



2020

Ruins of the Koenigstein Fortress

Site of European Democratic History



1796

Ruins of the Koenigstein Fortress today



- a - b Vaulted gate passage
- c - d Vaulted gate passage
- e - f Vault below the palace garden
- Paths and accessible parts of the building
- Non-accessible areas and parts of the building
- Fortress, accessible - lower level
- Fortress, accessible - middle level
- Fortress, accessible - upper level

All names of the rooms and fortifications date back to the year 1791!

You are visiting the ruins of a historical fortress from the 17th and 18th centuries. The remains of the buildings today are what is left of the buildings and fortifications from 1796, which were already 'old' at that time and date from the 12th to 17th centuries. This means that the ruins of the fortress contain the remains of a Renaissance palace and a medieval castle.

The ruins of the fortress today are divided into **three levels**:

The **lower level**, which you enter first, was created by landfills in the 16th century and also includes the 'new half bastion' from the 17th century. This completed the expansion of the Koenigstein Fortress.

The **middle level** comprises the 'parade grounds' from the 15th century and the 'new whole bastion' from the 17th century.

The **upper level** includes the roundels and the 'palace' from the 16th century and the remains of the medieval castle from the 12th to 16th century.

In 1796, parts of the fortress were blown up and torn down during the following years. Demolition work was stopped around 1840. Since then, the ruins have not changed much.

Recommendations / further information:
www.koenigstein-festung.de

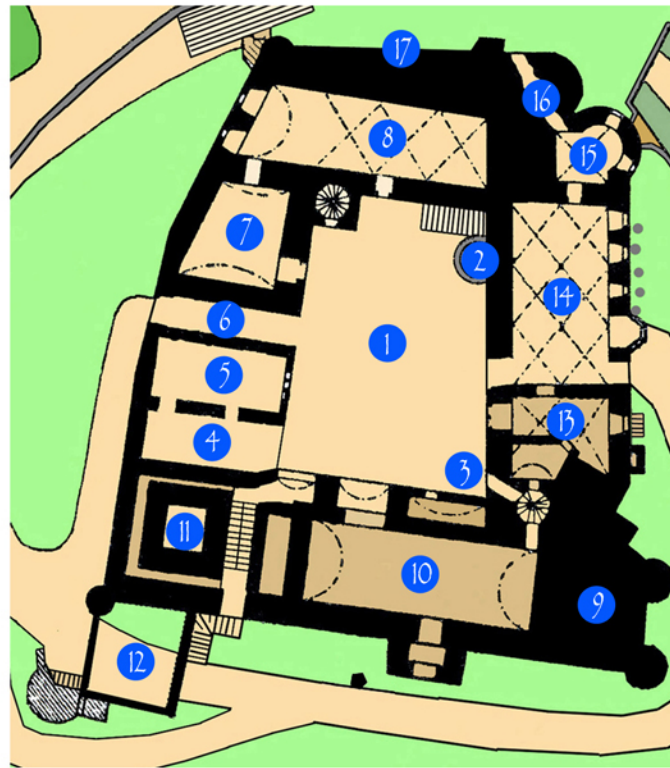
Visit the City and Castle Museum Koenigstein
 (Kugelhermstraße 1 / 'Historical town hall')
www.koenigstein-museum.de

Visit the Spa and City Information
 (Hauptstraße 13a)
www.koenigstein.de

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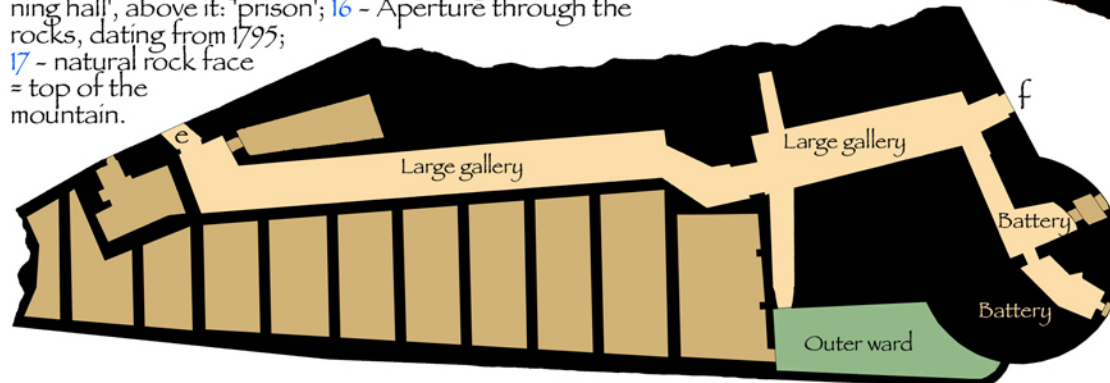


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Castle and palace, upper visitation level:

1 - 'Palace courtyard'; 2 - Fountain; 3 - Access to the stair tower to the upper floor; 4 - Room of the former 'baking oven'; 5 - Room of a former prison, named 'bakery'; 6 - Access to the palace; 7 - 'Cellar', above it: 'old palace chapel', next to it: stairwell; 8 - 'large cellar', above it: 'wood supplies', living 'room' and kitchen of the commander; 9 - medieval fortifications; 10 - large vaulted cellar, above it: 'garrison church' (accessible via 3); 11 - Palace tower; 12 - Gate; 13 - 'Wood container', 'prison', above it: 'living rooms'; 14 - 'Palace kitchen', above it: 'Commander's entrance hall' with guest room and dining room; 15 - 'Dining hall', above it: 'prison'; 16 - Aperture through the rocks, dating from 1795; 17 - natural rock face = top of the mountain.



During the Middle Ages, the castle was administered by the noble families of 'Muenzenberg', 'Falkenstein' and 'Eppstein' on behalf of the king. In the 16th century, the castle and fortress belonged to the Counts of 'Stolberg-Koenigstein'.

From 1581 until destruction, the fortress was part of the 'Electorate of Mainz', an individual ecclesiastical state in Germany.

The fortress was under siege several times between 1792 and 1796 and was also in French Hands.

From 1793 to 1795 political prisoners who had previously campaigned for the French-dominated 'Republic of Mainz' were held here: The fortress was known throughout Europe at the time, mainly just because of this prison of the first democrats. - Today, a plaque and a permanent exhibition in the castle and town museum remind us of this fact. - The ruins of the fortress are a 'place of European democratic history'.

From 1803 to 1922 the ruins belonged to the Princely House of Nassau, and since 1922, the City of Koenigstein is the owner.

Today, a large number of events take place here - the most popular certainly being the Koenigstein 'Burgfest', or castle festival (www.burgverein-koenigstein.de).

Vaulted passage next to the 'main gate'



Vaulted passage next to the 'parade grounds'.

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