

# State Castle Opocno

## Tour 2



**zámek Opocno**

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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. Staircase and hall on the first floor



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.

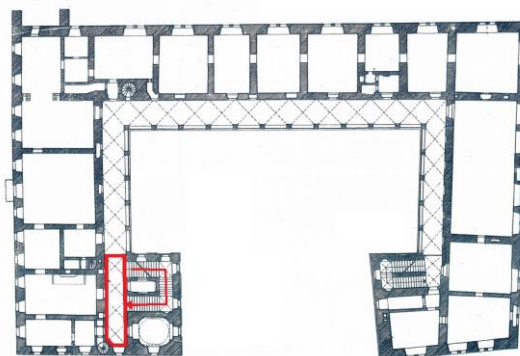
The first documented owners were the Drslavic family. The Drslavices converted the original wooden fortified settlement into a Gothic castle, which was burned during the Hussite wars.

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.

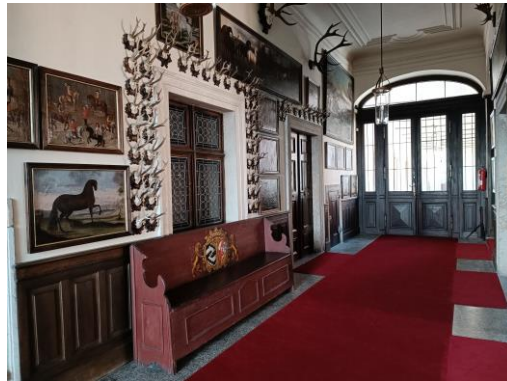
In the early 1700s, the Trčkas' wealth became immense. Jan Rudolf Trčka of Lípa supported humanist poets, and his wife, Marie Magdalena, focused on lending, buying and exchanging property. Due to her single-minded and uncompromising manners, she was dubbed the "Mean Manda" by the commonalty. After the 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 Colloredo (next to the door leading to the arcades). The current appearance of the interior comes mostly from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the castle was owned by Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld. We will be visiting the second floor, where Joseph Colloredo-Mannsfeld accommodated his guests and stored the family's most valuable collections.



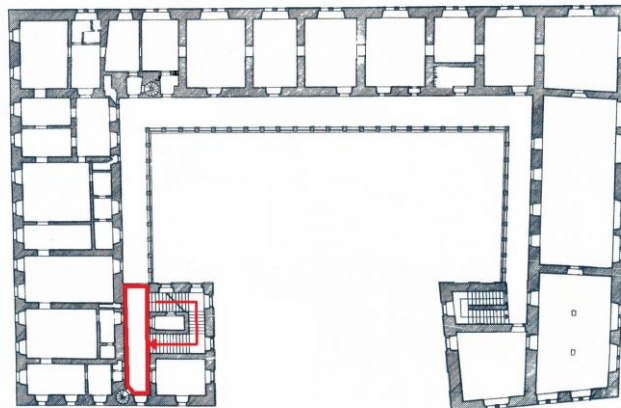
## 2. Staircase landing – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor



We are on the castle's second floor. You must have noticed the large collection of hunting trophies along the staircase. The hunting ground of Opočno abounded in game, which was the reason why guests from the high circles of the Hapsburg monarchy and from all over Europe would often come here. Opočno castle was visited by a Russian tsar, King of Prussia and many other famous figures of European history.

The second floor was used for putting up visiting relatives of the Colloredo-Mannsfelds. The rooms we are going to walk through are furnished so as to look the same as after the 1904 fire on the second floor. After the fire, the second floor was completely redecorated.

