



# Live the castle life #1

## *WhatToDoWhen*



# WhatToDoWhen

## Live the castle life

# My opinion

I thoroughly enjoyed writing these two guides on the châteaux of Provence (Guide #1 – 8 châteaux, Guide #2 – 9 châteaux). Not only are these places beautiful, often with breathtaking views, they are also rich in history. They provide a better understanding of Provence and its past since the castles were built around 1,000 years ago. You will meet families who are deeply attached to their region. You will discover stories, some of them surreal. You will travel back in time within these ancient places of power. Once respected, admired and feared, these castles are now yours to enjoy. Make the most of it! Who hasn't dreamed of being 1,000 years old?



[Consult the Map](#)

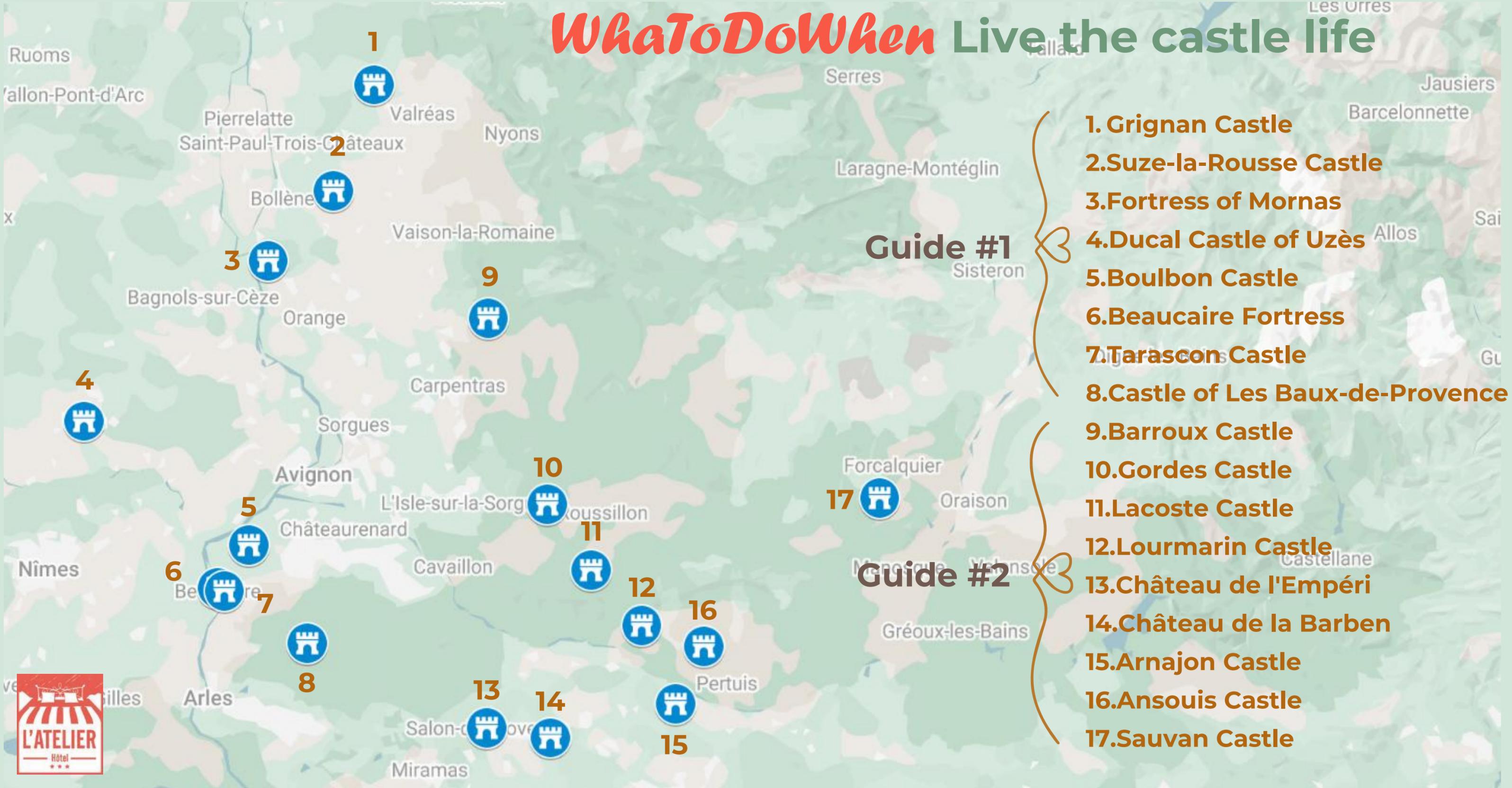


Lourmarin Castle



# MAP OF THE CASTLES OF PROVENCE

*WhatToDoWhen* Live the castle life



Guide #1

Guide #2

- 1. Grignan Castle
- 2. Suze-la-Rousse Castle
- 3. Fortress of Mornas
- 4. Ducal Castle of Uzès
- 5. Boulbon Castle
- 6. Beaucaire Fortress
- 7. Tarascon Castle
- 8. Castle of Les Baux-de-Provence
- 9. Barroux Castle
- 10. Gordes Castle
- 11. Lacoste Castle
- 12. Lourmarin Castle
- 13. Château de l'Empéri
- 14. Château de la Barben
- 15. Arnajon Castle
- 16. Ansois Castle
- 17. Sauvan Castle



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# Grignan Castle

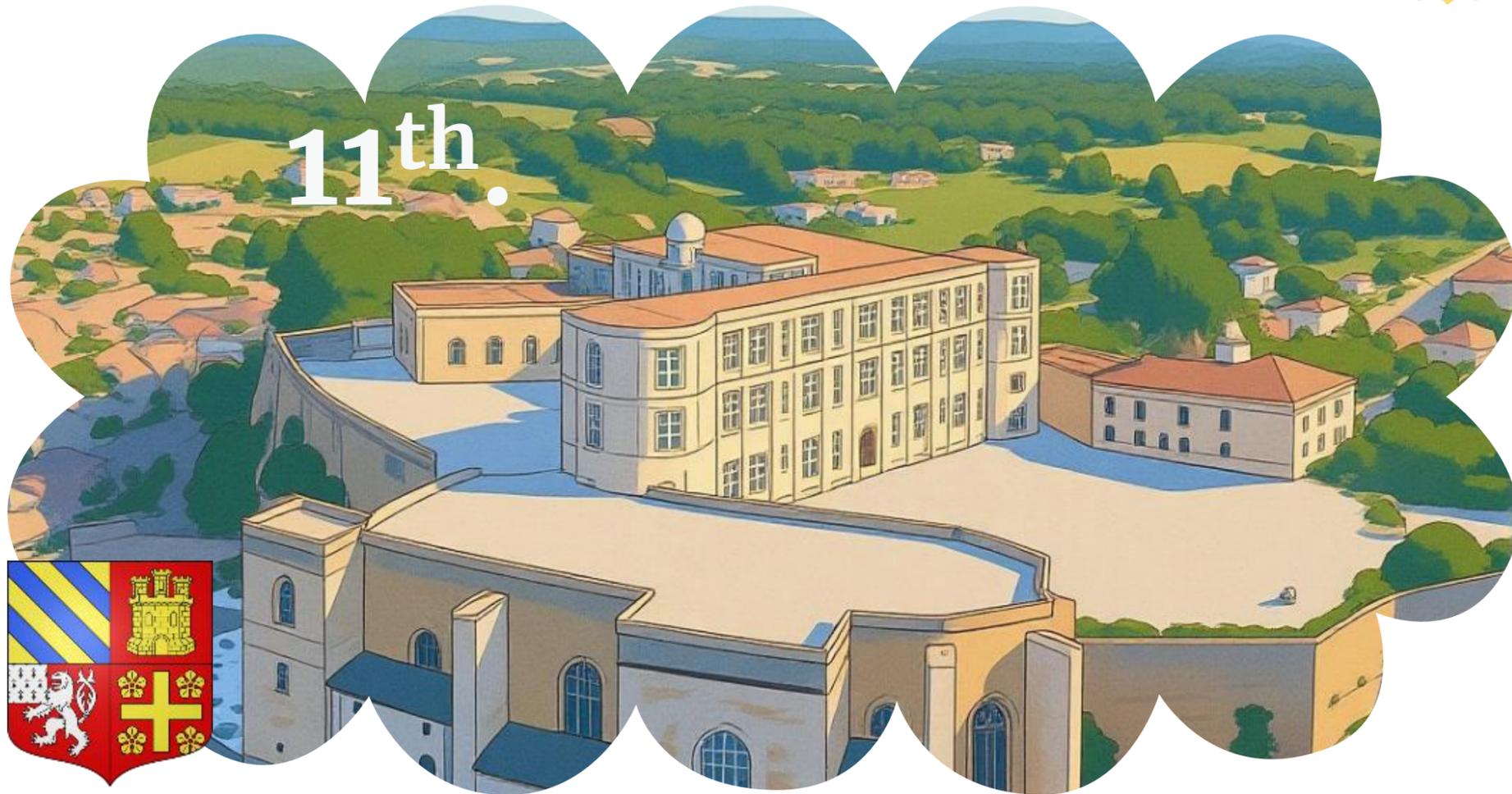
Madame de Sévigné died at the château in 1696 and is buried in the chapel below the château.



