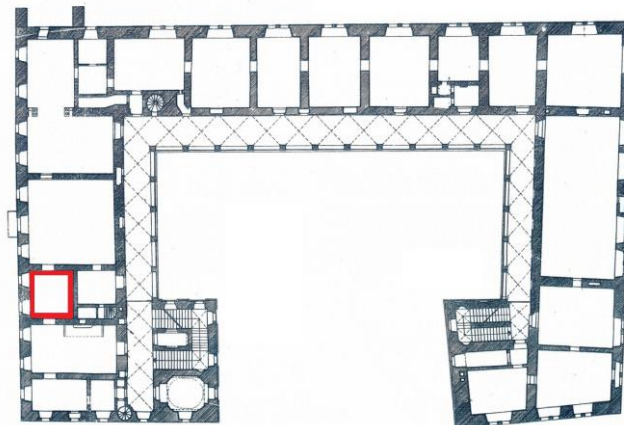
## 6. The Prince's Study



Joseph began to use his salon and study especially after 1906, when the managing director of the Colloredo-Mannsfeld estates, Jan Kolda, died. After that Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld managed his estates by himself, focusing particularly on forestry.

At that time all the estates were profitable and the Prince embarked on various experiments. For example, he founded a muskrat and arctic fox fur farm at Dobříš (he had brought muskrats from North America and as a result this animal species spread all over Europe).

After the land reform during the period of the First Czechoslovak Republic, the childless Joseph lost interest in his estates, transferring the possession of his property to his nephews and having a high rent paid. That secured his high standard of living and enabled him to pursue only his hobbies all over the world.



## 7. Dining Room

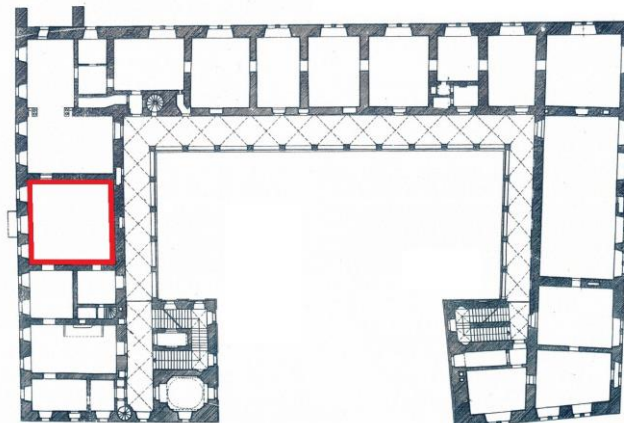


The dining room is one of the most sumptuous rooms of the castle. It also used to be a room that each important guest visited.

One of them was the Holy Roman Emperor, Francis I, who is looking at us from the painting in the left part of the room. He visited the castle twice, always without his wife, Maria Theresa of Austria (see her portrait on the opposite wall). Other important guests entertained by the Colloredo-Mannsfelds at the castle included Russian Emperor, Alexander I, King of Prussia, Frederick William III, and Duke Metternich (1813), who became Austrian Chancellor. One of the last prominent visitors was the successor to the Austrian throne, Franz Ferdinand d'Este.

There are many other portraits of the imperial family members. On the front wall we can see Maria Theresa's parents, Charles VI and Elisabeth Christine, and above the door to the next room Ferdinand I.

Above the door we used to enter the dining room you can see Francis I. The last two portraits mentioned were painted by František Horčíčka, who managed the Colloredo-Mannsfelds' picture gallery. As far as the practical use of the dining room is concerned, it is interesting to know that the food was cooked in the kitchen downstairs and then transported by an electric lift. The lift ran to the room next door, where the dishes were arranged and then taken to the table.