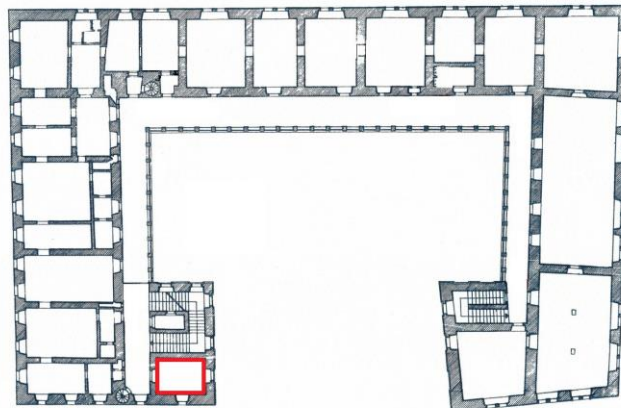
The rooms in this part of the castle belonged to the ruling Prince's sisters, who would come to Opočno especially in the autumn when hunts took place in the local game preserve.



### 3. Ernestina Karolina's Room



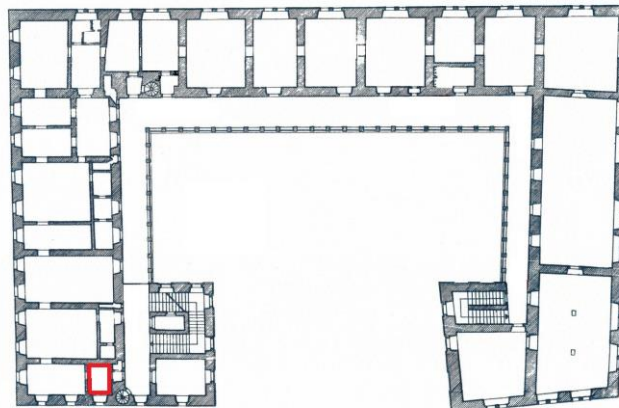
One of Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld's sisters, Ernestina Karolina, was regarded as the black sheep of the family. The reason was that she married Maxmilian Steinlechner, a doctor from the East Bohemian town of Miletín, who was not of noble origin. And at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that was unacceptable in such high aristocratic circles that the Colloredo-Mannsfelds belonged to. So, the bedroom is situated farther from the main suites and does not have a bathroom or a chamber for servants.



## 4. Trauttmansdorff Suite Bathroom



This bathroom was built at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as part of the Trauttmansdorff family suite. For your information, the Prince's bathroom is under this one, and upstairs, in the attic, there is a large water reservoir. There are seven bathrooms in the castle in total. The bathroom has a bath, shower, decorated washbasin and toilet bowl.

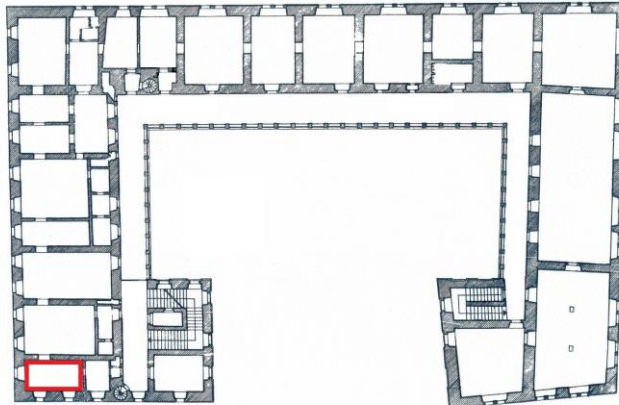


## 5. Trauttmansdorff Suite Dressing Room



In the early 1900s, the ladies would change their clothes several times a day. They wore different clothes for every activity they did. There were different clothes for the morning, afternoon and evening and a lady would use as many as five uncomfortable dresses a day. And this room was used as a dressing room.

The Trauttmansdorff Suite was created in the 1890s after Josepha II Colloredo-Mannsfeld's sister, Maria Theresa, married Count Karl Trauttmansdorff. They had five children and one of them was born here at Opočno. A modest man, Count Karl was very careful in terms of finances.