[See the map](#)



11<sup>th</sup>.



The Château de Grignan is somewhat of a legacy in Provence of the Grand Siècle of Louis XIV. It is majestic and elegant. Large terraces offer views of the region and the lavender fields. The Marquise de Sévigné ensured the château's place in history by writing part of her famous Letters there. Before becoming a "prestigious residence", the château was above all a family home since the 11th century.

the 11th century, the Adhémar... Yes, them again. The château was first a medieval fortress, then a Renaissance château, and finally a refined 17th-century château. It was also partially destroyed during the Revolution, only to rise from the ashes thanks to extensive restoration work in the early 20th century. **Why do I love this château? It is undoubtedly the most refined and beautiful château in Provence.**

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# Château de Suze-la-Rousse

11<sup>th</sup>



[See the map](#)

For me, it is one of the most beautiful castles in Provence, particularly because it has been so well preserved. What you will see during your visit is essentially the Renaissance castle, magnificently restored by the **La Baume de Suze family** (owners of the site from the 15th to the 18th century). You will also notice its past as a feudal fortress dating back to the 11th century. The site was even owned by Charlemagne in the 8th century, who gave it to his cousin. He was very kind in helping the King-Emperor liberate Orange. The stone used to build the château is reddish in colour, hence the name "Rousse" (red). It has also been home to a wine university since 1978.

**Why do I love this castle? For its combination of history and wine, and for its red or ochre stone.**



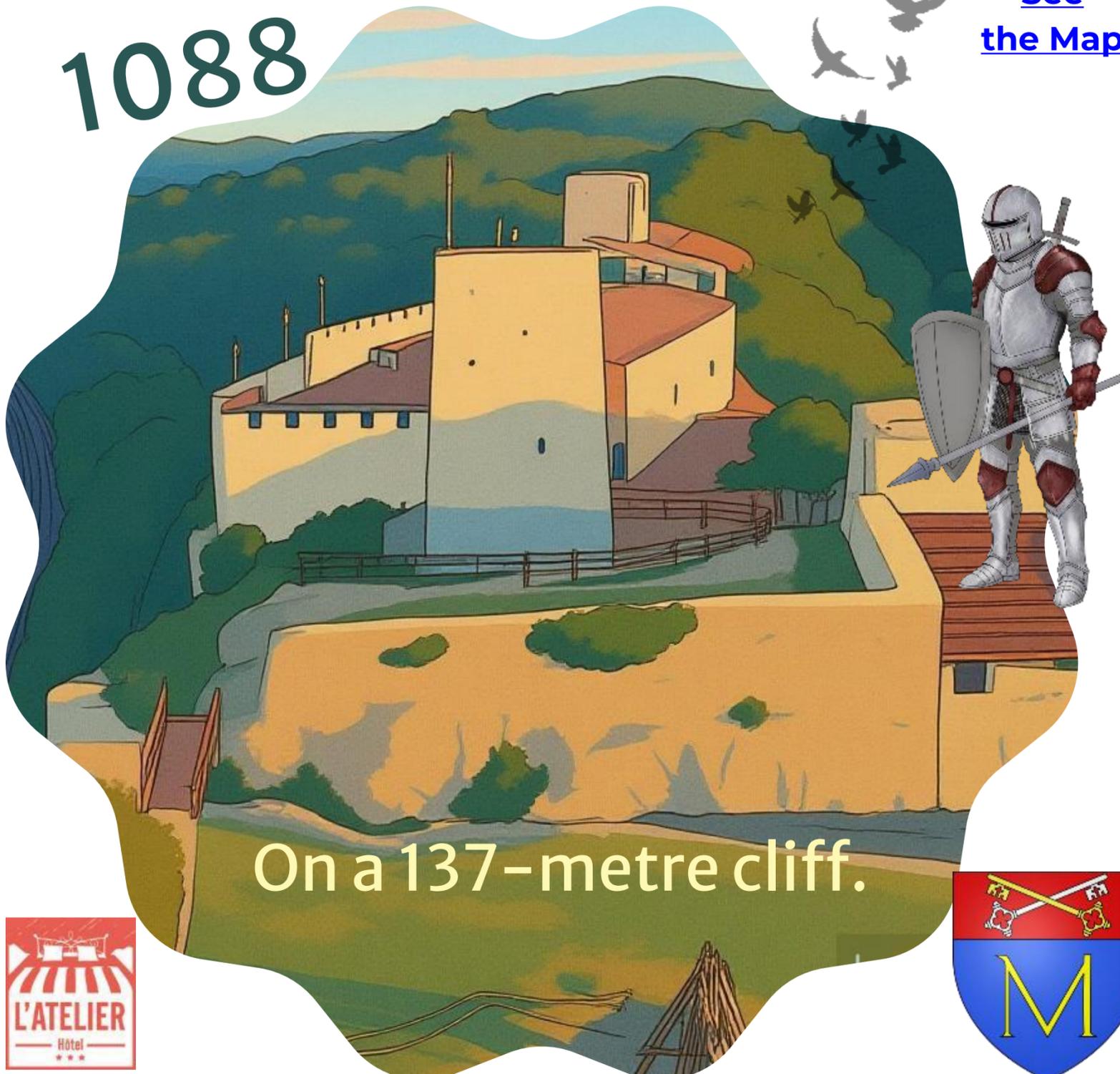
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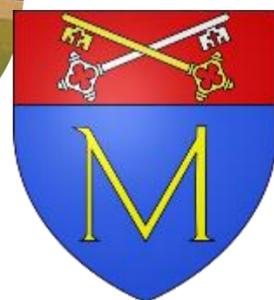
# 1088



