

# Renovation and interior design of the Jurisich Castle in Kőszeg, Hungary

## The city of Kőszeg

The city of Kőszeg, close to the western border of Hungary, is beautifully surrounded by vineyards and mountains. Its historical buildings and monuments have been preserved almost in their original form, a quality for which the city was granted the Hild-award in 1978.

The birth of the city dates back to the late 13th century when the founding Kőszegi family settled there. The city became the main scene of the events in 1532, when they managed to withstand the attacking Turkish army under the leadership of the town and fort captain, Miklós Jurisich. Kőszeg eventually lost its leading role in the county of Vas by the mid 19th century. But nevertheless it has developed into a typical society made up of small businesses as well as public companies, schools, etc.

## The Jurisich Castle

The Jurisich castle is the main symbol of Kőszeg, and together with the city walls, it has been an crucial part of the national defence system. In addition to its defensive nature, it also had an important status role as the centre of the Kőszeg estate.

Continuously evolving from its foundation in the 13th century, the castle eventually grew into consisting of an outer and an inner castle. The inner castle was built in Gothic style in the 13th to 14th century, and was later refurbished in Renaissance and Baroque styles. Only the eastern wing has retained its original shape. The castle's east and south wings were constructed from 1450 to 1550. The outer wall was built in the 15th century, and the circular bastions attached to it in the 16th century. In the western wing, the Knights hall on the first floor was built between 1392 and 1441. After a fire in 1777, an arcade toward the courtyard was erected in front of it altering the character of the courtyard. From 1616 to 1695 the inner courtyard was once again refurbished. In the north wing original gothic wall paintings were joined decades later by early renaissance windows and paintings, made between 1483-1489.

## Renovation and interior design

A general renovation of the interior surfaces and the facade was carried through to bring the castle closer to its former glory. Some changes in the interior layout were also needed for the castle to function properly as a home to the Jurisich community center, the Castle museum and many other public events.

During the renovation, archeologists made interesting findings in the basement. This had an effect on the design-process as the areas involved had to be left untouched by the renovation. One of the challenges in the design-process was to find a suitable place for restrooms and to improve the visitors' circulation flow in the building. A new glass and steel constructed staircase and walking bridge were added as a subtle but contrasting element to the existing castle, connecting the groundfloor with the first level. A proper restaurant, café and a space for performance were also needed to meet the requirements of today's needs. The Knights' Hall on the second floor, built in 1392-1441, was updated with modern technology to host performances for audiences of different sizes. A restaurant and café with a generous kitchen area were designed on the groundfloor. Due to financial limitations, the restoration of the paintings in the northern wing is left to be done in the future.