

## ENTRANCE HALL

Welcome to the state castle in Hořovice. It is called the New Castle because there are two castles in Hořovice. The Old Castle lies about 200 m from here on the opposite side of the road (in the curve). The first record of it is related to the year 1233 when the estate was owned by the Lords of Žirotín.

At the end of the 17th century, a new family of Silesian Lords of Vrbno and Bruntál appeared in Hořovice. The first of them, Count John Francis (1634–1705), is considered to be the builder of the New Castle. The Old Castle no longer met the demands of the representative aristocratic residence.

Lords of Vrbno remained in Hořovice until the mid-19th century. The last owner of this family was Dominik (1811–1876), who in 1852 sold the domain of Hořice to the Hessian Elector Friedrich Wilhelm, Prince of Hanau (1802–1875), whose stylized portrait represents a bust in the right niche. His wife Gertrud is depicted in the bust in the left niche. */Hesse was a principality in today's central Germany/*

The descendants of Prince of Hanau owned the castle and partly also the domain until 1945. The last owners are reminded here with the combined coat of arms of Count Henry of Schaumburg (left) and his wife Maria Theresia Fugger (right).

Above the representative staircase, you can see an extensive fresco from around 1730, which is attributed to Tyrolean painter and architect Johann Ferdinand Schor, who also drew up a project of the castle park. The sitting and hovering figures in the fresco represent allegories of sciences and art. In front of the gate is Pallas Athena, and in the highest sphere of the heaven, you can see the ancient god of time Chronos with a scythe as a symbol of the transience of human age.

## CORRIDOR

Corridors served mainly as communication spaces. The living rooms are oriented to the south because of the sun, while the corridors are situated to the north.

The collection of large paintings on the left depicting ruins of ancient buildings originated in Italy and dates back to the second half of the 18th century.

Two smaller paintings in the middle of the right wall, representing Italian villas, date from the 19th century.

## CHAPEL

The original chapel was dedicated to Our Lady of Czestochowa and decorated with typical Baroque pomp. After the arrival of a new Protestant noble family, the old chapel was deconsecrated and closed. The new chapel was built in 1896 in original guest rooms (see the date on the back wall of the room).

After the death of the last Hanau family member in 1917, a new owner, Henry Count of Schaumburg, came to the castle. As a Catholic, in 1933 he asked the archbishopric office for a sanctified altar stone and consecration of the chapel. Unfortunately, there is no record of the result.

The chapel, as well as the Main Hall, is decorated in the style of cold pseudo-classicism. The alter in the semi-circular chancel is from the 1930s.

The bench at the back wall is part of the original equipment, other benches are replicas from the mid-1990s.

On the back wall of the chapel, you can see a panel painting, a triptych – the central painting depicts Madonna with the Child, the side paintings depict St. Luke and St. Cecilia.

The painting on the right-hand wall depicts a biblical scene of Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet before the Last Supper.

## SACRISTY

Sacristy is a room in a church located next to the chancel (on the south or north), or behind the main altar, which serves for keeping vestments (such as chasubles) and other church furnishings used for the service. It is also a room where the priest and acolytes prepare before the service. Sacristy, as well as the church, are being cared for by a sacristan (lat. sacristanus).

## HUNTING CORRIDOR

The graphics on the walls date back to the mid-18th century. They were created by Austrian painter and graphic designer Johann Elias Ridinger.

These hunting-themed graphics come from the times when the Hořovice domain was owned by the Silesian Lords of Vrbno who used to enjoy the wealth of the local Brdy forests. Proof of this is the antlers on the walls, also from the second half of the 18th century.

In the long corridor, there are French comedies scenes from 1735 and biblical scenes.

# HABSBURG SALON

The first family at the Hořovice Castle was the Lords of Vrbno and Bruntál. The extent of their domain is shown on a very valuable cadastral map of the Hořovice estate dating back to 1756, prepared by land surveyor John Alois Kolbe.