[See the Map](#)



On a 137-metre cliff.



# Fortress of Mornas

The history of this fortress is linked to that of the Rhône River, which it majestically overlooks. The site has been occupied since Gallo-Roman times (oppidum) and was fiercely contested until the 16th century due to its strategic location. Passing in turn into the hands of the Salyens Gauls, the Romans, the Counts of Toulouse, the Archbishops of Arles, the Pope, the King of France, the Huguenots and the Catholics, the fortress has had a turbulent history. Today it lies in ruins, with a few buildings still well preserved (keep, barbican, granary).

The success of the visit is mainly due to the actors who entertain visitors in a fun way throughout the tour. I even found myself in the "pillory". Even there, the view is breathtaking!

**Why do I love this castle? For the infectious enthusiasm of the entertainment team.**

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Did you know? The Duchy of Uzès was the first to be created in France (1565).



[See the Map](#)

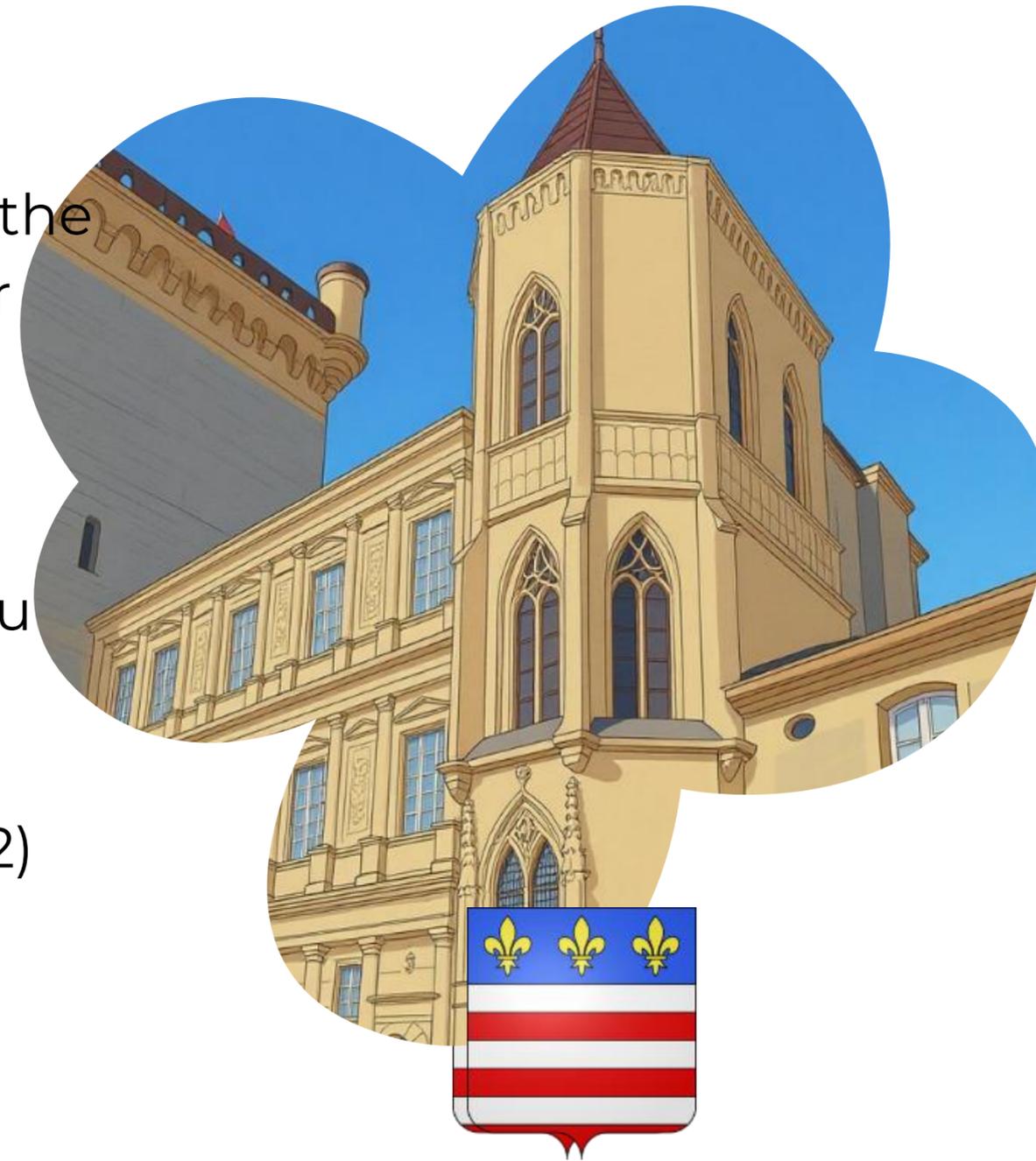
# Ducal Castle of Uzès

A visit to Uzès Castle takes about an hour. The site is very interesting for several reasons.

- Don't miss the castle's three towers, each symbolising a different period in the castle's history and a different power: the Bermonde Tower of the Lord (12th century), the King's Tower (13th century) and the Round Tower of the Aristocracy and Bishops (16th century). It's a real lesson in architecture per square metre.
- The same family, the Crussols, has lived in part of the château for 1,000 years. Don't disturb them!
