

Glossary

Basket-handle: low arch in a semi-oval.

Damask: monochrome patterned fabric, on a satin background, produced within the weaving.

Entablature: horizontal superstructure of a building, made up, from bottom to top, of an architrave, a frieze and a cornice.

Fronde (1648-1653): revolt of the nobles against the French monarchy during the years of Louis XIV's minority.

Hebe: Greek divinity who served the Gods; she is often found in the décor of the 19th century dining rooms.

Jesuit: member of the Society of Jesus, an order founded in 1534 by Ignatius of Loyola.

Putti (singular *putto*): cherub representing Love in Italian painting.

Information

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Gift and book shop

The guide for this monument can be found in the *Itinéraires* collection and is available in 3 languages in the gift and book shop.

Centre des monuments nationaux

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Interior decor inspired by injustice

An abridged version of ancient and modern history

“Bussy is not a large house, but it is magnificently built and the interiors are of a rare beauty which is seen nowhere else.”

(Roger de Rabutin)

The Count occupied his time in exile by furnishing the interior of his château with over three hundred paintings: portraits, mottos, royal and personal family trees, etc.

The mottos

Mottos were a means of expression much in vogue in the 17th century and which Bussy was particularly fond of. A motto, comprising an image and a title, was a language mastered by the intellectual elite. Bussy used them to express his qualities, his values, his state of mind and his symbolic portrait.

The Counts of Sarcus and their large-scale restoration works

Originally from Picardy, Jean-Baptiste César de Sarcus (1781-1875) moved to Burgundy following his marriage in 1817 to Bénigne Victoire Espiard of Mâcon.

He purchased the château in 1835. A military man and man of letters, he was also an artist and art lover, and set out to restore the gardens and the estate. He was fascinated by Bussy, and worked hard to bring his residence back to its former glory over the course of more than twenty years.

Roger de Bussy-Rabutin

Man of War

Roger de Rabutin, Count of Bussy (1618-1693) studied with the Jesuits* in Autun then in Paris. At the age of 16, he joined his father's regiment, where he soon distinguished himself. Nevertheless, he was imprisoned for five months at the age of 23 for having allowed his regiment to take part in smuggling salt. Despite that, he won many victories during the course of later military campaigns. In 1645, he succeeded his father as Lieutenant General of the King's Armies. He took part in the Fronde* in its early stages but very quickly switched his support to Louis XIV. In 1654, he was appointed Colonel of the Light Cavalry of the King's Armies.

The mind of a writer

Bussy wrote thousands of letters. His favourite correspondent was his cousin, the Marquise de Sévigné. He frequented the most highly regarded literary salons, and his writings were highly thought of, especially his ‘Maximes d'amour’ that earned him a place in the Académie Française in 1665.

In the style of the ‘Carte de Tendre’ by his friend Mademoiselle de Scudéry, he wrote a ‘Carte du pays de Braquerie’ mocking the amorous intrigues of the court.

To entertain his mistress, Madame de Montglas, he wrote the *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules* in which he related the romantic intrigues of the court. But the book was read by a wider audience than he had intended; angered by its contents, King Louis XIV sentenced him to one year in prison in the Bastille followed by exile on his estates in Burgundy.

* Explanations overleaf.

Château of Bussy-Rabutin

The embodiment of the spirit of the Grand Siècle

From medieval dwelling to Renaissance château

This former 14th century manor house has had several owners from the great families of Burgundy: first the



Chastillon family and then the Rochefort family. In 1602, François de Rabutin bought the estate. His grandson, Roger de Bussy-Rabutin,

was forced into exile by Louis XIV in 1666. In this château, renovated by his parents, he created a fabulous interior decor to demonstrate the honour to which his rank entitled him, the prestige of his lineage and the injustice of his fate.

Successive restorations

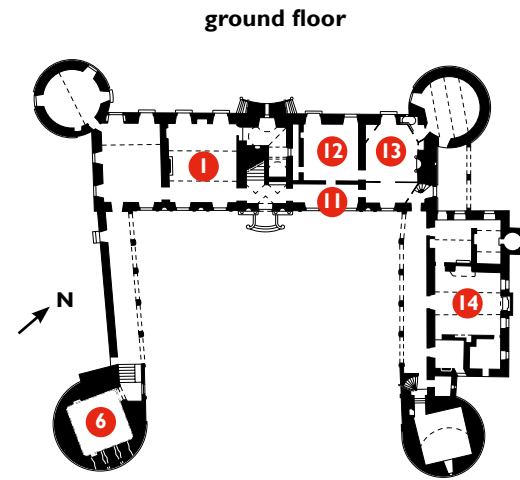
The estate was acquired in 1733 by Étienne Dagonneau de Marcilly and his wife, who undertook its initial restoration. In 1792, the château subsequently went into receivership and the furnishings were sold. Passing through the hands of a succession of owners, the state of the château deteriorated. Count Jean-Baptiste César de Sarcus bought the estate in 1835. He finished the restoration of the château and had it listed as a historic monument in 1862. In 1929 it became the property of the French State, which undertook numerous conservation and restoration works. The latest works enabled all the rooms to be opened in 2023. The decor and furnishings have been recreated according to several inventories dating from the 19th century.

The main courtyard

The main courtyard is built in a U shape, with four round towers at its corners, and is surrounded by moats. The original 14th century residence was fortified. An outer wall, which closed off the courtyard at the bridge, was pulled down in the 16th century. The galleries were built in 1520 in the Renaissance style. Their basket-handle* arches and entablatures* are decorated with scrolls, grotesques, *putti** and coats of arms. The facade of the main building is in the classical style and was completed in 1649. Its niches have remained empty since its construction, with no statues.