John Francis of Vrbno (1634–1705) (graphic between the doors on the top right) moved the main residence of Vrbna family from Silesia to Bohemia. He is known as the builder of the New Castle in Hořovice, originally a smaller one-storey Baroque building with a ground plan to the letter L. Its existence is recorded in 1709, but it is believed to be completed somewhat earlier.

Another notable member of the family was Eugene Norbert Wenceslas (1728–1789) who held important office functions at the Habsburgs' court in Vienna. Like his father, Eugene Norbert won the post of Supreme Court Marshal and was the third holder of the Order of the Golden Fleece in the family.

Eugene built his career during the reign of Empress Maria Theresa and her husband Emperor Francis Stephen of Lorraine, whose portraits you can see on the opposite walls of the room.

In 1737, the Baroque reconstruction was carried out – the castle gained the present appearance of the ground plan into the letter H (another three single-story wings were completed) and two courtyards were added, of which the eastern (towards the park) had the function of a representative courtyard of honour (three-sided ceremonial courtyard).

The Habsburg Salon is furnished in the style of Baroque salons from the time of Maria Theresa with a typical set of furniture only around the walls and, if necessary, it was moved by servants to another spot. The room with furniture in the middle of the room was considered untidy.

This splendid and richly inlaid Baroque furniture dates back to the first half of the 18th century.

By the wall on the right (below the portrait of Maria Theresa) you can see a luxury jewellery box from the 17th century, which is inlaid with tortoiseshell. On the sides, there are vases – the rarely multicoloured Delft faience. On the table in the centre of the room is a gaming cassette decorated with an exceptionally difficult and beautiful technique called Cheb Relief Inlay. /Cheb is a town in West Bohemia/

On the other side, it was possible to play chess or checkers, the trick-track field of play appeared inside.

# RUDOLF'S STUDY

The so-called Rudolf's Study is dedicated to the most important representative of the Vrbno family – Rudolf John Nepomuk (1761–1823), whose portrait you can see on the wall.

Rudolf of Vrbno was a lawyer and very popular at the court of Emperor Leopold II (1747-1792) for his great knowledge and diplomatic talent.

Emperor Francis II. (I.) (1768–1835) even counted Count Rudolf as his personal friend and counsellor. Rudolf was a high imperial official, but natural science was at the true centre of his interest.

He devoted his time mainly to the study of mineralogy and mining and as an expert in the field of iron metallurgy, he established the famous foundry in a nearby village of Komárov. It produced primarily artistic cast iron and in his lifetime the foundry became a leading European producer of cast iron for industrial use.

Rudolf of Vrbno was also one of the most important representatives of the patriotic nobility at the beginning of the Czech National Revival. He contributed to the establishment of the National Museum in Prague in 1817, not only financially but he also donated a valuable collection of minerals, which you can still admire today.

Rudolf did not support only Czech science but also Czech culture. Cultural life at Hořovice Castle reflected his great love for music and he also sponsored the talent of a local boy and later the famous Czech violin virtuoso Josef Slavík. His eldest son and heir of Hořovice Eugen continued in this tradition, as the following lounge proves.

Rudolf's study is furnished according to the tastes of the Enlightenment period nobleman at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. The best work of art in this room is the Classicist clock between the doors with a stationary hand, a figure of the Virgin Mary-Immaculata and a calendar. They come from around 1800.

# MUSIC SALON

Rudolf's eldest son, Eugene Dominik Rudolf (1786–1848), walked successfully in his father's footsteps. During his rule, the prosperity of Hořovice domain reached its peak.

Eugene inherited many of his father's qualities – interest in mining and mineralogy that he studied, and business talent which he used to manage both the estate and industrial business. The fact that he donated material necessary for the production of the first Czech steam engine from his ironworks in Hořovice shows his progressive mind.