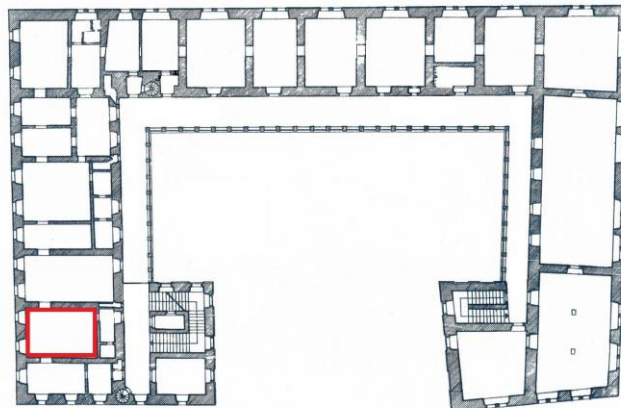




## 6. Trauttmansdorff Suite Bedroom



Maria Theresa lost her husband Karl after 18 years of marriage – he died at the age of 45. A year later (1911) she married his brother Adolph, who was thirteen years younger than Karl. Adolph was the exact opposite of his brother. He was extraordinarily charming and lively but also careless and extravagant. In a very short time he spent not only his own fortune but also his wife's dowry and their children's property. The marriage was very short since Adolph was killed by one of the first bullets shot in WWI. After that Maria Theresa never remarried and spent the next 46 years of her life as a widow. She lived to the ripe age of 91.

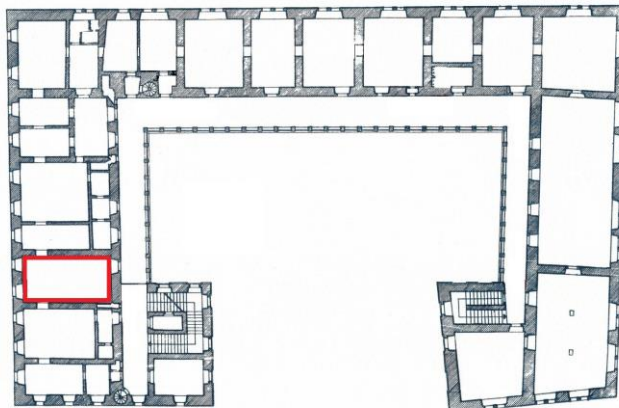




## 7. Mantua Room



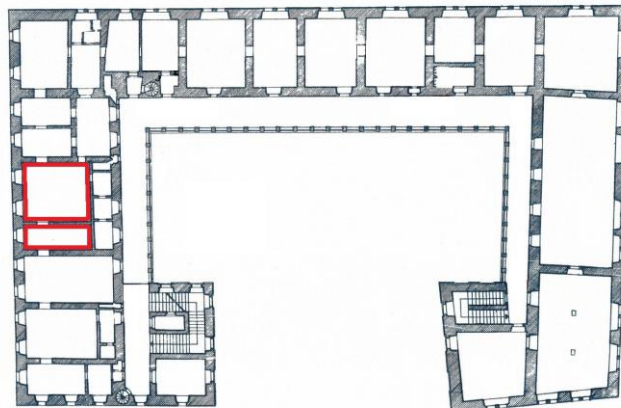
This room got its name after three large paintings acquired by Rudolf Colloredo (1585-1657) from the palace of the Gonzaga family in Mantua (in Italy) in the Thirty Years' War. As the large billiard table suggests, this was used as the second floor's lounge. You can see popular games of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> / beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (billiards, chess, cards, etc.).



## 8. Schönburg-Hartenstein Guest Suite



This suite consisted of the dressing room that we have seen, a bedroom, bathroom – shared with the suite next door – and a servant’s chamber. The suite was named after the husband of Joseph II’s sister, Johanna, who got married to Eduard Alois of Schönburg-Hartenstein. The couple had seven children even though they did not spend much time together. As a soldier in the Austrian-Hungarian Army, Eduard Alois spent a lot of time travelling. He fought in the battles of WWI. After the war he was active in Austrian politics.



