CHÂTEAU DU RAMSTEIN

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+ Description

Built in 1293 by Otto (Othon) von Ochsenstein, Grand Bailiff of Alsace, Ramstein Castle was constructed below its powerful neighbour, Ortenbourg Castle, in order to support the siege against it. Originally a simple tower, it gradually evolved into a veritable castle. After passing into the hands of the Zorn family of Bulach, it was devastated by the people of Strasbourg in the 15th century, then destroyed again by the Swedes during the Thirty Years' War.

Today, all that remains of the residential tower are two sections of wall, where several levels, a fireplace and a large niche arrow slit facing Ortenbourg can still be seen. This arrow slit, the largest in Alsace, was specially designed to accommodate a giant crossbow capable of firing projectiles at the neighbouring castle. The outer wall and two turrets of Ramstein also remain, rebuilt in 1793 to defend the entrance to the Vosges.

The site is home to rare and precious flora, such as the biscutella – a small cruciferous plant unique to the region – as well as endangered species such as perennial lettuce, noble yarrow and the green lizard.

For several years, a team of volunteers, the ‘Veilleurs du Ramstein’ (Guardians of Ramstein), has been clearing and consolidating walls, towers and foundations to preserve this heritage. **For safety reasons, the castle remains closed to the public, but it is sometimes possible to visit the site during Heritage Days.**