Like his father, Eugene was also interested in Czech culture and continued to support the outstanding violin virtuoso Josef Slavík (1806–1833), whose portrait you can see [here](#). Slavík did not disappoint his patron: he succeeded in challenging competition first in Prague, then in Vienna and even caught the attention of the great Paganini himself. Paganini highly appreciated Slavík's talent, especially the virtuoso ability to play even the most difficult parts of his own violin compositions. That is why the promising young artist began to be called "the Czech Paganini". The peak of Slavík's career came in 1833, when he became a member of the imperial court orchestra, a prestigious ensemble, and when he celebrated great success with his concerts in Vienna. However, in the same year, he suddenly and prematurely died in Budapest at the age of 27. He is buried at Vyšehrad Castle in Prague.

Josef Slavík also composed his own compositions. He then dedicated one of them to his patron – the title page of the sheet music on the piano bears a dedication to Count Eugene of Vrbo.

Count Eugene himself died fifteen years after his protégé. His close relations with the Habsburgs and loyal politics became fatal to him in the end. He died in Prague in a revolutionary turmoil in 1848 under unexplained circumstances. His eldest son and the universal heir Dominik Andrew Rudolf (1811–1876) took over the Vrbo estate after the mysterious death of his father but as an officer of the Austrian army he did not show much interest in Hořovice. That is why in 1852 he sold it to the Hessian Elector Friedrich Wilhelm of Hanau and left for the Silesian estate Holešov.

The music salon late Empire style furnishing dates back to the first third of the 19th century. The painting on the wall beside the door depicts a woman with violin - St. Cecilia, patron saint of musicians.

# FRIEDRICH WILHELM I. OF HANAU

## BEDROOM

In 1852 a new noble family came to Hořovice in the person of Prince Friedrich Wilhelm I of Hanau. This princely family is not very well known in the Czech Republic, because apart from Hořovice and a palace in Prague, it had no other property in Bohemia. The family ruled Hessen, one of today's federal states of Germany that lies exactly in the centre of Germany.

Hessen was a very rich and important country. Princesses of Hessen were married off to members of leading European royal families, for example to three Russian Tsars – Peter I, Alexander II, and Nicholas II. On the other hand, the wives of the Hessian rulers were princesses from other important royal families of Europe – Friedrich Wilhelm's mother was a Prussian princess Augusta, his grandmother a Danish princess Wilhelmina Carolina and his great-grandmother an English princess Mary.

His Royal Highness's Apartment consisted of two rooms – a representative bedroom and a library that was also a study. At that time, a bedroom was not an intimate room, as we know it in modern times, but it served to demonstrate status and nobility. The four-poster bed was for one person, the dressing table served for personal hygiene. The toilet was portable and was delivered if necessary.

However, Friedrich Wilhelm did not spend his first night at the Hořovice Castle in bed. The Dean's Chronicle states: "Witnesses say that the Elector spent the first night here as a knight lying on the threshold of his wife's bedroom, afraid that someone might kill her! So was the notion about the locals...".

Men's bedroom was also connected with marriage duties – the wife was supposed to come to the bedroom of her husband and not the other way around.

Wall tapestries are hung in a decorative manner here. They were no longer used as thermal insulation but only as decoration. At the time of owner's absence, all textiles, duvets, carpets, but also chandeliers and some pieces of furniture were taken off, wrapped in special boxes and stored, or transported to other residences.

Between the windows hangs a large painting depicting the legend of St. Elizabeth of Thuringia, a very popular saint in Central Europe. Elizabeth (1207-1231) was the daughter of the Hungarian king Andrew II and wife of the Thuringian Landgrave Ludwig. Their daughter Sophia (1224–1275) married Henry II, Duke of Brabant, and in 1264 their son Henry I (1244–1308) became the first Landgrave of Hessen.

The helmet and the sabre on the table are part of the uniform (in the closet), in which Friedrich Wilhelm was most frequently portrayed. The painting by the door shows military training ground at Wilhelmsthal Castle in Hessen. Above the door, there are plaster medallions depicting an allegory of day and night.

