

CHATEAU LEDNICE – PRINCELY APARTMENTS

Dear ladies and gentlemen, dear children,

the chateau administration welcomes you to the chateau Lednice. The owner of the chateau is the Institute for Monument Preservation in Kroměříž.

Thank you in advance for following these rules throughout the tour:

- we kindly ask you not to touch displayed objects and walls, not to sit on the furniture and not to leave your group
- in the rooms with carpets please walk only on them
- taking photos is included in the price of the ticket, but it is forbidden to use flash, tripods or selfie sticks

The first preserved record about Lednice is from the year 1222. At that time it was just a Gothic water stronghold with a farmyard which a Moravian aristocrat Sigfried Sirotek obtained from king Wenceslas I.

The Liechtenstein family, who came from Styria (Austria), bought a part of the manor and the castle Mikulov and from 1371 to 1945 they were the owners of Lednice and nearby chateau Valtice.

Lednice with its beautiful gardens and surrounding park served as the summer residence for the ruling princes who were continually improving the property. For instance, the famous Austrian architect Bernard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723) rebuilt the Renaissance chateau from the 16th century and added a monumental riding hall and stables in the Baroque style, which is connected to the chateau on the west side.

During the years 1846–1858 the chateau was rebuilt in English Neogothic style by the architect George Wingelmüller as requested by the then-ruling prince Alois II. (1796–1858). The chateau served as a summer residence. After Wingelmüller's death his assistant Johann Heidrich finished the project.

However, part of the furnishings suffered damage during the World War II and the most valuable pictures were transported to Vaduz (the capital of the Principality of Liechtenstein) in 1943 by the family. The Lednice chateau was taken over by the Czechoslovak State in 1945 and made it accessible to the public. Lednice-Valtice complex was placed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1996.

The representative halls on the ground floor witnessed grand meetings of European nobility. You may appreciate the exceptional beauty of these rooms if you follow the main route of the guided tour of our chateau.

The private rooms of the ruling prince and his wife were on the first floor of the chateau while the rooms for guests were in other parts of the building. The chateau rooms we are going to visit now served the prince's family until the year 1945. Since the 1950s till the year 2001 these rooms were housing the exhibition of the Agricultural Museum. It was not until the year 2002 that they were opened to the public. They have been refurbished according to the plans from the last third of the 19th century. A significant number of pieces of furniture and pictures were identified on the list of the year 1885 and renovated by our eminent restorers.

We will go through the room where you may see the picture of the castle of Liechtenstein at Mödling, near Vienna.

The apartments of Sofia Esterhazy, later Aloisia Fünfkirchen

Now we are going to proceed to the apartments of princess Sofia of Liechtenstein (1798–1869), who was a sister of Alois II. After the death of her brother in 1858, Sofia stayed in Lednice, where she had grown up, to keep company to her widowed sister-in-law Francisca. Another reason why Sofia settled in Lednice was that her husband Vincent Esterhazy, an army officer, whom she married in 1817, was stationed in nearby Brno (the capital of Moravia). It was easier for him to travel to Lednice than to their family mansion of Esterhazy in Galanta (Slovakia). In 1835 Vincent died in Lednice leaving his widow childless.

Sofia became a bosom friend of Sophia of Habsburg, mother of the emperor Franz Joseph I. After Franz Joseph married princess Elizabeth of Wittelsbach, called Sissi, in 1854, Sofia became Sissi's court-lady. She looked after immature Sissi with full patience till 1862. Sofia was also an experienced painter. This can be proven by her aquarelle, which shows the view of her apartment in Hütteldorf chateau in Vienna.

The first three rooms we are visiting now – a ladies' cabinet, a bedroom and a sitting room, remained to be used in the same way by Sofia's niece Aloisia, later Fünfkirchen (1838–1920), daughter of Francisca of Liechtenstein. The portraits probably represent some of her 9 sisters. It is worth noticing the contemporary photo taken before 1920, which portrays living brothers and sisters from Liechtenstein family. The lady in the armchair, first from the left, is Aloisia, behind her there are Terezia von Bayern, ruling prince Johann II, prince

Franz and Muster, the steward. Princess Ida Schwarzenberg, Henriette Liechtenstein and princess Anna Lobkowitz are sitting next to Aloisia.

The bedroom of Sofia Esterhazy, later Aloisia Fünfkirchen

The furnishing of this room is typical for the end of the 19th century. The three-piece sitting set was made in Biedermeier style. Next to the bed, there is a kneeler, which was used for the evening prayer. There is also a dressing table with accessories without which the ladies could not do. Two doors lead from the alcove, area with the bed. The right door leads to a bathroom, the left to a store of bed linen. We will see these rooms from the other side at the end of the tour. The chandelier is from the 19th century and it is made from split Venetian glass.

