

The noble floor of the Castle displays big and refined rooms, embellished during the 20th century by ornate fireplaces (fig. 9) and magnificent monoblock floorings that in some of the rooms show deeply carved decorations (fig. 10). This flooring was made by the Salentinian craftsman Amilcare Peluso with the 'sown concrete' technique.



Fig. 9 Fig. 10

From the main door, through the outer staircase (Fig. 11) it is possible to reach the oldest core of the Castle with its anteroom, the main hall, the private Count's library, the dining room, a study and a bedroom. The newer part was annexed to the circular tower on the project of the engineer Marschiczek in occasion of the restoration wanted by the Dentice di Frasso in the early 1900s. It features a billiard room with a wardrobe room, the private Count's study and three bedrooms.



Fig. 11 Fig. 12

In 1961 Count Luigi Dentice di Frasso sold the Castle to the National Institution for the preservation of maternity and childhood.

In 1973 it became a property of the province of Brindisi, given in concession to the town, today is a beautiful cultural location and it houses the "Salvatore Morelli" (fig. 13) public library that among the 11000 books preserves a section of local history and some of the books once owned by the Count Alfredo Dentice di Frasso.



Fig. 13 The "S. Morelli" Public Library

Town of Carovigno

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Dentice di Frasso
Castle

“The Dentice di Frasso Castle represents the cultural and historical identity of Carovigno. Our cultural politics aim to promote and enhance our heritage in order to improve the socio-economic development of the territory”

The Mayor
Massimo Lanzilotti



A treasure chest of culture

The **Dentice di Frasso Castle** of Carovigno rises close by the historic centre of the Town on a promontory overlooking the entire coastline.

A parchment preserved by the Diocesan Curia of Ostuni, attests that it already existed in 1163.

Hallmark of the Castle is its triangular plan which displays three different types of fortification, one on each corner: the square tower on the eastern, the circular on the western and the lanceolate on the northern vertex. The latter was probably built under the influence of a famous military architect, Francesco di Giorgio Martini, whose presence in Apulia is attested just at the end of the 15th century when he superintended the construction of several fortresses of the area.

Since the 17th century, when the defensive purpose became unnecessary, the Castle has been converted from a military fortress into a noble dwelling by the feudal families that owned it, among which the Caputo, the Serra, the Costaguti, the Castaldi, the Granafei, and the Imperiali.



Fig. 1 Planimetry of the Castle

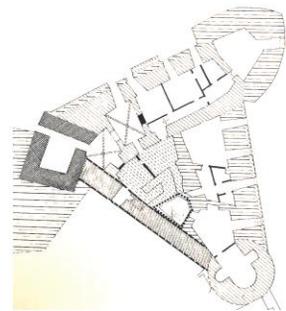


Fig. 2 Plan of the basement, which perimeter shows the triangular shape given to the castle during the 16th century - “Castello Dentice di Frasso, il restauro” by Ferdinando Russo

The rooms have been adapted, especially through the opening of doors, windows and balconies; an instance of this is the elegant balcony of the southern facade of the Castle, constructed during the 18th century in Carovigno's limestone, a soft and extremely workable material that thanks to its particular colour provides a fascinating light to the building. (Fig. 4)



Fig. 4



Fig. 5 The coat of arms of Count Alfredo Dentice di Frasso, placed above the main entrance of the Carovigno Castle

The Castle has been a property of the Dentice di Frasso family since 1791 (Frasso is a village near Benevento, Campania). When the Count Alfredo Dentice di Frasso and his wife Elizabeth Shlippenbach received it as a wedding gift, the Castle needed a restoration which was entrusted to the engineer Gaetano Marschiczek in 1906. He didn't only restore the preexisting condition but created new spaces merging them together, he also enriched the building with decorations and sculptures that concealed high and refined messages.

Moreover, the Countess wanted the Castle to be endowed with gardens in which symmetry and proportions imitated in small-scale that of the sumptuous European palaces. To make it more accessible they created a subterranean passage that connected the Gardens of the Castle to a wider area and the botanical gardens. (Fig. 6 - 8) In 1926 in order to improve the local economy the Counts Dentice di Frasso decided to open a school of spinning will and weaving inside some of the rooms of the Castle that has been opened until 1955, producing fine fabrics esteemed all over the world. From 1909 to 1961 the Castle hosted many important guests, among which the scientist Guglielmo Marconi and the King of Italy Umberto di Savoia.



Fig. 6 - 8 The subterranean tunnel, the gardens and its botanical garden