



Castle of Condé

Visiting guide



Your contribution helps us finance the upkeep and maintenance of the house so that we can share it with you. Thank you!



You can find an audio-guide in English on our website (chateaudconde.fr) in "visiter", then "audioguides en quatre langues". You can either download it or listen to it online.

Information: the West aisle of the castle is temporarily closed (track n°5 of the audio-guide)

Should you like to know more, a detailed booklet is available in the shop. It details the history of the castle and the people associated with it.

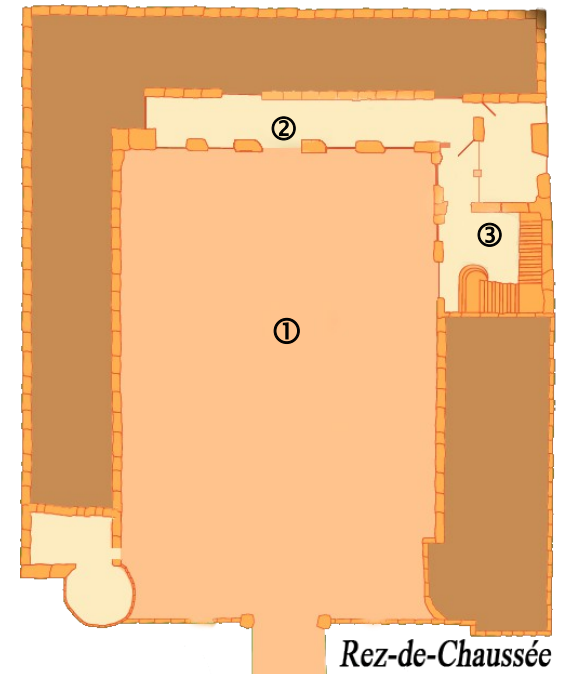
We thank you for your visit. See you next time !

Château de Condé-Demeure des Princes
4 rue du château, 02330 Condé-en-Brie
Open April through November (afternoons)
everyday except Mondays and Thursdays
– tel: 03.23.82.42.25.

The Ground Floor

① Main Courtyard: The castle saw many changes during the 18th century. The fourth aisle (old facade) which used to close the courtyard was pulled down, letting the light in. Windows were widened and trompe-l'oeil windows (painted in such a manner as to create an optical illusion) were created by the architect Servandoni to harmonise the whole. A sundial and a noon mark were installed on top of the great door.

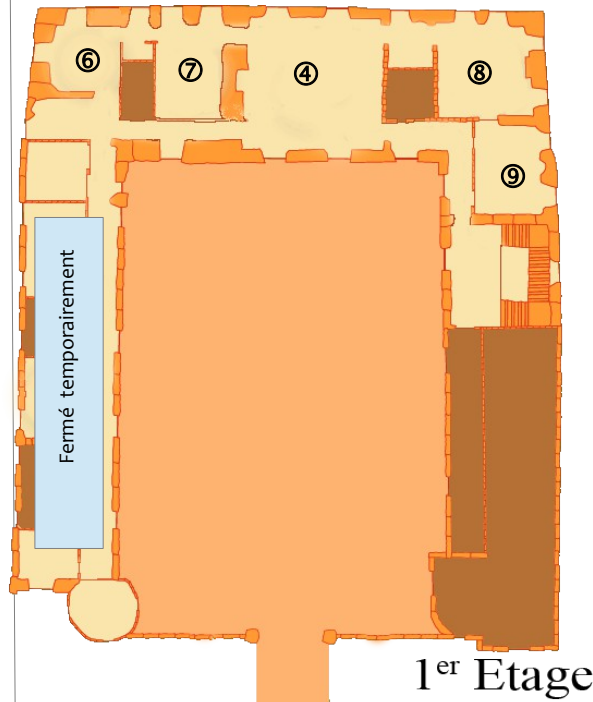
② Enter the Renaissance Gallery (16th century) through the great door. Portraits hung in the gallery depict members of the first Prince of Condé family. The Princes of Condé were Princes du Sang (lit. "princes of the blood": cousins of the monarch).



☞ Enter the hall through the door at the end of the gallery to see a cabinet that displays objects found during purification works in the domain in the 1990's.