The sitting room of Sofia Esterhazy, later Aloisia Fünfkirchen

The picture decorations on the first and second floor of the chateau have often been changed according to the taste of its residing occupants. A part of the large collection of graphic, architectonic and photographic materials from Lednice is presented in this room. The Liechtenstein family systematically gathered the collection through ages. The proprietor Alois II had travelled, before the reconstruction of the chateau in 19th century, to Italy and was acquainted with English and Scottish architecture. Part of his collection was donated to him by his friends or commissioned by him. Both of his sons, Johann II and Franz, were experienced in architecture and art. They completed their education in all related fields and further extended their father's collection.

The author of most of the aquarelles and coloured printings above the three-piece sitting set is an Englishman Joseph Nash (1808–1878). He was a well-known genre painter whose lithographic sheets capture the atmosphere of romantic images of aristocratic life. They are also coloured printings of the Chinese pavilion in Ausperg garden in Vlašim and of the local Canary Isle. The other pictures by Rudolf Alt portray a view of Šternberk, Dürnberk and Fürchtenstein. The landscape painters Rudolf (1812–1905) and his younger brother Franz Alt (1821–1914) were often commissioned by the Liechtenstein family to renovate their exteriors and interiors. Most of the collection is in Vaduz now.

Family hall

The central and at the same time the largest area of the first floor is the Family hall. It is the only room, which preserved its baroque appearance. It comes from the time of prince Franz Joseph I. of Liechtenstein. The general

decoration of the hall was finished in 1775. The crystal chandelier comes from that time as well.

Above the fireplace you can see a richly carved frame with a portrait of the temporarily ruling prince Alois II (a man wearing a habit). The portrait was painted by a famous court painter Friedrich Amerling and was positioned here in the half of the 19th century, after minor interior changes. The frame was made in Vienna in 1847. Unfortunately, this picture was moved by its owners to Vaduz in the 1940s and you can see is only its copy.

The rest of the portraits represent members of the family in 18th and 19th century painted by Friedrich Oelenhainz (1745–1804). From right to left: princess Maria Antonia (1756–1821), princess Maria Leopoldine (1733–1809), prince Alois I (1759–1805), princess Leopoldine Adelgunde (1754–1809) and Johann I (1760–1836). The original portraits are in the Museum Liechtenstein in Vienna and thanks to the management we acquired their copies. The tables, the replica of the three-piece sitting set in antique-looking style and the grand piano are set in the original location. The Family Hall was used mainly for family sessions and gatherings.

The study room of prince Franz

We are standing in the study room of prince Franz, whose portrait, as seen on the right side, was done in 1898 by French painter Henri Gervéux. Prince Franz (1853–1938) was the youngest son of Alois II. He was born at the chateau of Liechtenstein near Mödling. When his father died, he was only five years old. Just like his mother Francisca, he loved their residence in Lednice and stayed here quite often. He took his school-leaving exam in Vienna, after which he started studying law at the Universities in Prague and Vienna. Between the years 1879 and 1922 he acted as an attaché of the Austro-Hungarian embassy in Brussels. In 1895–1899 he was appointed as an Austro-Hungarian delegate for Tsar's court in St. Petersburg. He spoke fluently Russian, became the centre of social life and dealt with prominent scientific and artistic institutions.

In 1929 he married Elsa Gutmann (1875–1947), the daughter of an industrial tycoon Johann Gutmann. Her first husband was a Hungarian aristocrat Göza Eres de Bethlen Falva (who died in 1908). The marriage took place after the death of Franz's brother, the ruling prince Johann II, who had not wished this marriage to happen because of Elza's origin. Elza's father, a "coal" Baron, bought his title. In the middle you can see the portrait of her father Johann Gutmann from 1878. The wedding photo of Franz and Elsa is on the desk.

Prince Franz, from 1929 the ruling prince, used to visit the whole estate with his wife, however most of the time he spent in Vienna in Bankgasse

(Bankstreet). The marriage was childless. Prince was a generous donor financially supporting the construction of several churches. In March 1938 he was succeeded by his grand-nephew Franz Joseph II, the father of Prince Hans Adam, who rules the country nowadays.

The picture collection in this room tells us that Liechtenstein family became famous, apart from other things, for their horse breeding (in the 17th century they even developed their own breed). The former furniture represents a valuable collection of wicker furniture, which was highly popular in the second half of the 19th century. In the corners, on the mahogany cabinets, you may see standard lamps, which were originally used with kerosene. The lamps were electrified in 1903 together with the whole chateau.

The bedroom of prince Franz and his personal maid

The prince's bedroom was equipped in a rather simple style. It is worth noticing the English bay window in this small room, which offered a beautiful view of the garden. By the sides there are hidden wooden sun blinds. On the wall you can see baroque portraits of the ancestors. The bed linen is genuine. Because of the size of the maid's room we will go through and directly continue to dining room.

Dining room

This so-called small dining room served only for the family. When the Liechtenstein family had guests, the Knights' Hall at the ground floor or the nearby summer dining room were used for serving food. The picture on the right side *The View of the Castle* (1839) is the work of the Austrian landscape painter Anton Hansch (1813–1876). He was a student at Viennese Academy and at least 10 of his works decorated the walls of Lednice chateau. On the frontal wall you can see a painting of Vesuv and the Renaissance gate in Verona. The chandelier, styled in the form of a jug and glass cups, was ordered to be made directly for this dining room. On the tables you can find authentic menu cards from 1912 and 1913.