## 8. Prestige Salon

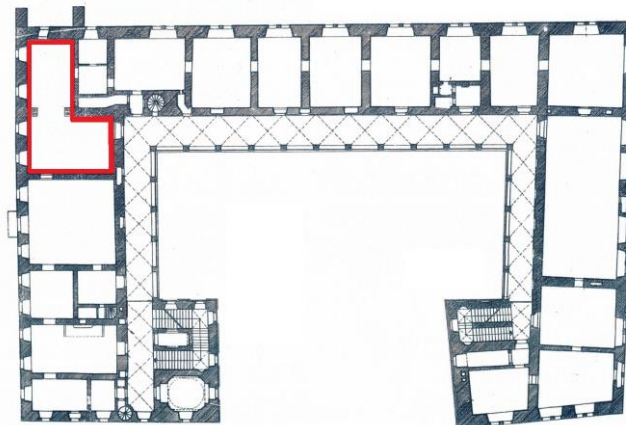


In order to have this spectacular room decorated, Joseph Colloredo-Mannsfeld invited French artists, who made his dream of having a French Baroque-style room come true at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> / beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The boarding has the family's portrait gallery embedded in it, showing the family of the Princes wearing the robe of the Golden Fleece, which was the highest honour of the Hapsburgs.

The lady in the picture wearing the pink dress is Maria Isabella Mannsfeld. As a result of her marriage to Franz de Paula Gundakar I von Colloredo, two important families merged into one: the Colloredo-Mannsfelds.

The moustached man in one of the paintings was Joseph II's grandfather, Joseph Franz, and Joseph had him to thank for the immense wealth that was bequeathed to him. Joseph Franz had bought Zbiroh Castle, and the Colloredo-Mannsfelds became the third richest noble family at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this room we are walking on the original carpets, which are covered with glass so that the room's historical appearance is preserved without them getting damaged.



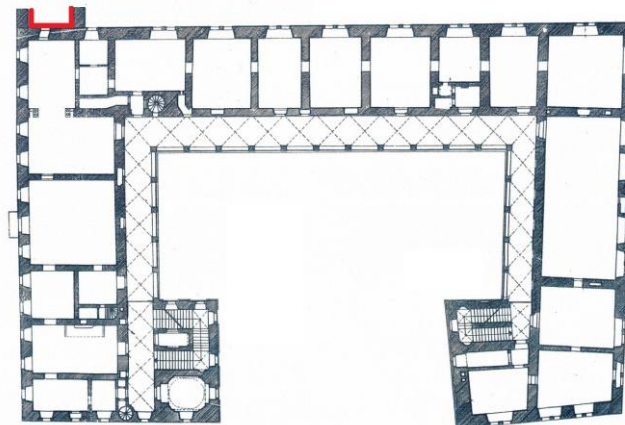
## 9. The Game Room



Let's take a peek into the Game Room. It is one of the most modern rooms of the castle. It was built at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld to house his American collections (large hunting trophies, taxidermies, etc.).

The hall is focused on his passion for travelling, which is why the ceiling has the form of a ship's hull seen from the inside. There is a dog-leg staircase leading down to the hall, so it feels like walking down a captain's bridge.

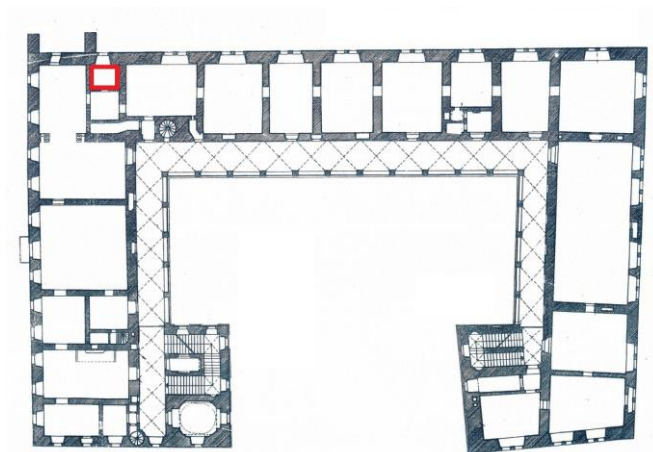
The Game Room and the salon are the only two rooms of the castle that were heated by hot air. There was a boiler room downstairs from which hot air was blown through ventholes (e.g. behind the cue stand) into the hall.