# FRIEDRICH WILHELM STUDY

During his studies in Bonn, Friedrich Wilhelm met Gertrud Lehman, whom he married in 1831. They both are depicted in graphics in black frames above the library.

This morganatic (uneven) marriage was not without complications, just like his fathers' Wilhelm II (1777–1847, his portrait is on the medallion above the door to the lady's bedroom), who got married three times. The first wife was the already mentioned Prussian Princess Augusta (1780–1841, mother of Friedrich Wilhelm I – her portrait on a stand). The second wife was his long-time mistress (since 1812), Emilia Örtlepp (1791–1843), a daughter of a Berlin goldsmith, later Countess von Reichenbach-Lessonitz, whose portrait is above the door. Emilia died after only two years of marriage in 1843. At the age of 66, Wilhelm II married for the third time – a 43 years younger Baroness Caroline Berlepsch (1820–1877).

But how did the Princes of Hanau find themselves in Hořovice at all? The peaceful family life in Hessen was disturbed by the Prussian – Austrian war in 1866. The Prussian kingdom then wanted to consolidate its power and realize an ancient dream to unite Germany into one state. Austria, however, had little understanding for this project because it would lose its influence in the small German states. And so, the conflict between Austria and Prussia was ignited.

Heads of small German states, including Hessen, naturally opposed the Prussian intentions, and so they took the side of Austria. And eventually also lost the war against the Prussians on this side. Germany was united into one great state and the former ruling Prince of Hessen had to go to exile, which he found at his estate in Hořovice. The family spent the summer months here while in the winter lived in the Prague palace.

Paintings in the study reminded of Kassel, the residence town of the Hanau family in Hessen. Between the windows hangs a picture depicting the most monumental structure of the Wilhelmshöhe Castle Park near Kassel – the Hercules Cascade, a unique water work still in operation today. The entire castle park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2014.

Armour next to the door is a romantic reminder of the medieval chivalrous tradition of the Hessian rulers. It also reminds the founder of the Landgrave family of Hessen – Henry I (1244-1308).

The family legend connected with his name talks about the curse of the first-born sons in the Hessen house. In 1298 Henry I lost the eldest son of the same name who disagreed with the division of the family estate between him and his brothers as his father wanted. He raised a dispute against father and then he disappeared without a trace. Apparently, to his father's orders. The mysterious end of Henry's son summoned a curse upon the whole family – firstborn sons did not survive their fathers. And indeed, the firstborns of the later Hessian-Kassel Landgraves and also first sons of the first two electors died in childhood. The first German owner of Hořovice Friedrich Wilhelm I of Hanau himself was born only after the death of his brother, who died as a four-year-old.

## ELECTRESS' BEDROOM

From the men's part, we walked into the women's apartment, which consisted of three rooms - a bedroom, a boudoir and an anteroom. The bedroom was used by Friedrich Wilhelm's wife Gertrud, Princess of Hanau and in Horowitz (Hořovice), Countess of Schaumburg. She was born in Bonn, where the Prince later met her, as the daughter of a pharmacist Gottfried Falkenstein. However, Friedrich's chosen wife suffered from a number of shortcomings - she had already been married to officer Karl Lehman and had two sons with him, unlike Protestant Friedrich, was a Catholic and, above all, of low-born origin.

The purchase of the Hořovice estate on the territory of the then Austrian Empire was connected with the marriage of Friedrich Wilhelm I with Gertrud Lehman. After the marriage, which, despite the above-mentioned obstacles, was eventually accomplished, it was necessary to provide Gertrud with an appropriate noble title. In the end, it was agreed with the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I that her princely title "von Hanau und zu Horowitz" would be awarded to her and her descendants after the purchase of Hořovice.