The gallery

The Liechtenstein family was one of the most important European collectors of visual art for ages. This is the gallery where great masterpieces of visual art, mainly oil paintings of Dutch and German painters, were displayed. The gallery has its beginning at the time of the Emperor Rudolf II. Johann II enriched it with numerous purchases of art created by prominent European

painters. After the World War II this well-known collection was moved to the residence of Liechtenstein principedom in Vaduz.

Nowadays the decoration of the chateau gallery includes the works from the 16th till the 19th century. It is worth noticing several paintings: *View of the Convent*, from the 17th century and below *the Winter Rural Feast*. Additionally, there are four pastoral scenes and a temporary replica of the German councillor's portrait painted by Albrecht Dürer. This replica is twice-framed in the same way as the original would have been. The valuable originals were kept in a secure treasury while the replicas were shown to public.

There is also *The portrait of the old engraver* and next to the door leading to the library on the ground floor there is a picture of a cemetery in Lovran by German painter Egon Jettel. Additionally, you can see the painting *The Dying fiddler* by Karl Litschauer and a family scene by an unknown Dutch painter.

Chinese room

Have a look at the Chinese room, which still has the original appearance including the wallpapers (restored) and window curtains. The Chinese chandelier is original as well. The corner glass menagerie served as a show case of small oriental knick-knacks. At the time of the romantic era it was fashionable to decorate aristocratic mansions with Chinese and Japanese art. The Liechtenstein collections of oriental art was considered one of the best at one point.

The study room of the princess

We have entered the study room of princess Francisca of Liechtenstein (1813–1881). She married Alois II of Liechtenstein in 1831. In 1856 they celebrated their silver wedding at Lednice. Two years later the prince died. Frances's sister-in-law Sofia Esterhazy, whose rooms we have already seen, helped to bring up her children. It was not only Sofia who served at Emperor's court. The leading person was mainly Maria Eleonora (1745–1812), whose picture is above the three-piece sitting set on the left. She came from an old princely family Oettingen-Spielberg. Her husband Karel Boromeus is painted on the right and is the founder of a new Liechtenstein family branch in Moravský Krumlov.

All princesses of Liechtenstein were experienced painters, especially Francisca enjoyed painting during her travels when she accompanied her husband. After her death, her rooms were glorified and often called "Mama's rooms". They were used as guest-rooms from time to time. Notice also the grand view of the French garden which can be seen from this room.

The bathroom of the princess

The bathroom of the princess was originally completed with an English porcelain bathtub and a washbasin in the second half of the 19th century. This can still be seen today. However, the bathroom was modernized in the 1920s.

The bedroom of the princess

Above the Classicist commode on the right there is a picture by Joseph Kriehubert, which shows the young prince Johann II at the age of 18, when he became the sovereign. Johann II ruled till his death in 1929. It is hardly known that his rule lasted longer than that of Emperor Franz Joseph I of Habsburg.

The portraits of the girls show two of princess's nine daughters. The picture *The Bowing of the Kings* above the bed is a masterpiece by an Italian artist from the 16th century. The richly carved Neogothic commode and the inlaid Baroque wardrobe additionally furnish the bedroom.

The anteroom

From this room you can have a look at the other side of the dining room, for which the entrance room served as a background. The dishes and the place mats were kept in the built-in cupboards. The wardrobe opposite served as a cloakroom.

It is not possible to stand on the stairway of the Entrance hall for a long time because of the static reasons. We would ask you to pass through it quickly and wait in the so-called Billiard room.

The Billiard room

The Billiard room contains articles that were originally placed in the chateau's casino: the Neogothic billiard and card tables. A unique Neogothic richly decorated wardrobe is placed in the original location. The riding portrait of prince Anton Florian represents the original decoration of the room. From all the tiny articles, which survived, we should mention the tobacco case decorated with hunting motives placed on the table. It emphasizes the masculine character of the room. Two chairs on the right are 360 degrees moveable.

The corridor

From the corridor you may look into the maid's rooms. The rooms of the children, their tutors and governesses were placed on the second floor of the chateau.

The oratory

From the princely oratory you can see the interior of the chateau chapel, which was added in 1848 during the Neogothic reconstruction of the chateau in 1848. It was used not only by the princely family but also by the local parishioners, as the original church standing at the place of the nowadays greenhouse was pulled down in 1732. The chapel was consecrated to Saint Jacob. The extraordinary, precious organ is 430 years old. At the same time, nowadays it is the only church in Lednice.

By the right side of the entrance there is a relic – a stone from the saint mountain of Oreb at Sinai. On the other side there is a confessional.

The last rooms to be seen are the store of bed linen and the bathroom, both from the 1890s. At this time changes were being done in the princely rooms by the master-builder Weinbrenner.

This is the end of our tour through the princely apartments. Thank you for your visit. We would recommend you to visit the representative halls on the ground floor as well as the greenhouse. Please return this text to the guide.