



Koenigstein Fortress

Site of European Democratic History

A Tour of the Fortress in 1795

A tour of the
'Prison of the First Democrats'
with your mobile phone



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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The Tour on the Internet

There is good internet reception on the fortress. You will therefore find a German-version tour of the fortress in 1795 on the Internet at:



Larger on the title page

With a total of 67 positions, we guide you through the fortress such as it looked in the year 1795. - All positions are marked on the plan of the fortress ruins, in order to facilitate orientation. - For comparison, you will also find a floor plan of the fortress of 1795 in the same scale.

The Year 1795 and the Fortress

On September 21, 1795, the **political prison at Königstein Fortress** was closed, and the last prisoners were released from the **'prison of the first democrats'**.

Since April 8, 1793, more than 250 political prisoners were imprisoned here for varying lengths of time. Most of them had participated in an effort to build to a democracy in the **'Mainz Republic'**, based on the French model (see www.demokratiegeschichten.de/die-mainzer-republik). The proclamation of the 'Mainz Republic' is today regarded as the birth of our democratic history. Also, it was the only foundation of a democratic republic modelled on the French Revolution on German soil and is thus a place of European democratic history.

The Mainz Republic existed from November 1792 to July 1793, created completely under the influence of a French occupation. It claimed civil rights on the model of the Constitution of the French Republic for the people of its territory, which was solely protected by the French revolutionary army against the German troops and the former sovereign, the Elector of Mainz. The Mainz Republic denied that her inhabitants continued to be subjects of the Elector of Mainz. This proclamation of the claim to the abolition of all privileges and prerogatives of the nobility and the rejection of governments without elections was revolutionary. The Koenigstein Fortress was the largest prison for the arrested Democrats after the failure of the Republic.