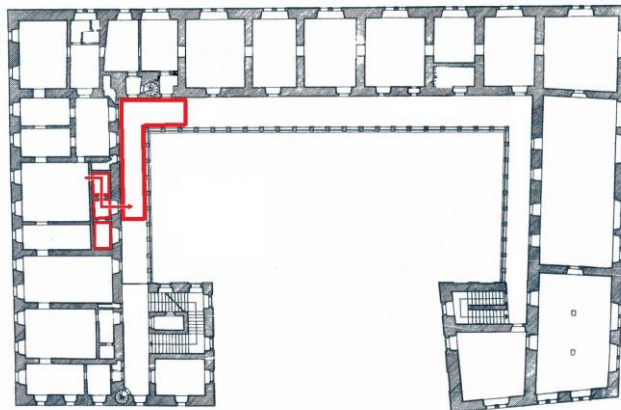
## 9. Second Floor Arcades



We have walked through three rooms for servants to the second floor arcades.

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

The dominion of Opočno ranged from Opočno itself to Dobruška and the Orlické Mountains (which can be seen on the horizon if the visibility is good). Its total area was almost 10,000 hectares and the most important commodity was wood. There was also a brewery, sugar factory, brick plant, etc.



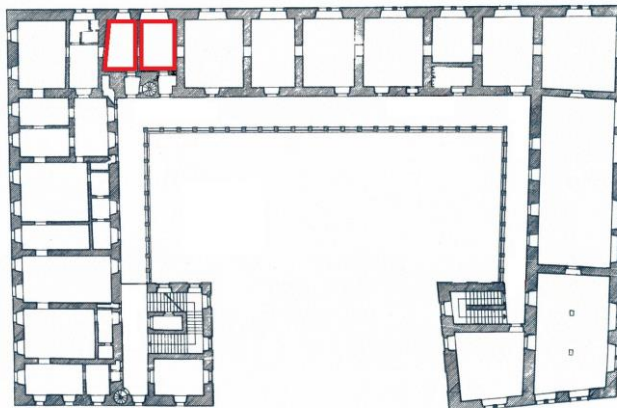
## 10. Governess's Room



Prince Joseph II Colloredo-Mannsfeld, his brother and three sisters had a French governess, who used this room. She looked after the children of Hieronymus Sr. and Aglae Festetics-Tolna. All of the five children also had a private teacher.

From this room you can look into the adjacent girl's room, which belonged to Ida, the ruling Prince's last sister, who died of an unknown disease at the age of twelve.

Let's now go to the children's rooms which belonged to Joseph II's nephews. Since he was childless, he adopted these four boys (the sons of Hieronymus and his wife Bertha Kolowrat-Krakowsky) in the 1920s and bequeathed his property to them.



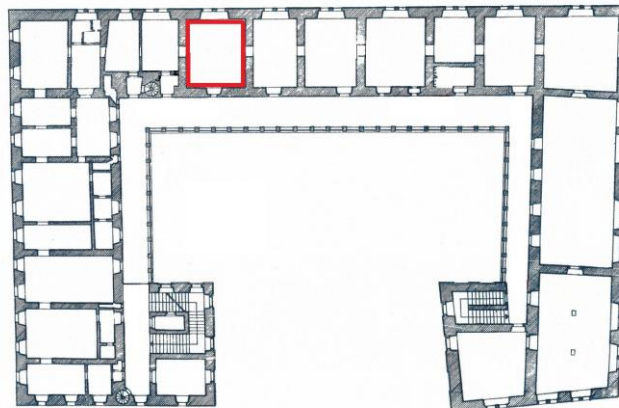
## 11. Friedrich's Room



This is the room of the ruling Prince's youngest nephew, Friedrich.

After his studies, Fritz – as he was called by the family – lived in Geneva, where he met his wife Christa von Kries. Before they got married in 1944, he became a volunteer of the Czechoslovak Army in exile. However, the war was over before he completed his military training, so he never saw the battlefield.

Along with his three brothers, he was adopted by his uncle Joseph but because he was to inherit the dominion only if one of his brothers died prematurely, his father, Hieronymus, tried to provide for him. In 1946 his brother Weikhard died, so he became the heir of Dobříš Palace.





