

The Dunajec Castle in Niedzica

Erected in the first half of 14th century by Kokos of Brezovica, the castle was a fortalice protecting the Northern border of Hungary. In the period 1327–1328 the watchtower was appropriated by Wilhelm Drugeth and prior to the year 1330 it was converted into a masonry castle (gothic upper castle). From that moment on, with a short interlude, the castle remained under control of Hungarian families until 1945, even though following the First World War it was already incorporated into the area of the Polish state.

The castle underwent numerous modifications. In the second half of the 15th century Emeric Zapolya initiated expansion of the castle (the oldest part of the lower castle and the medium castle), whereas Jerzy Horvath started reconstruction and expansion in 1601. The latter modifications include the new Renaissance-style wing with entrance gate (lower castle) and they considerably influenced the ultimate look of the castle.

The period of Giovanelli family rule was marked by the anxious time of insurgencies and fights for the independence of the Hungarian nation. This fact as well as the lack of permanent care of the residence led to the upper castle falling into rack and ruin until the end of the 18th century. When in the year 1817 the castle was reappropriated by the Horvath- Palocsay family, its condition was so dilapidated that thorough reconstruction and modernization were required. Having invested considerable funds and effort into these processes, the interior of the castle regained its representative character. This was also the time when a new chapel and a ballroom were constructed.

Last owners of the castle were the Salamon family. The Countess Ilona Bethlen Salamonowa, widow after the late Gez Alapi Salamon conducted in the 1920s necessary refurbishment works of the residence and the surrounding area. She also arranged the Salamon family cemetery in the vicinity. With the last owner of the Hungarian castrum Dunaiecz ended the history of Hungarian noble families owning the Castle for 700 years.

After 1945, following the entrance of the Red Army, the castle was totally devastated and plundered. It was nationalized in such state and in 1950 entrusted by the Ministry of Culture and Art. To the Art Historians Association for perpetual usufruct. Over 50 year's period of the Association's care over this magnificent object was marked by mundane construction-conservation and adaptation works, implemented in several stages by the Management for the Restoration of Wawel Royal Castle under the supervision of Prof. Alfred Majewski.

The interior of the upper and medium castles were adapted for museum purposes, preserving their historic arrangement and character. The museum was opened to the public in 1963. The exhibits displayed here were gathered with a view to furnish among others the following rooms: prison with torture chamber, the Spis župa room, the župa bedroom, guards' room or residential chambers of the last owners of the Castle: the Salamon family. The historical halls house objects excavated during archeological works conducted on the area of the castle and some old photographs. An additional attraction are viewing terraces which give you the opportunity to admire the beauty of the surroundings.

Opening hours of Castle Museum Complex in Niedzica

The Castle, Coach House and Granary during the season between 1 May and 30 September are open from 9 am until 7 pm.

Museum's ticket office is open until 6.20 pm.

The Castle and Coach House out of season, from 1 October to 30 April, are open every day but for Mondays and holidays.

Museum's ticket office is open until 3.20 pm.

Out of season the Granary is not accessible to the visitors.

You can visit the Castle and the Coach House with one ticket.

In order to visit the Granary you will need an additional ticket.

Organized groups tour the Museum with a guide (free of charge).

Visiting duration of the Castle and the Coach House: approx. 1.5 hour.

Visiting duration of the Granary: approx. 20 minutes.