In an effort to financially secure their large family, Friedrich Wilhelm created fideicomis in Hořovice, the trust fund, with the permission of the Emperor Franz Joseph I of Hořovice - the property was not to be divided among the individual heirs after the death of his holder, but the successor took it over as a whole. The eldest son, who had a duty to financially support other family members, was in charge. Exact conditions of fideicomis were regulated by law. Among other things, he stipulated that the eldest son, who was not allowed to close the morganatic marriage, had to head the estate that could not be sold, divided, indebted, etc.

The bedroom is furnished in the French Empire style, which also served as a model for the interiors in Kassel. The bedroom was inspired by the iconic Parisian interior of Madame Récamier, whose bedroom had been copied throughout Europe for decades, even in royal residences. The ship-shaped bed was to symbolize a river of life cruise.

On the front wall of the room is a portrait of the two oldest daughters of Friedrich Wilhelm and Gertrud - Augusta and Alexandra, who were born before their parents' marriage and had to be later adopted by their father to become the princesses of Hanau. The other two children's portraits depict the oldest son of Friedrich Wilhelm and Gertrud - Friedrich Wilhelm Jr. and between the windows is Gertrud's husband, unusually painted in civilian clothes.



# BOUDOIR

Boudoir was a private room where the princess spent her time. She dealt with extensive correspondence, she received her close relatives and instructed chief members of the household staff. Since it was her private space, she was surrounded by portraits and photographs of her closest family members - her husband, all of their nine children, and all of her grandchildren (only two!).

Her eldest son Friedrich Wilhelm junior followed the family tradition in morganatic marriage scandals, just like his grandfather and father.

In 1859 he married actress Augusta Birnbau in St. James Church in Westminster, London. It was a violation of the law on fideicomis and Friedrich Wilhelm was excluded from the succession. The title of First Prince of Hanau and in Hořovice and all his fortune was inherited by his younger brother Moritz. His father ordered Friedrich Wilhelm junior to divorce Augusta. He did so, but after his father's death he married Ludovica von Glöde, also an actress (photo of a woman in a striped dress).

Moritz was a man of the great world, spending his time equally in Paris, Vienna and Hořovice. He had the local castle park altered according to the design of the garden architect Thomayer and had a significant rosarium (rose garden) founded here. He had also a Neo-Renaissance family tomb built in the local cemetery, where he finally rested alongside his wife Anna von Lossberg. Since their marriage was childless, his younger brother, Wilhelm, inherited the manor of Hořovice as well as the title. Even his two marriages were childless, and therefore, after his death, the estate passed to another brother Carl, the third Prince of Hanau and in Hořovice. He burdened the estate with a disproportionate mortgage and after only three years his life was ended by a fallen tree in Kassel. As you do suspect, he didn't leave any children either.

A common photograph on the chest of drawers between the windows captures most of the siblings on the occasion of their meeting after the death of their father in 1875. Only two oldest daughters Augusta and Alexander are missing. But there are also two Counts of Scholley, Gertrud's sons from her first marriage to officer Karl Lehmann. (standing man in the middle and sitting man on the far right).

## SILVER SALON

This was an antechamber, or antecamera, to the rooms of the Princess. The large picture above the chest of drawers depicts a city palace in Fulda, Hessen, a residence of crown princes, i.e. of Friedrich Wilhelm junior. After separation with his first wife, actress Augusta Birnbaum, he married Ludovica von Glöde, also an actress (photo of a woman in a striped dress). By the way, he married her after his father's death. As the only one of six brothers had an offspring, two sons. On a large portrait above the couch, you can see the older one, Friedrich August, who later became High Steward at the court of the King of Bavaria in Munich.

However, Wilhelm (1836-1902), the second Prince of Hanau and in Hořovice (see the bust), was the most important owner of the Hořovice estate. Wilhelm was a capable and tough businessman with a great passion for music. He was a big lover of Wagner's operas and therefore he had a number of statues of mythical Germanic gods from Wagner's operas sculpted for the castle park, as well as a monument to his father, which as the only one still stands there.