- The castle escaped destruction twice: 1) During the Wars of Religion (16th century). The Duke converted to Catholicism. 2) During the Revolution, as it was made available to the revolutionaries. Very pragmatic Dukes!

**Why do I love this castle? For the view from the top of the Bermonde Tower (135 steps).**

12<sup>th</sup>



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# Boulbon Castle

Another castle that saw turbulent times during the Middle Ages. This is hardly surprising given its ideal position as a sentinel for the County of Provence, directly opposite the Kingdom of France on the other side of the Rhône. All the hallmarks of a medieval castle are there: a rocky spur (particularly impressive, as you'll see when you visit), a castrum built in the early 11th century, violent conflicts to take possession of it, a defensive function for the village, and architectural developments with major works in the 14th century. Unfortunately, the Revolution came along and ordered its destruction. Owned by a passionate architect, the castle has been given a new lease of life and has been welcoming visitors since 2025. Don't miss it!

**Why do I love this castle? For its abrupt, spectacular, rugged appearance. It's a bit like the "villain's castle" in films... You feel like you're being watched.**



Great families:  
De Boulbon, De la  
Tour, Bompant



[Consult  
the Map](#)

Discover a terrifying man:  
**Raymond de Turenne**



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Did you know that a memorable siege took place here in 1216? Simon de Montfort remembers it well!