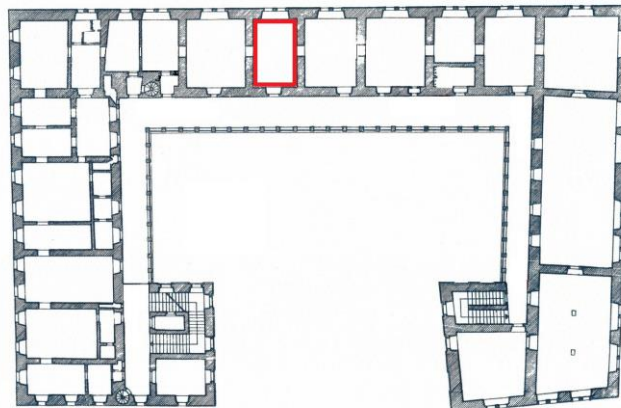
## 12. Weikhard's Room



Prince Joseph's second nephew was Weikhard, nicknamed Katta by the family. He spent his childhood at Zbiroh Castle and after his studies he began to manage the estate of Dobříš, which he was to inherit.

In 1938 and 1939 he signed the Czech nobility's declaration claiming allegiance to Czechoslovakia and as a result he was persecuted by the Nazis during WWII. In 1940, like his brothers, he filled out the Fragebogen - application for Reich citizenship. However, that did not prevent the Dobříš estate from going into receivership in the same year. Dobříš Palace became the Reichsprotektor's residence. After that Weikhard worked in Moravia and towards the end of the war he probably joined a group of Red Army partisans that liberated Dobříš. After the liberation he provided the palace in Dobříš for the headquarters of the partisan group. However, that did not prevent the palace and the estate in Dobříš from being confiscated after WWII as a result of the Beneš decrees.

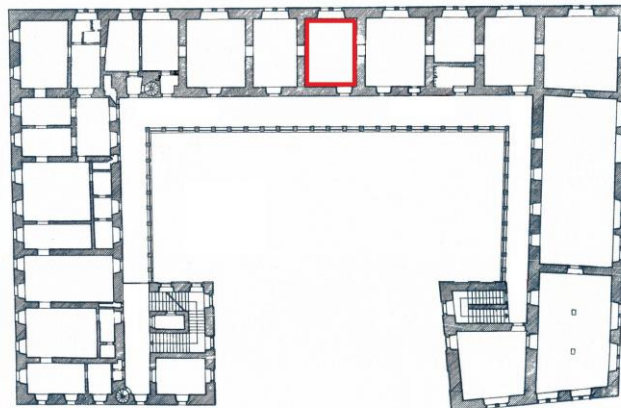
Weikhard died of cancer at the age of thirty-two at his mother's palace in France.



### 13. Hieronymus Jr.'s Room



Based on the division of the family's property in 1925, Hieronymus and Bertha's second son, Hieronymus Jr., was to inherit Zbiroh Castle, where he had grown up along with his brothers. His family called him Honomé. Like his siblings and father, he also applied for German citizenship but he was the most adept of them, both politically and socially, so he quickly got his bearings in the post-WWII situation. He maintained contact with important politicians and foreign diplomats and became a member of the Czechoslovak People's Party. He eventually became the last member of the family to stay in Czechoslovakia until 1948, struggling to keep the family estates in the family's hands. What played an important role was the fact that he did not have his own family. In the end, he fled Czechoslovakia in 1948, travelling in the Italian consul general's suitcase from Bratislava to Vienna.