Production of the local ironworks in Komárov had a significant share of family income. Their production attracted attention especially during the Prague Jubilee Exhibition in 1891 when Wilhelm had the so-called Hanau Pavilion (Hanavský pavilon) built as an exhibition space for their products. The pavilion was then moved to the Letná Park in Prague, where it still stands today overlooking the river and the city.

The last owner of the castle of Elector Friedrich Wilhelm's sons was Henry, the fourth Prince of Hanau and in Hořovice (see the photograph of a man before Fulda). He died as a result of an injury caused by a fall from the staircase of this castle in 1917, a month and 10 days after his first (morganatic) marriage to Martha Riegel. The groom was 75 at that time, the bride was 41 years old. The direct line of the Hanau Family died out, and the castle was left without an owner. It was handed over to the state and it was turned to a prison camp for Italian officers captured in the Battle of Caporetto.

On a chest of drawers under the image of Fulda, you can see a silver equestrian sculpture of Emperor Franz Joseph and Empress Sissi. Between the windows hangs a silver embroidered family coat of arms that originally hung under the canopy of the Kassel Palace Throne Hall. In the French display cabinet note the photograph of the Main Hall of the Hořovice Castle - this is what it looked like until the end of World War I.

## MAIN HALL

The Main Hall is just next to the entrance vestibule, so this is where the guests were first welcomed. The hall was meant to be the main representative space of the castle and this was reflected in its original decoration from the late 19th century (which you saw in the previous room on the photo). The only part of that Second-Rococo decoration that has been preserved is the collection of wall paintings inspired by the cycle of Czech painter Josef Mánes 'Life in a Mansion' painted by German painter Karel Würbs.

Nowadays, the Main Hall leaves a great impression thanks to its spectacularly grand decoration from the 1920s, created for the last owner Henry of Schaumburg (1900–1971). It is a Neo-Classical decoration, which tried to create the impression a cool, graceful and monumental elegance.

Large paintings on the walls represent the gallery of the ancestors of the Lords of Hanau. However, these members of the Hanau family, which you see in chronologically arranged pictures, never lived in Hořovice. In the corner by the window, there is a portrait of the founder of the House, Philip I the Magnanimous (ruled 1509-1567), on the right by the door you can see the first Hessian Elector Wilhelm I (1743 – 1821), the grandfather of Friedrich Wilhelm. According to the family chronicle from the 1920s, this nobleman had 25 illegitimate children.

In the 1920s this hall was more a family museum. In 1932 it was opened to the public but under strict visitor rules. Access was granted *to visitors in groups of up to 10 people after prior notification to the estate management, also to groups of school children, and professional and educational associations; it was open on Saturdays and Mondays from 9.00 to 11.00 am, except for holidays and when the castle was occupied by the owner or his family; entry was not permitted in permanently cold and rainy weather and snow to avoid excessive soiling and damage to the floor; young people under 16 only accompanied by adults.* Hořovice Castle thus belongs among the oldest open-to-public monuments in the Czech Republic.

## VESTIBULE - PARK

From the entrance vestibule, you can see the court of honour with the so-called Hercules Gate that separates the courtyard from the castle park. The pillars carry mythological and allegorical statues and vases from the workshop of Matthias Bernard Braun from around 1725.

The Baroque park was built probably between 1709 and 1714. The linden alley was formed in the axis of the castle, crowned with the Sun Gate with a forged sun. Its pillars bear other statues and vases from Braun's workshop.

Today's appearance of the park is based on an English style adaptation that took place under Count Rudolf of Vrbno in the early 19th century. In 1890 a statue of the first German owner, Friedrich Wilhelm of Hanau, created by Heinrich Natter was unveiled in the park.

In the years 1908 - 1917 a rectangular pond was built on the left meadow, which was later grassed (due to poorly executed concrete works) and a tennis court at the back of the park. The last owner of Hořovice Henry of Schaumburg had a pool built in the southern part of the park in 1939/1940.

After 1945, the park became a public park and a playground. Many valuable plants were lost to private gardens. The devastated park was partly renovated in 1993.