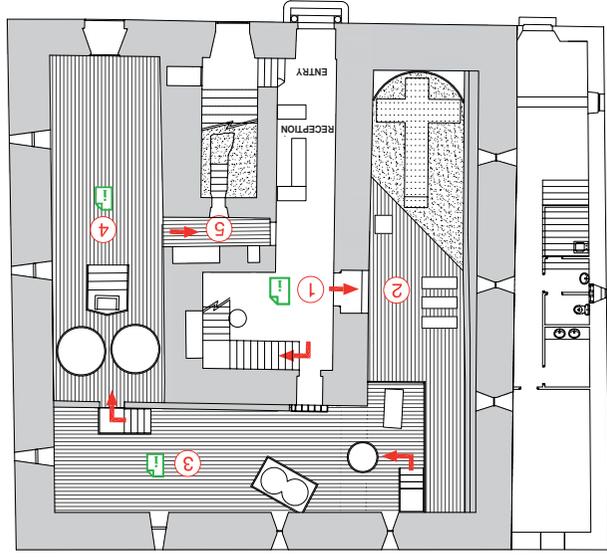


**NOBLE FLOOR**



**GROUND FLOOR**

**GROUND FLOOR**

**1. Inner courtyard:** The two floors of the castle are built around a small central courtyard with a connecting staircase. It is interesting to note the well, dating from the 11th century when the castle was built, which guaranteed the water supply in times of siege. The well was covered over in the 15th century. **i**

**2. Stables:** Area reserved for housing and feeding the mounts and beasts of burden, mainly horses and mules. Archaeological excavations have uncovered the original sloping cobblestone floor facilitating drainage, a drinking trough, and a manger along the west wall.

*The stables have been turned into a projection room for the Pyrenean Counties Route audiovisual entitled: Land and Blood: Feudal War in Emporda County.* **i**

**3. Prison and cellar:** According to a plan drawn up during the French occupation of La Bisbal in 1823, this part of the castle used to be divided into two separate spaces: a prison in the west room and a cellar in the east room. Archaeological excavations have uncovered different structures and findings which have confirmed this division.

*Further details are available on the information panel and in the display cabinets containing the main archaeological findings from the excavations carried out prior to renovation work on the ground floor of the Palace-Castle in 1993-1994.* **i**

**4. Wine-making room:** The structure of this and other rooms in the castle testifies to the existence of another level, as seen by the 14th-century wooden door on the opening above the arch separating the two rooms. This room was a stable until the 18th century, when it was used for wine-making. Visitors can see tubs and a basin, discovered during the archaeological excavations. In the 19th century, the space was occupied by the fire brigade, and from 1901 to 1969 it housed the archive of the Notary Public. **i**

**5. Dungeon:** The original prison, located under the castle staircase, was referred to as "the cannon" in a document dating from the 11th century.

*From the inner courtyard, go up the staircase to the first floor with its stately rooms, used by the Bishop and his retinue when visiting La Bisbal. The staircase to the right of the landing leads to the chapterhouse.*



Foto: Bob Masters, Direcció General del Patrimoni Cultural (AIPC)



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**NOBLE FLOOR**

**6. Chapterhouse:** This was the meeting room of the castle, where important events took place, such as the Episcopal receptions. The bishops were the feudal lords of the castle, and their coats of arms above the stone lintels bear witness to the importance of this room. Note the louvers on the ceiling for extracting smoke from the braziers and fires used for heating the room. **i**

*In the mirror on the right-hand wall of this room, a virtual town crier will inform you of the bishops' impending visit.*

**7. Main chamber:** The small square room connecting the chapterhouse to the great hall may have been the bishop's chamber. A secret staircase (currently closed off) leads up to the chapel on the upper level. **i**

*In this room, you will see a militia presenting its credentials in the parade ground of the castle.*

**8. Great hall:** A room used for banqueting, almost certainly at a long table flanked by benches with a seat in the place of honour. Note the natural light coming in through the Romanesque-style windows on the side wall. **i**

*In this room, a master stonemason will appear to tell you about his trade.*

**9. Chamber beside kitchen:** The most interesting feature of this room between the kitchen and the great hall is its panelled wooden ceiling, formerly found elsewhere in the castle, which had the function of creating an extra level, increasing comfort and optimising space. An inventory from the year 1329 notes the curious detail of two straw-filled pallets, a bed with bed linen, a cupboard, and a pair of prisoner's shackles (*gryllons ad tenendum homines captos*).