## 14. Joseph Jr.'s Room

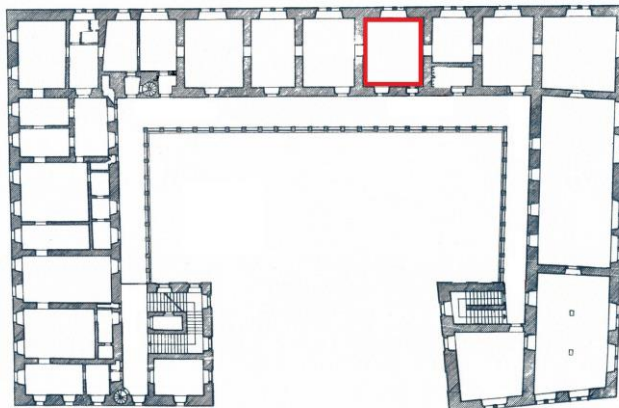


Joseph was the oldest son of Hieronymus and Bertha. Like his brothers, he spent his childhood at Zbiroh Castle. Having studied in Europe, he returned to Bohemia. According to the family agreement he was supposed to manage the estate of Opočno, which he did in the 1930s. Just before WWII he met his future wife Anna Maria Rabl, nicknamed Bucki by the family. This divorced tennis and skiing enthusiast represented another trial of life for the Colloredos. Neither Hieronymus Sr. nor Bertha agreed to the marriage. Bucki was only of bourgeois origin and had divorced famous tennis player Roderich Menzel. Hieronymus even considered depriving his son of the inheritance of Opočno and transferring it to one of the other brothers.

In spite of the parents' disapproval, the couple got eventually married in Austria in March 1939. Anna was often ill and her condition became worse after her daughter, Kristina, was born. She died in Canada, which was where the family emigrated in the early 1950s.

Joseph and his family never lived here in the castle but in the "Well Tower", which you might have noticed in the first courtyard. The castle as such was reserved for the Prince in power and his guests.

In 1942 the castle went into receivership and Joseph and his family had to move to a villa in Rozběrice near Hradec Králové. He returned after WWII but the castle was confiscated as a result of the Beneš decrees. It is still owned by the state although his daughter, Josepha, keeps trying to get the castle back in restitution proceedings.



## 15. Classroom

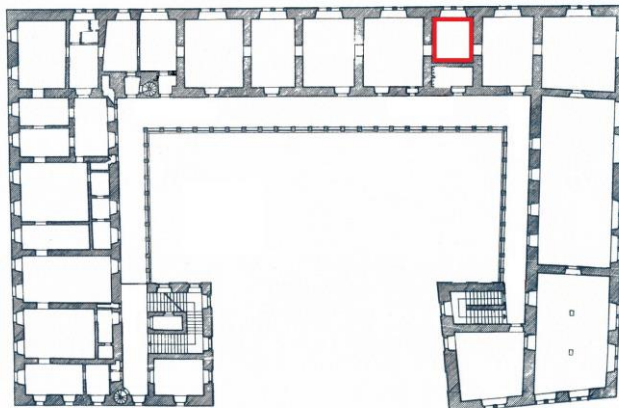


This room was used as a classroom for the four boys we talked about in the previous rooms. They spent most of their time at Zbiroh Castle, which their parents had converted into a family residence.

The boys did not go to school and had a private teacher.

There are different teaching aids, of which the map cabinet stands out.

All of the brothers graduated from secondary school and then went to different European universities. The range of the Colloredo-Mannsfelds' interests was enormous: from arts to cartography to ethnography to mineralogy, which is proved by the large collections housed at the castle.



## 16. Family Museum

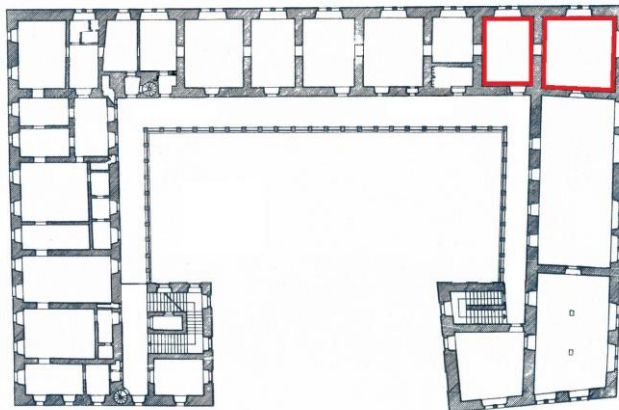


The following two rooms of the family museum prove the wide range of Joseph Colloredo-Mannsfeld's interests as a collector.

