

The medieval garden at Haut-Koenigsbourg castle



Plants at hand

In the Middle Ages, gardens were usually laid out in or near Rhenish castles, providing a small reserve of plants.

Plants played an important role in everyday life. To illustrate this, **a collection of almost 200 species** is on display in the Haut-Koenigsbourg garden. You'll find everything you need to care for and protect yourself, feed yourself, make your own clothes and talk to your friends.

Medicinal plants were essential, making up the first-aid kit of the time: sage and mint against fevers, white broth against coughs... not forgetting a few magic herbs.

In the **kitchen garden**, cabbages, peas, onions, turnips and other root vegetables were the stars of the day. No potatoes, tomatoes or other vegetables from America!

And of course, no medieval garden is complete without the inevitable charm of roses, peonies and lilies, near the arbours and benches where you can relax.

A well thought-out, structured space

Although there is no historical evidence to support it, it is likely that Haut-Koenigsbourg had its own garden in the Middle Ages. A garden was therefore created at the beginning of the 21st century for educational purposes, classifying plants according to their uses.

In keeping with medieval tradition, it is enclosed, protected by fences and hedges. Everything is perfectly structured with paths, geometric flowerbeds and green constructions. The pleasure of the garden came from its sensory qualities, and above all from its regularity and the sense of security it provided.

The garden covers an area of around 600m². Its size and the quantity of its plantings are undoubtedly much greater than they were at the time, but they show the richness of the plant life of gardens in the Middle Ages.

Particular attention has been paid to the choice of plants, in order to find species that are as close as possible to those of the 15th century. Replanted in 2023 and 2024, these plants must also be adapted to the Alsatian climate, which can be harsh in mid-mountain areas!

The medieval garden of Haut-Koenigsbourg is located outside the southern enclosure of the fortress. You can explore it on your own as the seasons change.