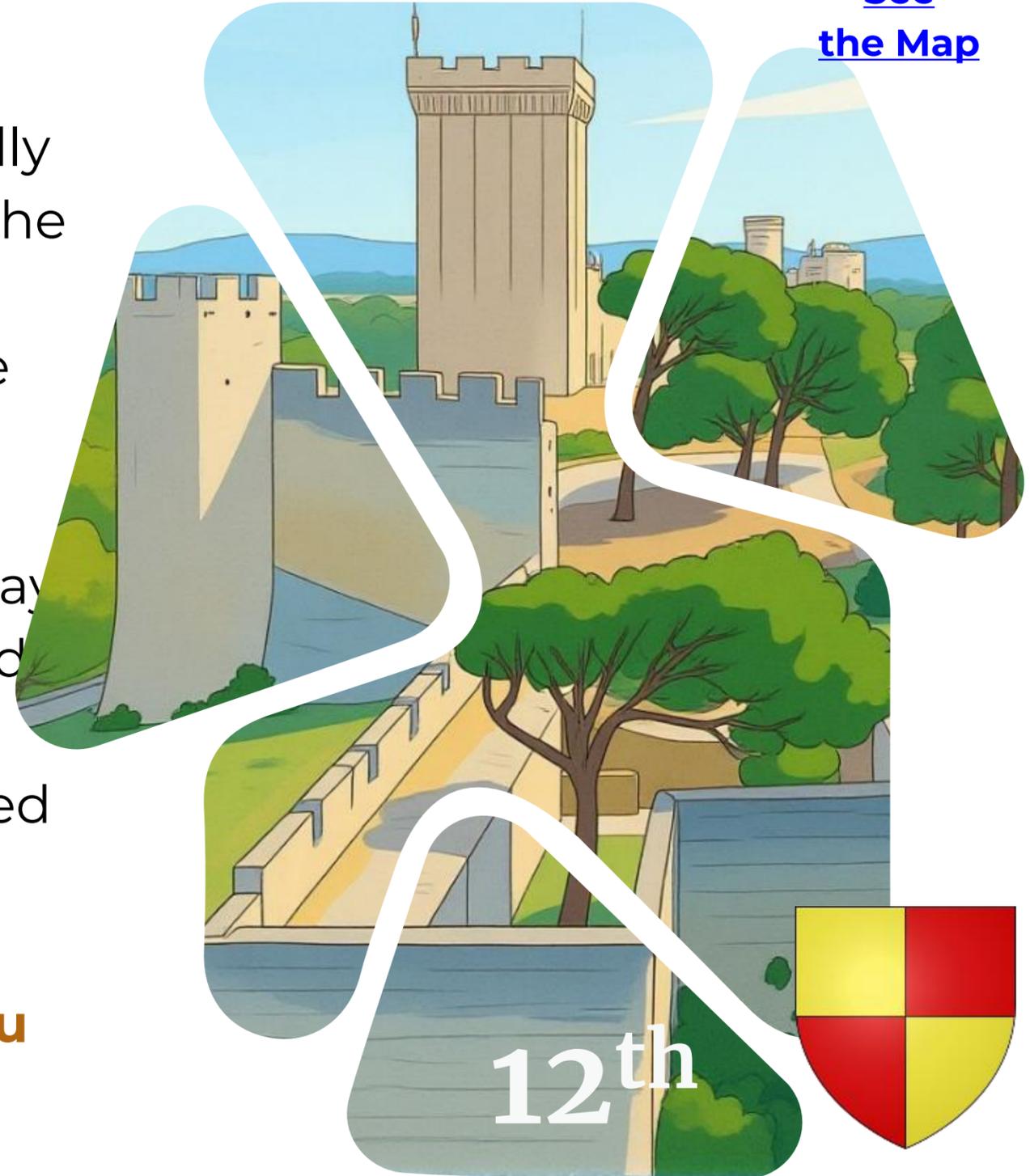
[See the Map](#)

# Beaucaire Fortress

Located opposite Tarascon, the fortress of Beaucaire is ideally placed to control the Rhône. It is important to note that in the Middle Ages and until the 18th century, Beaucaire was a prosperous town, with one of the largest fairs in Europe, the famous Foire de la Madeleine (10 days in July).

The fortress was originally built by the Counts of Toulouse, then became a very powerful citadel under Saint Louis. Today it must be said, all that remains are mainly the ramparts and a striking triangular tower. Yes, Richelieu ordered its dismantling in 1632. Nevertheless, a visit is still recommended for the ramparts, the view from the top of the tower, the peaceful surroundings and the excellent Escape Game!