His most important collection is probably that of Native American items acquired mostly during his expeditions to North America, which he undertook in the USA (including Alaska) and Canada in the early 1900s.

The theatre costumes on the dummies were made mostly in Paris and bought by the family for the castle's theatre, which was situated in the area of the current Big Picture Gallery until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (You can visit the castle's galleries if you take a tour of the first floor.)

A unique object is the illustrated inventory of the Opočno armoury. The inventory's preserved part includes file cards for 2011 weapons. Their descriptions and drawings were made for 25 years (1908-1933) by Vienna-based specialist Julius Ernst Scheurer.



## 17. Knights Hall



**IT IS PROHIBITED TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAKE VIDEOS OR ANY OTHER RECORDINGS IN THIS ROOM!**

During the construction changes after 1895, the castle's new owner, Prince Joseph Colloredo-Mannsfeld, designated two halls on the second floor of the north wing for the family's collection of weapons, which includes more than 2,000 exhibits, making it one of the largest collections of its kind housed at Czech castles and palaces.

What also makes it unique is the fact that almost half of the exhibits were acquired by a single collector, Prince Joseph, who bought the weapons personally without using any specialists. Neither did he collect the weapons randomly. On the contrary, he tried to create a sort of summary of the history of warfare. Unfortunately, his intention was interrupted by the Second World War.

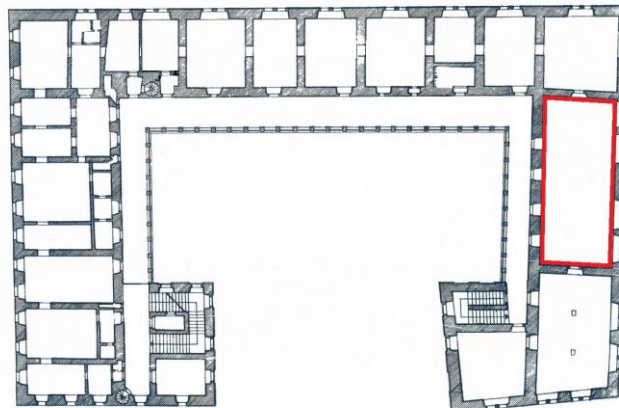
A unique item is the "Maximilian armour" (on the horse) made around 1515. It weighs 27 kilos.

Visitors often think the guns in the varnished showcase are Oriental but in fact they are all European. They represent masterpieces of the Renaissance and Baroque gunsmiths' craftsmanship.

Weapons from Oriental countries are exhibited on the opposite side. They include, for instance, Persian shields and helmets inlaid with gold.

The period of antiquity is also represented by a Roman soldier's helmet from one of the first centuries AD (in the small showcase).

The stand (next to the showcase with guns) includes examples of executioner swords, whose collection at Opočno Castle is likely to be the largest in the Czech Republic.



## 18. Hunters Hall



**IT IS PROHIBITED TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAKE VIDEOS OR ANY OTHER RECORDINGS IN THIS ROOM!**

Opočno definitely must have a hunters hall. As early as in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Trčkas of Lípa founded the local game reserve, which still exists. Its total area is 217 hectares.

In 1724, for example, a party of forty hunters headed by the future emperor, Francis Stephen of Lorraine, shot 1,700 boars, over 3,000 deer and 13,000 hares within a mere 18 days. The total number of animals killed amounted to 63,243.

Please, go to the first showcase, which includes a selection of presentable firearms.

There are other guns on the stands in the middle of the room. Most of them are weapons used by the Colloredo-Mannsfelds during local hunting expeditions. Many of them have been here for almost three centuries.

We are now going to walk gradually through the whole hall to the last showcase. The exhibited swords come from the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

**Thank you for visiting our castle.**

