

Universalmuseum Joanneum Press office

Universalmuseum Joanneum
Mariahilferstraße 4, 8020 Graz, Austria
www.museum-joanneum.at

presse@museum-joanneum.at
Telephone +43-316/8017-9211

Styrian Armoury

Armoury, Herrengasse 16 , 8010 Graz

Information: +43-0316/8017-9810

In the times of the Turkish Wars the unique and world-famous Armoury in Graz was the central armoury of Styria. 32,000 exhibits, e.g. armours, coats of mail, helmets, weapons and other war materiel have been preserved and are presented in their original array.

The Styrian Armoury on Herrengasse street is certainly one of the most interesting historical monuments in Graz. Styrian nobles built it between 1642-1645. Today, with an array of 32000 weapons and devices of all kinds, it is the best-preserved armoury in the world. Nowhere else in the world could one find this kind of arrangement and original atmosphere of an old armoury having such a range and level of concentration.

The former political and strategic importance of Graz as the centre of the inner Austrian group of provinces of Styria, Carinthia and Kranjska, under immediate threat from the Ottoman Turks, made the armoury the most important arms store in the south-east of the Habsburg Empire. Therefore, the majority of the weapons consist of pieces of armour for simple foot soldiers or cavalry from the 16th or 17th century. In addition we find beautifully ornate officer's weapons, manufactured in workshops in Innsbruck, Augsburg and Nuremberg.

To set the historical scene, the historical exhibition of armaments entitled "Zum Schutz des Landes" (For the protection of the Country), is shown on the ground floor in the former Cannon Hall. The beginning of national defence, first invasions from Ottoman Turks, measures for the security of the country, military borders to Croatia, war with Kuruc rebels, closing of the provincial armoury convey, amongst other things, a basic understanding of Styrian provincial defence. Above, on 4 storeys with a length of more than 50 m and width of approx. 11.5 m, weapons from the 15th to 19th centuries have been stored close to each other almost untouched for centuries.

Styrian armoury collection

Between the fifteenth and eighteenth century, Styria was almost constantly faced with hostility from Ottomans and Hungarian rebels. The province responded by positioning its own forces. The headquarters for their equipment was the „regional armoury”. The collection of today’s Provincial Armoury, that was built in 1642-1647, has grown over four centuries. The weapons and armour were produced by Styrian, Carinthian and Upper Austrian workshops, but were also purchased from the major German armourers in Augsburg, Nuremberg and Suhl. The uniqueness of the Styrian Armoury is due to the way its exhibits are stored. The collection conveys the atmosphere of an original seventeenth-century arsenal.