## 10. The Princess's Bathroom



This bathroom was only built in the 1930s. There was both cold and hot water. It was used by Joseph's second wife, Marie de Smit.

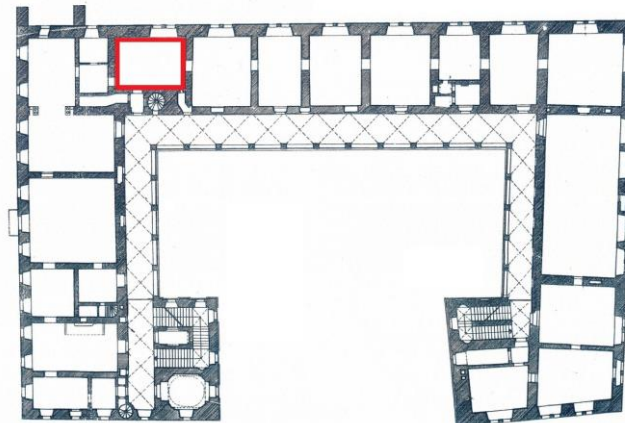


## 11. The Princess's Dressing Room



Let me now tell you about Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld's first wife.

Lucy Yvonne was a charismatic lady from France. She got married to Joseph in Paris in 1903. However, a year later the Austrian aristocracy began to assault the Prince verbally due to her lineage and due to stories from her past. The most ardent proponent of the marriage being annulled was Prince Kinsky. He hired an English lawyer who collected evidence proving that Lucy Yvonne's first husband had died in sheer poverty and that for the next three years she made her living as a prostitute in London. Joseph was shocked by the news and considered annulling the marriage himself. After the initial shock subsided, he returned to Paris and told Lucy Yvonne about the evidence. She denied all the allegations and Joseph believed her. Then he announced he was not going to get divorced.



## 12. The Princess's Bedroom



Notice the original historical curtains, wallpapers and fitted carpet. The whole room is a copy of a room at a French palace.

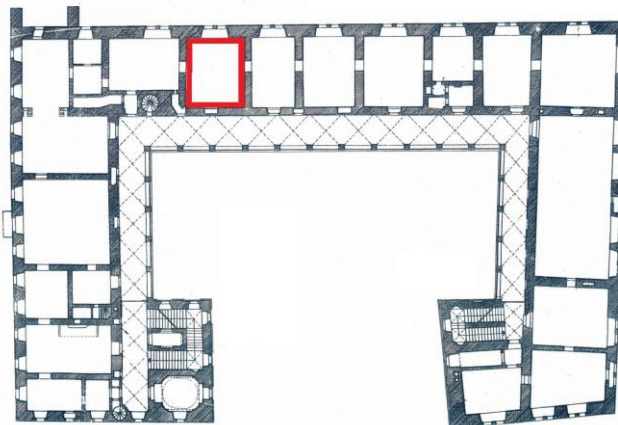
The couple, Lucy Yvonne and Joseph, loved travelling. They travelled to North America together (1904-1905), met the American high society and went to see different performances. Lucy Yvonne unintentionally attracted a lot of attention as she slipped and fell over the edge of the parterre while entering the box at the New York opera house. Fortunately, her fall, which looked dangerous, had no consequences.

Having returned to Bohemia, Lucy Yvonne participated in many social and charity events. In Dobříš she provided 140-160 dinners for the poor twice a week and established a kindergarten at the castle.

She shared her husband's passion for modern technology, especially for cars.

After Joseph returned from WWI, their marriage went through deep crisis. One of the reasons might have been the fact that they had no children (above all, they didn't have a son to bequeath the family's property to). Their relationship was also ruined by Lucy Yvonne's "generous" relationship to money. However, the most important reason was that Joseph had already begun corresponding with another woman, Marie Sidonia de Smit, before WWI and stopped sharing a household with Lucy Yvonne.

The ensuing divorce was difficult from many points of view.