**10. Kitchen:** In the 17th century, Bishop Francisco Arévalo de Zuazo commissioned the large Renaissance-style fireplace, engraved with his coat of arms. **i**

*In this room, a cook will tell you about the tasks he must perform in preparation for the Bishop's visit.*



Foto: Bob Masters, Direcció General del Patrimoni Cultural (AIPC)



Foto: Rubén García, AIPC



Foto: Lluís de Miquel (AIPC)

The Palace-Castle (11th-12th centuries), a fine example of Catalan civil Romanesque architecture, is a square building consisting of a ground floor, a noble first floor and an upper level with a chapel inside the keep. At the moment, only the ground floor and the first floor are open to visitors. There is an audiovisual on the ground floor, formerly the more humble, functional part of the castle; virtual characters from the medieval ages accompany visitors through the stately rooms on the first floor. A visit to the Palace-Castle is a must for anybody interested in history. Information panels throughout the building provide more in-depth information. Ask the staff at the Tourist Office for further details.

**Edited and coordinated by:**

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**Collaborators:**

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**Sources:**

Juan Badia i Homs, Jordi Frigola i Arpa i Xavier Rocas i Gutiérrez



AJUNTAMENT DE LA BISBAL D'EMPORDÀ



Oficina de Turisme de Torre Maria Castell Palau

C/ Aigueta, 17  
17100 La Bisbal d'Empordà  
Tel. 972 64 55 00  
turisme@labisbal.cat

castell@labisbal.cat

[www.labisbal.cat](http://www.labisbal.cat)

[www.visitlabisbal.cat](http://www.visitlabisbal.cat)



Foto: Bob Masters. Direcció General del Patrimoni Cultural (AIPC)



Chapel

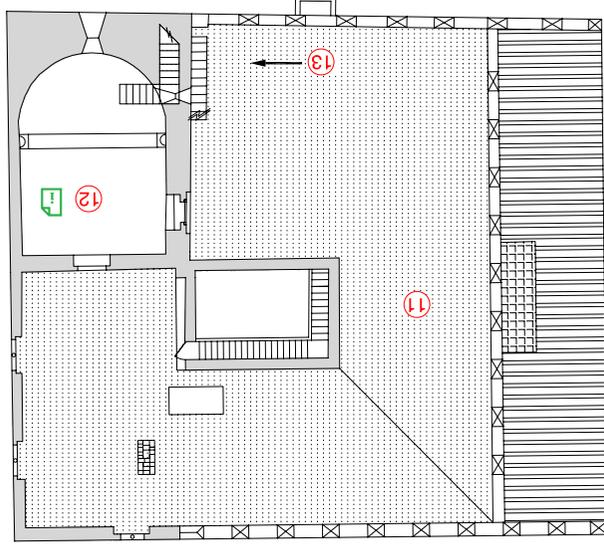
The upper level is only open for guided visits previously arranged by the Tourist Office.

**UPPER LEVEL**

**11. Flat roof:** The flat roof affords an attractive panorama of La Bisbal town centre and the surrounding area, and visitors will gain greater understanding of the defence structure of the castle. From this height, the castle defenders commanded a view over the town and the countryside, protected by battlements from where projectiles could be shot through the loopholes or dropped through the machicolation above the entrance, which was the most vulnerable point of the castle.

**12. Chapel:** The most noteworthy feature of this part of the castle is the Romanesque chapel dedicated to St Michael, curiously located under the tower and the keep.

**13. Keep:** The double-level keep is the highest point of the castle. This was the last refuge for defenders, and also the place where the incumbent castellan swore vassalage to the feudal lord. Access to the first tower is by steps on its south façade. The tower is further protected by a defence door and crowned with battlements.



**MAIN FAÇADE**

The main entrance has flanking columns and a split pediment, and bears the name and emblem of Bishop Arévalo de Zuazo who commissioned it in 1604. The four first-floor openings, renovated in the 15th and 16th centuries, bear the emblems of Bishop Berenguer de Pau (1484-1506) and Bishop Joan Margarit (1534-54). The most noteworthy feature of the main façade is the large machicolation over the main entrance. The walls and the tower are crowned with battlements.