③ The Grand Staircase was built during the 18th century by Servandoni. This ceremonial staircase leads to the noble floor of the castle.

Suite de la visite : 1^{er} étage



On the **landing**, you can see paintings by François Lemoine L'Été and L'Automne ("Summer" and "Autumn"), as well as portraits of some of the owner's ancestors. The tapestry dates from the 17th century and was produced in Flanders.

☛ **Turn right, into the Servandoni Gallery to see a map of the principality of Condé before the French Revolution as well as engravings of sumptuous 18th century festivities.**

☛ **Turn left and enter the Servandoni Room.**

④ This used to be the music and theatre room. It was decorated by the Italian architect, designer, and painter Giovanni Niccolò Servandoni. The artist, used to creating decors for operas, painted a decoration based on trompe-l'oeil.

He found his inspiration from sculptures in Versailles and frescoes in the Palazzo Farnese in Rome. The decoration is exceptional as it is painted on a canvas and hung close to the wall, rather than painted directly on it. This helps create better acoustics in the room but is, 300 years later, very fragile.

☛ **Go through the corridor in front of you, to Watteau's Atelier. This room used to be the painting studio for Antoine Watteau and his students, of which Pater and Lancret are the most famous names. They practiced directly on the walls where imaginary sceneries and landscapes of the region are represented.**

⑥ **Olympia's Apartment** is located in the old dungeon: the walls are more than 2 meters thick. Olympia Mancini (portrayed on her own above the console) was the Count of Soissons' wife (portrait on the table). She used to invite the writer and fabulist Jean de la Fontaine to come and distract her. The painting above the mantelpiece tells the one of his tales: *Le villageois ayant perdu son veau* (lit. « The villager who lost his calf »). On the wall, a portrait of Olympia with her sisters Marie-Anne and Hortense, a portrait of the son of Olympia, the Prince Eugene and a painting of the Siege of Douai of 1667 can be seen. A wing chair in front of the window allowed the sitter to avoid draughts. The painting above the mantelpiece tells the one of his tales: *Le villageois ayant perdu son veau* (lit. « The villager who lost his calf »). On the wall, a portrait of Olympia with her sisters Marie-Anne and Hortense, and a painting of the Siege of Douai of 1667 can be seen. A wing chair in front of the window allowed the sitter to avoid draughts.

☛ **Continue to your left into the Antechamber where you can see a sedan chair for children and a Tugot map of Paris, first published around 1735.**

⑦ Louis XIII has the **Richelieu Bedroom** made for the cardinal who complained of the noise in Château-Thierry in 1735. A century later, it became the marquis of La Faye's bedroom. He had the fresco above the mantelpiece painted by Servandoni: it represents Perseus saving Andromeda.

Go out into the Servandoni Room and walk straight to the Study. The walls are covered in oak panelling, an original parquet "à la Versailles", and paintings representing the arts. A concealed door leads to the old librarian's apartment and the old library.

⑧ The Oudry Living Room was decorated at the beginning of the 18th century by Jean-Baptiste Oudry, the official painter for Louis XV's hunting parties. He painted three *Retour de chasse* (lit. "Returns from Hunting") and one *Retour de pêche* (lit. "Return from Fishing") as well as the paintings around the northern windows. The decorations above the mantelpiece and the decorated lintels were created later. In 1991, an intact painting was discovered behind the mirror. It was painted during the time of the Princes of Savoy (17th century) and illustrates another tale of Jean de la Fontaine, *La Fiancée du roi de Garbe* (lit. "The King of Garbe's fiancée")

☛ **Go back to the Servandoni room and turn left to the dining room.**

⑨ This is one of the first rooms dedicated to dining in France. The shell-like niche at the back was made in stucco by Servandoni and houses a Prussian stove of the late 18th century. The two paintings, the *Abduction of Dejanira and Bacchus and Ariane*, are attributed to François Lemoine and his students, in which probably a young François Boucher.

☛ **To exit the castle, walk down the stairs and turn right. To open the door, press the white button on your left and enter the main courtyard through the great door.**

You can prolong your visit in the park, which is kept in the style of the early 18th century country houses. Nature reigns free and human intervention is humble and sparse.