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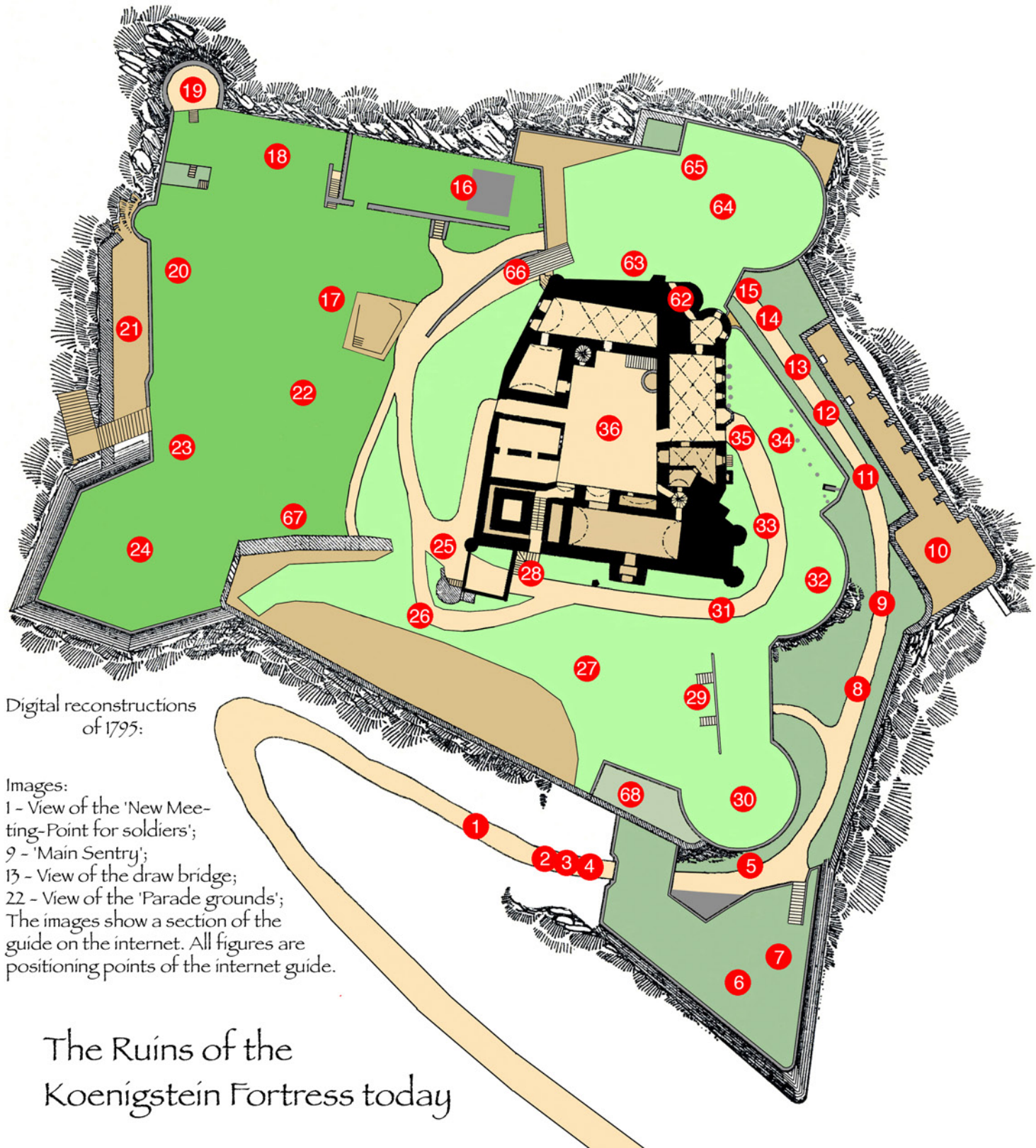
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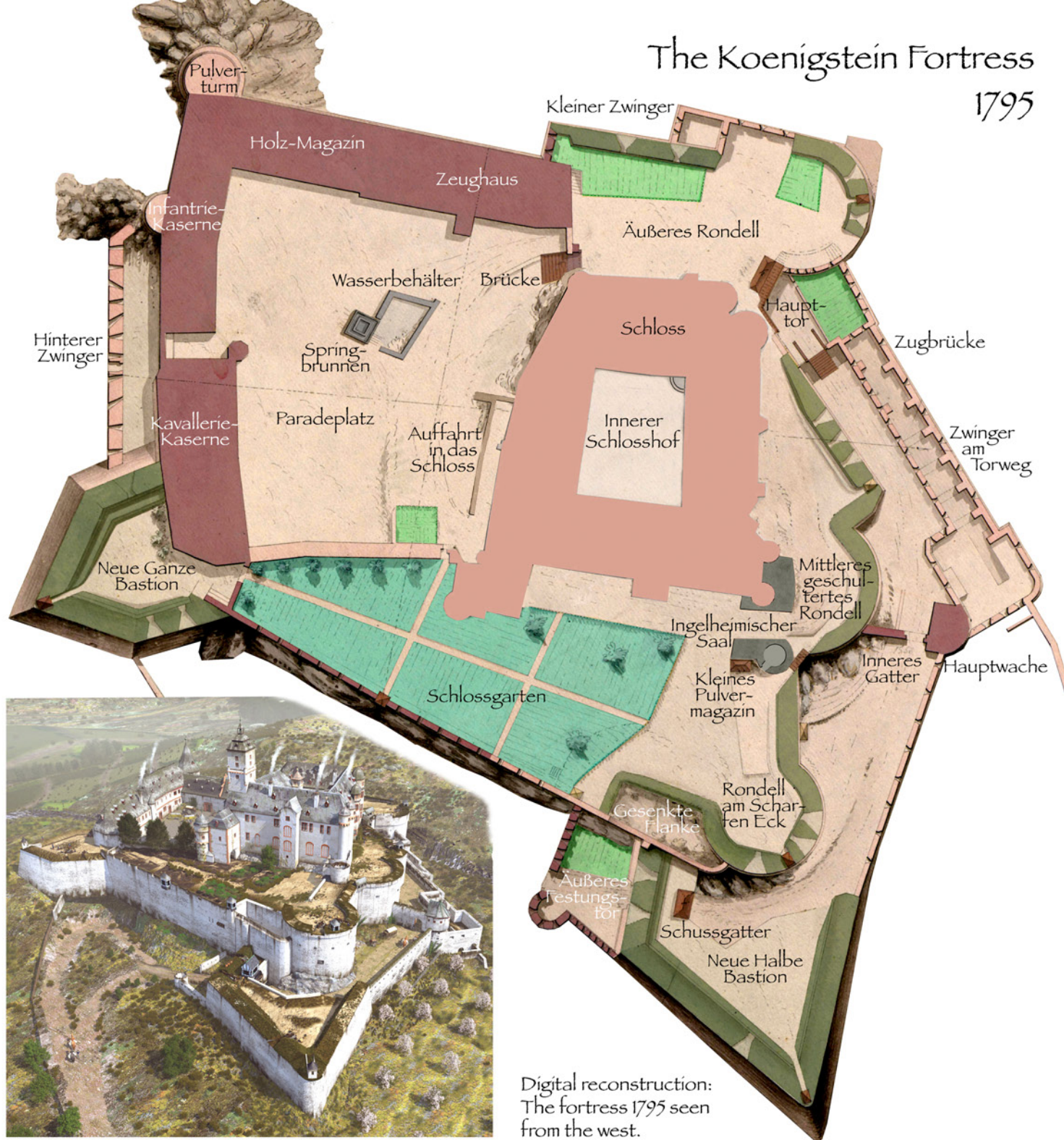
Digital reconstructions of 1795:

Images:
 1 - View of the 'New Meeting-Point for soldiers';
 9 - 'Main Sentry';
 13 - View of the draw bridge;
 22 - View of the 'Parade grounds';
 The images show a section of the guide on the internet. All figures are positioning points of the internet guide.

The Ruins of the Koenigstein Fortress today

The Koenigstein Fortress

1795



Digital reconstruction:
The fortress 1795 seen
from the west.



Guided tour for avid readers:

There are places on this fortress (A-Q), where special events in connection with the 'Prison of the First Democrats' took place: You will find first-hand information through contemporary literary sources and newspaper reports.

Guided tour for avid readers:





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Infantry barracks
Powder tower

Cavalry barracks

Wood supplies
Arsenal



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Digital reconstruction of 1795:

67 - View from the 'Great Gallery' to the 'Parade grounds';
35 - View of the east facade of the castle; 22 - View of the 'Parade grounds'; 36 - View into the 'Inner courtyard';
27 - View of the castle garden.



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