The apartments of Roger de Bussy-Rabutin

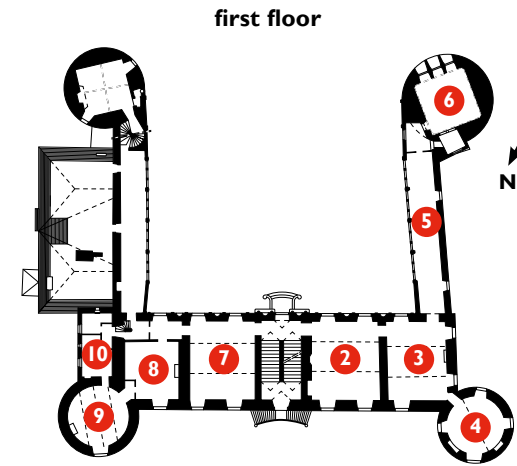
- 1 The Mottos room** presents a portrait of Roger de Rabutin over the mantelpiece, together with the family coat of arms. Around him are the mottos he adapted to his own personal story. The eighteen buildings on the upper level attest to his interest in the residences of his time.
- 2 The Men of War room:** as a reference to the military honours of his past, Bussy surrounded himself with 64 men of war, both French and foreign. He placed himself to the left of a window. The dark colouring of the paintings contrasts with the panelling displaying mottos, military trophies, antique medallions and monograms of the Rabutin family.
- 3 Bussy's bedchamber** contains portraits of favourites of the Kings of France and ladies of the court. A triptych portrays – from right to left – Madame de Sévigné, her daughter Madame de Grignan, and Louise de Rouville, Bussy's second wife.
- 4 In the Golden Tower**, inspired by the former Salon of the Ladies of Versailles, can be found the portraits "of the most beautiful ladies at court".



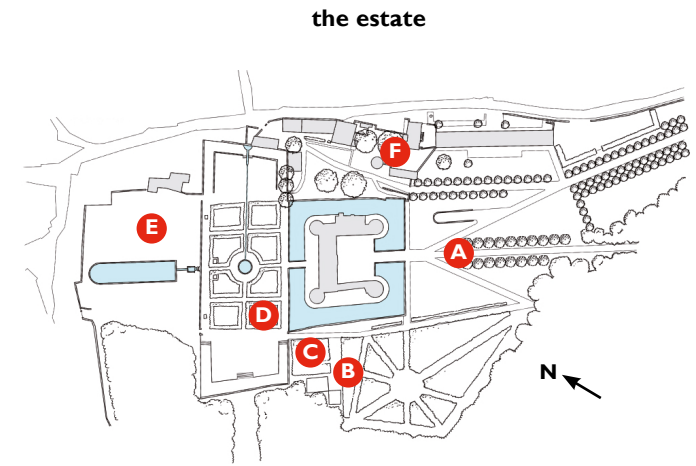
- Bussy amused himself by adding a comment below each of them. This collection is completed by representations of royal, princely and mythological figures. On a table there is a clandestine copy of the *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules* (The Romantic History of the Gauls).
- 5 The Gallery of Kings** displays, on one side, the family of Rabutin and, on the other side, the Kings of France, from Hugh Capet to Charles X and the Dukes and Duchesses of Burgundy. Portraits of Men of State and Letters were added in the 19th century by the Count of Sarcus.
 - 6 The vaulted chapel**, square in shape, contains a 16th century altarpiece showing *The Resurrection of Lazarus*, beneath a large painting of Saint Francis de Paola by Bartolomé Estéban Murillo, and a painting of the *Holy Family and Saint John the Baptist* by Andrea del Sarto.

The apartments of the Sarcus family

- 7 The antechamber** is hung with lengths of damask*. Its Regency-era furnishings are completed by two pearwood cabinets blackened in 'ebony' fashion and



- two imposing sculpted bookcases. This room contains portraits of *L'homme aux gants gris* (The Man in Grey Gloves) by Hyacinthe Rigaud and of *Madame Augustin de Lapeyrière* by Claude-Marie Dubufe.
- 8 The bedchamber of Monsieur** is furnished in the style typical of the era of Charles X. Above the fireplace is a copy of Leonardo da Vinci's *Portrait of an Unknown Woman*, produced by Jean-Baptiste de Sarcus.
 - 9 The bedchamber of Madame** is hung with Indian-style printed fabric showing the tree of life, made by the Bracquenié company, and is furnished in Empire style. Above the fireplace is a portrait of Marie Leszczyńska by Gobert.
 - 10 The study** contains a portrait of Buffon in his own study and a bookcase lined with works from the Sarcus collection.
 - 11 The vestibule and boudoir** are decorated with trompe-l'œil marble and wallpaper.
 - 12 The salon** is hung with red wallpaper with a yellow pattern and is furnished in the Restoration style. On the walls are paintings from the Sarcus collection.
 - 13 The dining room** is decorated with trompe-l'œil painted marble. Above the tiled stove is a statue of Hebe*.



- 14 The kitchens**, accessible from the courtyard and built in the 18th century, paint a picture of daily life with their huge Renaissance fireplace equipped with a roasting spit, scullery and bread oven. The 'wash room' in false marble was supplied with hot water from the kitchen. A small gallery leads off to the fruit cellar where the harvests were stored.

The estate

The estate extends over 34 hectares and provides the chateau with a beautiful natural setting.

- A The forecourt** is made up of branching paths, like at Versailles, and a footbath to wash the horses' feet.
- B An ice house and a larder** stand out from the verdant setting.
- C The maze** was built when the gardens were restored in 1993.
- D The classical formal gardens** are divided into eight squares edged with box hedge and flowers.
- E In the orchard** below, a large pool collects water from the moats and the ponds in the formal gardens.
- F The dovecote** is a symbol of aristocratic privilege.