**Why do I love this castle? The place is really peaceful, you feel like you're away from the world.**



12<sup>th</sup>

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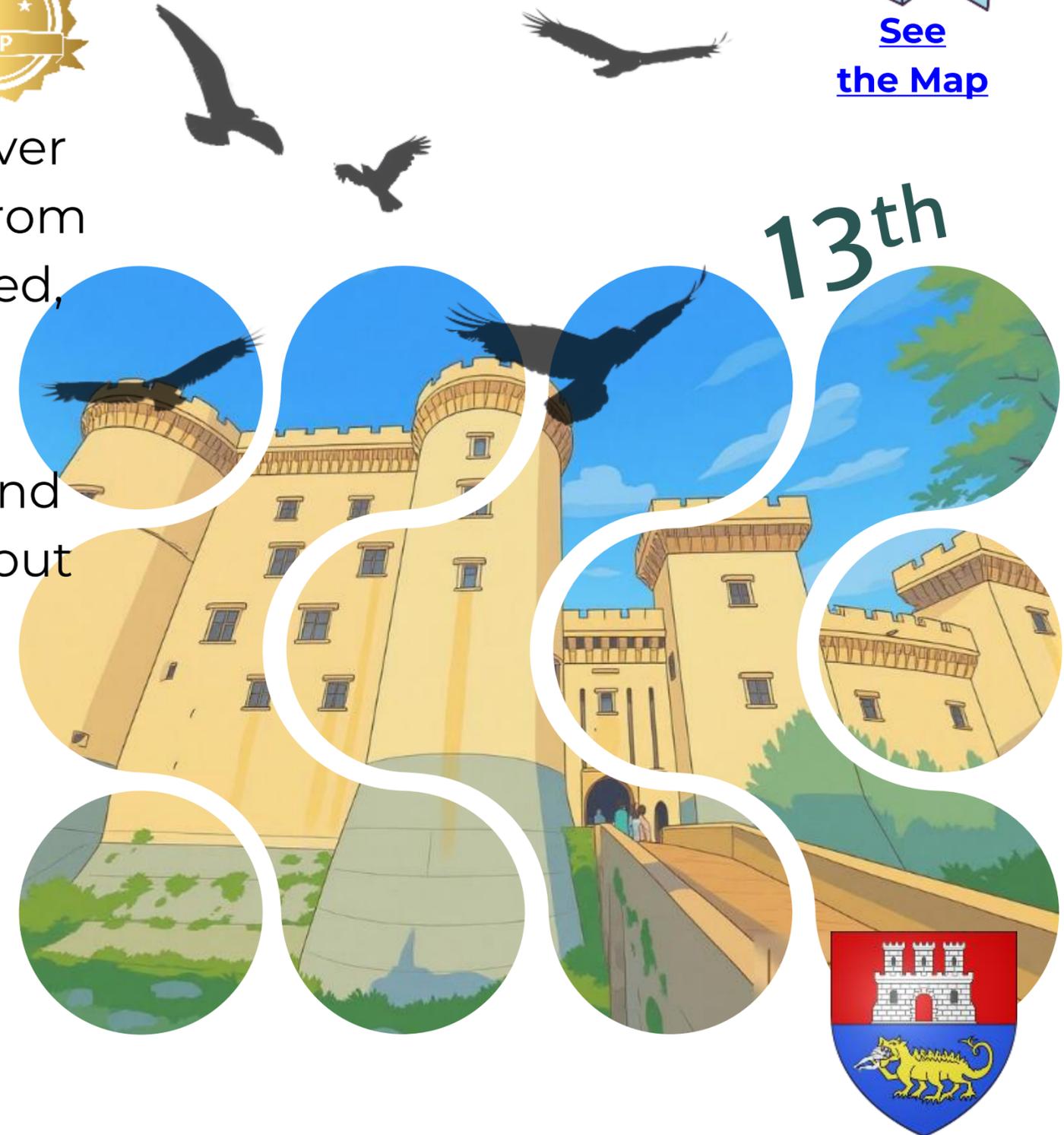
# Tarascon Castle

This majestic fortified castle stands along the Rhône River and became the residence of the Counts of Provence from the 14th to the 15th century. It is incredibly well preserved, having remained virtually unchanged since the 15th century. It is often referred to as the castle of the good King René, although it was actually built by his father and brother (1400-1435). King René, who was passionate about the arts, turned it into a place dedicated to culture and celebration, thus heralding the Renaissance. It is this ambivalence that you will discover during your visit: a **medieval fortress**, a veritable control tower over the Rhône, transformed into a **holiday palace**. And did you know? It closely resembles the Bastille, which was destroyed during the Revolution. Not to be missed!

**Why do I love this castle? Because King René...**



[See the Map](#)



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"Au hasard, Balthazar" (As chance would have it, Balthazar) is the motto of the Lords of Les Baux. And yes, according to them, they are the descendants of the famous Three Wise Men.