### 13. The Princess's Salon

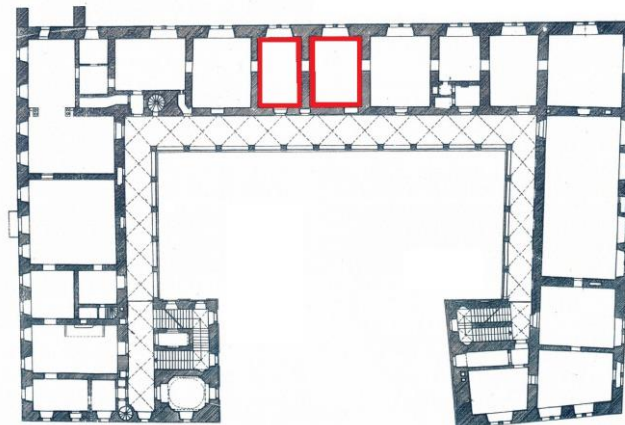


Princess Lucy Yvonne did not agree to the divorce and tried to get as many benefits as possible. At the same time she did not hesitate to defame her husband in the highest places. They were eventually divorced in 1925 but disputes between the ex-spouses intensified. Shortly after the divorce, Joseph sued Lucy Yvonne, demanding that she returned a family jewel, a diadem set with 575 brilliants. It was originally part of the fidei-commissum. Joseph's legal action at the courts of the then new Czechoslovak Republic was unsuccessful. The reason was that the institute of fidei-commissum had been cancelled in 1924.

After the divorce, Joseph maintained a relationship with the aforementioned Marie Sidonia de Smit. They lived happily travelling between France, Czechoslovakia and other countries, and spent less and less time at Opočno. Joseph would only stay here for three weeks a year. One week in July to check the operations of his farm estate and two weeks in October to go hunting.

This room became the bedroom of the Princess's lady companion.

You can take a look into the adjacent room which was the bedroom of Joseph's brother, Hieronymus.





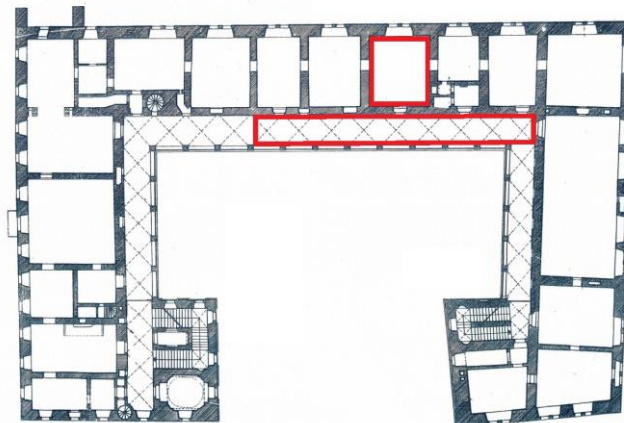
## 14. Arcade



**!!! PLEASE, DO NOT LEAN OVER THE EDGE OF THE ARCADES' STONE RAILING AND KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR CHILDREN TO ENSURE THEIR SAFETY!!!**

Notice the parrots in the cage on the arcade. Parrots at Opočno Castle were already documented in the early 1900s. They had been brought along with monkeys by Joseph from his expeditions.

Let's now take a look into the Prince's brother's salon. His name was Hieronymus and Joseph charged him to manage the family estates during the period of the First Czechoslovak Republic. At that time, Joseph spent more and more time abroad and did not take care of the family estates very much. As a young man, Hieronymus was the captain of an Austro-Hungarian warship. In 1924-1925 the brothers entered into an agreement stipulating that the family estates would be transferred to Hieronymus's sons and that their father would manage the estates before they reached legal age.



