

# THE REMARKABLE ROOMS

## REMARKABLE ELEMENTS

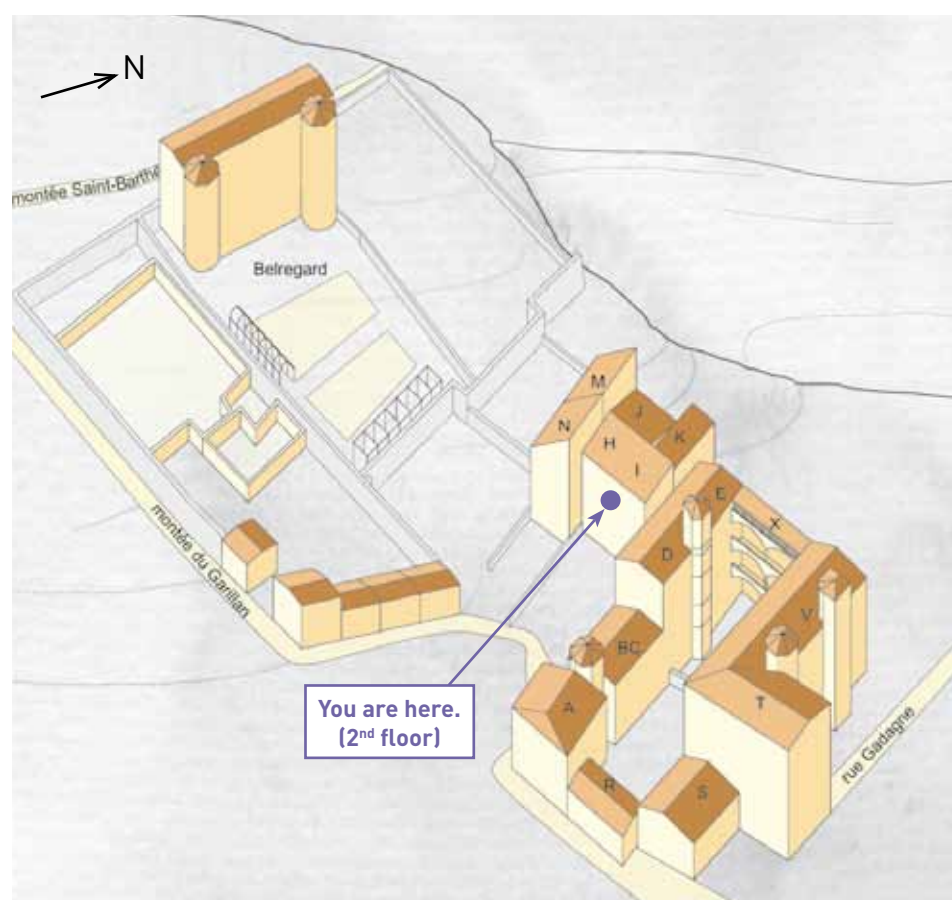
### ROOMS 22-24-25-26



#### At that time...

##### First half of the 16<sup>th</sup> c.: the work of the Pierrevive Brothers

Around 1489-1492, the four Pierrevive brothers, from a rich family of grocers and apothecaries in Piedmont, settled, like many Italian merchants and bankers, close to the place du Change where so much of the city's commercial activity was conducted. They acquired a large property extending from the current rue Gadagne as far as the montée Saint-Barthélemy, on which the Boyssette House, an opulent mediaeval townhouse, stood. The Pierrevive family destroyed it to undertake a huge building project across the whole of this property. Around 1540, after nearly fifty years of work, almost all of the current buildings had been constructed: the subsequent amendments, which mainly involved the elevation



*The buildings under the Pierrevives, a volume reconstitution of the 2nd quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> c., figure 123, DARA No. 29, Lyon Series No. 10, edited by C. Becker, I. Parron-Kontis, S. Savay-Guerraz, 2006]*

of the buildings, had repercussions on the **structure** of the rooms in which we find ourselves now.

##### A 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> c. labyrinth

To the north west of the plot, the building in which these rooms are to be found is one of the few elements to survive from the former outbuildings of the mediaeval Boyssette House. But it was completely reconstructed, first in the early 16<sup>th</sup> c. by the Pierrevive family, and then again in the 17<sup>th</sup> c., which is what gives visitors the impression of being in a labyrinth as they move through the rooms.

#### All the remarkable rooms

##### First layout in the 16<sup>th</sup> c.: simplicity and harmony

Located towards the bottom of the slope, a new house was organised around a larger space which to the south gave on to a flat terrace that extended as far as the montée du Garillan (the future small courtyard) and, to the north, to a new entrance that was directly accessible from a traboucle (visible today at the far end of the main courtyard). On this floor, five new rooms were created and new doors knocked through.

These rooms were designed as an ensemble with a harmonious interior architecture, which reflected the external facades (visible from the Fairgrounds, Theatres and Television Room in the Puppets of the World Museum). The very salient door lintels are made up of geometrical mouldings which continue on to the jambs\*, just like the **monumental fireplace in room 24**, which also dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> c. This type of decoration and framing is rare in Lyon, and takes its inspiration from models found in Sienna.

Monumental 16<sup>th</sup> c. fireplace, state 2005



### Second layout in the 17<sup>th</sup> c.: in search of lost light

The adjustments made in the 17<sup>th</sup> c. reinforce the impression of a labyrinth: two new doors are knocked through, whereas others that had been created in the 16<sup>th</sup> c. are sealed up again. These are traceable thanks to the absence of lintel and the painted frame highlighted with a burnt umber line.

When Falconet raised a building to the south of the plot, the inhabitants in the north lost a lot of light. They therefore decided to take the rather rare step of creating **two windows** in the interior wall between rooms 24 and 25...

The development did not stop there. Each occupant over the centuries has added their own stone to the labyrinth. For example, these same interior windows were transformed in 1707 into cupboards, the door **hinges** of which can still be seen!

### Water and fire

In the 18<sup>th</sup> c., the building abounded in fireplaces. Only two have been preserved, in rooms 22 and 23. The most elegant of them, **in room 22**, is composed in the style of the time, with two curved bracket abutments\* supporting the lintel.

In this room, as in room 26, the **sink and water disposal** plates reflect how the building was set out in the 19<sup>th</sup> c., when it was divided up into a number of homes, equipped with water on each floor. Wastewater was discharged from the sink stone towards a vent pipe in the facade wall, which can be seen in room 24.

### Nooks, crannies and the little boy's room

The small room that currently adjoins room 22 is where the latrines would have been found after their creation in 1510.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> c., the location of the current Nostradamus lift was also occupied by latrines and a scullery\* with a small sink.

On the lower floor, these little nooks and crannies were used as storage cubicles or coal stores. Over the centuries, every little corner of the building was used, according to needs!

### Choice of restoration

#### A reconstituted whole

Today's reconstituted building is the result of various key periods through which this part of the building has gone. As part of the project to restore and redevelop the museum to receive visitors, all of the openings, be they 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> c., were unsealed. This layout is therefore quite new. A system of **interior wooden shutters**, fixed to the window frames themselves, has also been reconstituted, matching those that may have existed at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> c.. The terracotta floor tiles, so characteristic of the region, also contribute to creating an atmosphere of centuries past.



Remarkable rooms, state 2002 (before restoration)

#### FURTHER READING:

*The decor in the remarkable rooms sheet*

#### glossaire

**jamb/abutment:** each of the sides of a door or window or any of the uprights supporting the start of a vault or arch.

**scullery:** small room behind a kitchen, usually reserved for major kitchen work.