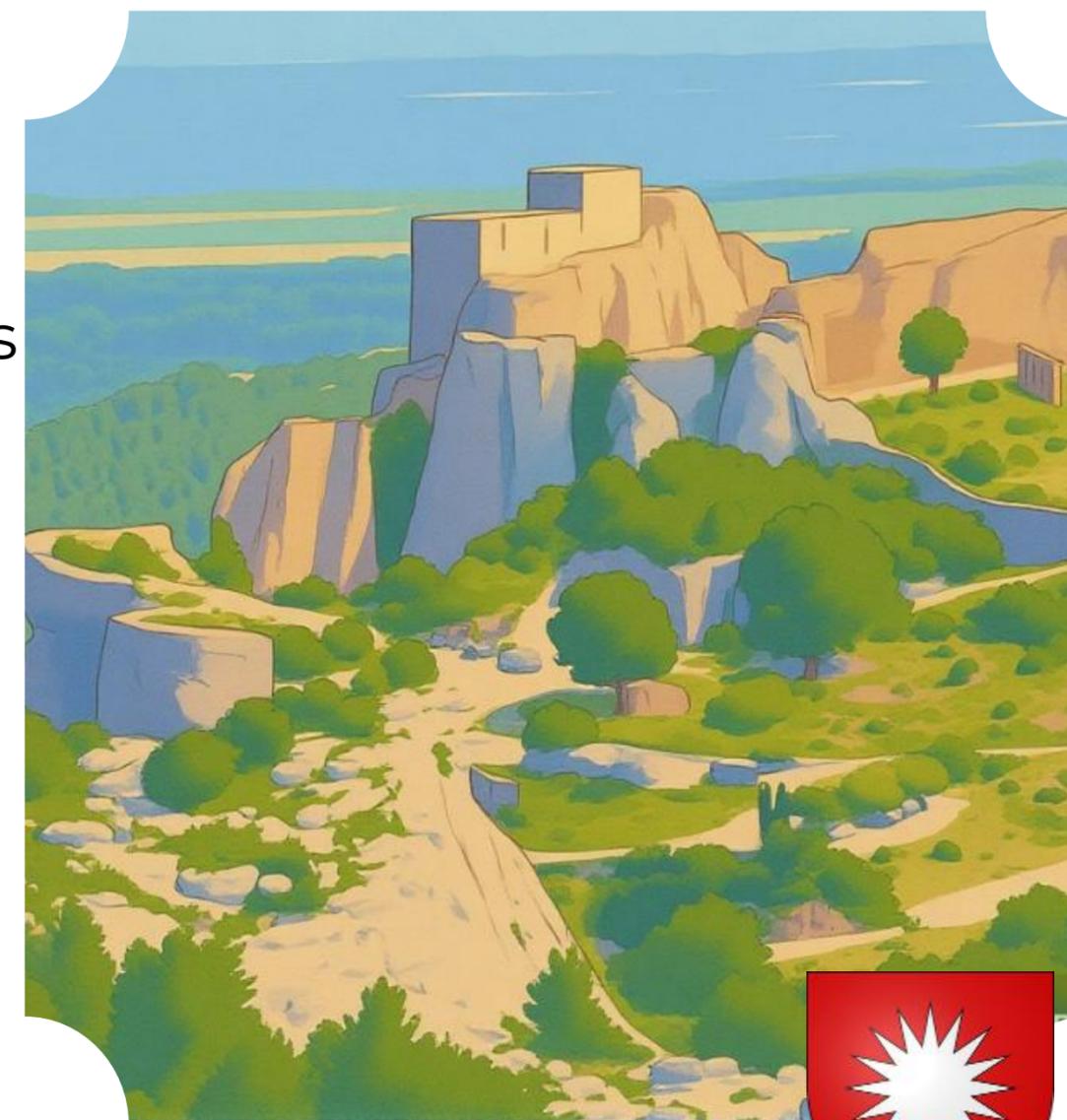
[See the Map](#)

# Château des Baux-de-Provence

10<sup>th</sup>

Ah, how difficult it is today to appreciate the importance of the Château des Baux. It belonged to the very powerful family of the Lords of Baux (11th-13th centuries), who controlled no fewer than 79 villages in Provence. The Lord was practically a prince. Of course, this was enough to fuel centuries of rivalry with the Counts of Provence. The castle became one of the largest fortresses in France and gained a reputation for being invincible. This was true in fact, as it was never conquered. One date changed everything: in 1483, Provence was annexed to the Kingdom of France. Until then, nothing serious had happened, except that two centuries later, Richelieu ordered its dismantling (1633). It subsequently became a romantic ruin, popular with visitors.

**Why do I love this castle? The views from the top of the ruins over the village, the region and the Val d'Enfer are an absolute must.**



# Practical Guide - Castles of Provence #1



**Grignan Castle** Open daily from 10 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. (earlier in low season).



**Fortress of Mornas** Open daily from April to early November, from 9.45am to 12.30pm and from 1pm to 5.15pm.



**Boulbon Castle** Open Wednesday to Sunday from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 14:00 to 17:00.



**Tarascon Castle** Open every day except Monday, from 9.30am to 12.30pm and from 2pm to 6.30pm (earlier in low season).



**Suze-la-Rousse Castle** Open daily from 10:00 to 12:30 and from 14:00 to 17:00.



**Ducal Castle of Uzès** Open daily from 10:00 to 12:30 and from 14:00 to 18:30.



**Beaucaire Fortress** Open all year round, Wednesday to Sunday from 10am to 5pm.



**Baux-de-Provence Castle** Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