## 15. Bertha's Bedroom

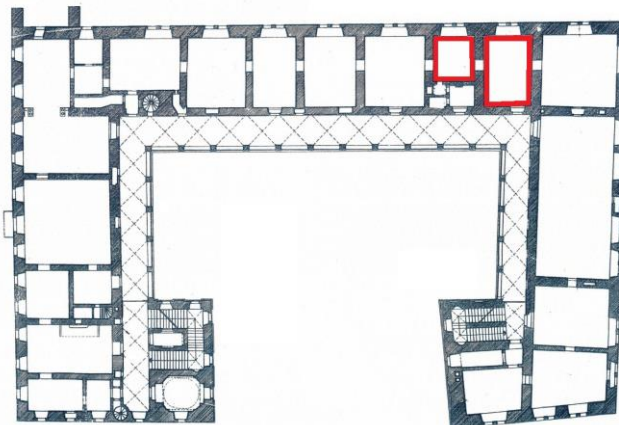


We have entered the bedroom of one of the most beautiful women of the pre-WWI Austro-Hungarian aristocracy.

This lady, who came from the prominent Kolowrat-Krakowsky family, married Hieronymus Colloredo-Mannsfeld in Vienna in 1909. They had four sons, who became the heirs of their childless uncle, Prince Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld.

Bertha's life was really wild for her time. She could speak twelve languages and was initially a model mother. Due to her remarkable temperament she complemented her level-headed husband. Hieronymus truly loved and supported her.

However, in 1924 their relationship broke up. Bertha went to famous American tenor Roland Hayes's (1887-1977) performance in Prague and as an avid music fan she met him. The initial fondness grew into a love affair, which got out of Bertha's control. In July 1924 she invited the singer to Zbiroh, where Hieronymus gave him a tour of the castle and showed him the local forests. Bertha lost control of her emotions and told her husband about the affair. After that she left him and their minor sons. In spite of that, Hieronymus continued to stand by her, trying to make her return to him. The situation changed after Bertha had found out that she was pregnant. That was something her husband couldn't ignore and they were divorced at the beginning of 1926. A few weeks later, Bertha gave birth to a daughter, Maria Dolores Franzyska (1926-1982), nicknamed Maya, who bore her mother's surname, Kolowrat. Bertha's planned marriage to Hayes never happened and she spent the rest of her life in seclusion, living at a palace in the south of France which Hieronymus had bought for her. Let's look through the opening into the breakfast room which belonged to the suite.



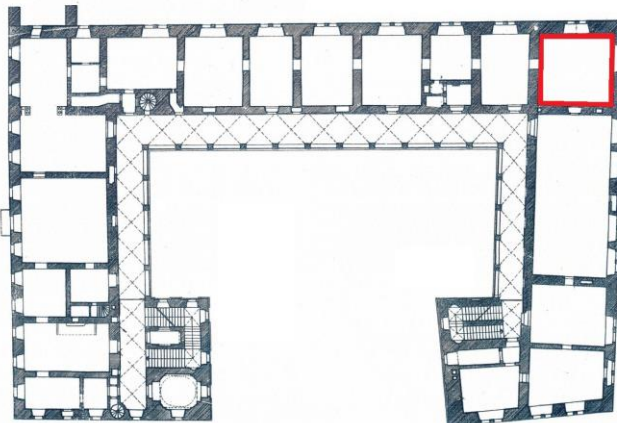
## 16. Small Picture Gallery



This room and the following one include a collection of paintings that Prince Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld transported to Opočno.

In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the family's collections of paintings were managed by František Horčíčka (as mentioned in the dining room), who was a well-known plagiarist of artistic works – he would add “historical” writings to some pictures so that they appeared to be more valuable.

The most interesting painting here – the horizontally placed double-sided canvass in the middle of the room by Giuseppe Bartolomeo Chiari – was made around 1700. The obverse side shows Madonna with Child, a cross and Saint Stephen while the reverse side (which you can see reflected in the mirror on the floor) features Saint Mary the Protectress. In the past this double-sided painting was probably used in processions or as an altar picture.



## 17. Big Picture Gallery



This room, one of the largest in the castle, was created as a result of the castle theatre having been shut down at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Joseph used it to house a large collection of paintings by important artists, which he had transported to Opočno from his other residences.

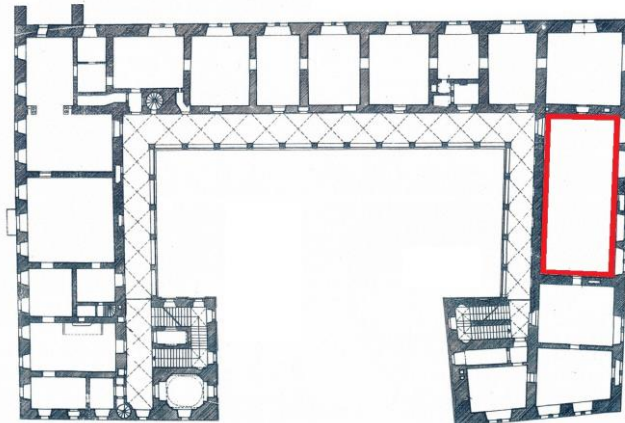
Look at the painting of Madonna with Child and young John the Baptist (on the easel). This painting belongs among the most valuable paintings of the Opočno Picture Gallery and has no parallel in any collections in the Czech Republic.

There are three other pictures which are worth mentioning. You can see them on the rear wall of the gallery:

The Map of Opočno Dominion outlines the towns, villages and courts belonging to Opočno Dominion around 1667. The town and castle of Opočno are in the middle.

Žerotín Epitaph is a 1575 painting showing the interior of Opočno Church, which is situated in front of the castle, and Barbora of Bieberstein (widow of Vilém Trčka of Lípa) with Jan Jetřich of Žerotín. There are also five Christian sacraments depicted: christening, wedding, communion, confession and sermon.

Jesus among the Teachers (in the right-hand corner). A few years ago, restoration research was done and an overpainted figure – probably the donor – was discovered. It is probably the oldest preserved version of a painting by a disciple of the famous Dutch artist, Hieronymus Bosch.



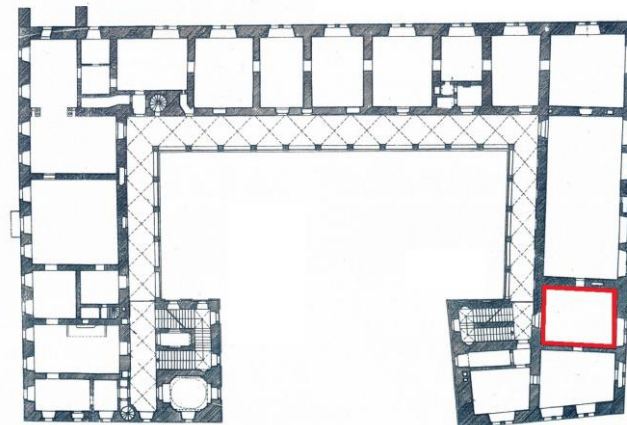
## 18. Library



There are approximately 10,000 books in the castle. They are arranged thematically according to the labels in the upper parts of the shelves (history, warfare, philosophy, law and architecture).

One of the oldest books is *The World Chronicle* from 1493. It was included in the collections through army general and defender of Prague against the Swedes, Rudolf Collredo, who got it from his godfather, Emperor Rudolf II.

There is another library at Opočno Castle, called the French Library. Joseph used it as a private room where he had books for pleasure. It is called “French” because most of the books are in the French language.



## 19. Guest Suite



These rooms were used as a guest suite for relatives as well as important guests from the imperial family. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the suite began to be called “Kinsky Suite” according to the guests who stayed here most frequently. They were the family of Rudolf, Prince Kinsky (1802-1836), who married Wilhelmine of Colloredo-Mannsfeld (1804-1871), Franz Gundakar I’s sister. The suite consisted of a bedroom, which you can see, and a salon, where we are right now.

Other guest rooms can be seen on the second floor, which we recommend visiting. The second floor also includes the famous Opočno armoury, which is part of tour no. 2.

**Thank you for visiting our castle.**

