

"A FATEFUL WIND BLEW ME TOWARDS THE EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD"

wrote the artist Signac on arrival in Saint-Tropez...

And it is certainly that same, fateful wind that drives us to embrace the charms of Provence and fall in love with the colourful house frontages, sun-drenched vines and hills and sparkling Mediterranean Sea so intrinsic to Saint-Tropez's genteel lifestyle... In the last century, *"Le Monde de l'Art"* magazine described Saint-Tropez as a paradise found. Today, this world-famous village remains a revelation to travellers seeking enchanting new experiences.

Perched between sea and sky, radiating out from its hillside location facing the Bay of Saint-Tropez and beaches and vineyards of Ramatuelle, Château de la Messardière is a historic site which has welcomed – and continues to welcome – many illustrious figures. It offers new and returning guests a genuine haven of peace and tranquillity.

La Messardière's name goes back to the era of Charles Martel. Numerous marriages related the family to the Royal, Carolingian and Capetian dynasties from 640 onwards. Decorated by royalty for its feats of arms, the dynasty's official Coat of Arms first appeared in 1669, when Renée, daughter of Seigneur de la Messardière, wedded Count Léonor Le Brun. The Château continues to adorn its Coat of Arms today: "Argent, on a chevron gules between three martlets sable", accompanied by the motto "Victor et Inermis" (*victor even when disarmed*).



Built in the 19th century, the Château was donated to officer and excellent horseman Henry Brisson de la Messardière and young artist and musician Louise Dupuy d'Anjac, at the time of their wedding.

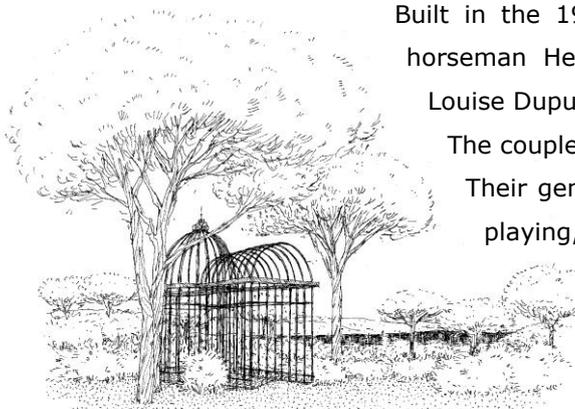
The couple had seven children.

Their gentle and quiet life was a succession of long horse rides and piano playing, until Henri's untimely death.

Louise was faced with poverty, but the dynamic and determined young widow decided to take the Château's fate into her own hands by using it as lodgings for prestigious guests.

During the roaring twenties, the lounges of La Messardière were the stage for extravagant receptions and parties. Sadly, Louise's poor management skills slowly but surely led the Château to ruin...

Although she was subsequently obliged to sell, Louise was unable to bring herself to leave these beloved surroundings and moved to nearby Bellevue.



The spirit of this remarkable couple lives on today through their descendant Victoire de la Messardière, whose works are now permanently exhibited at the Château.

The new owner, a rich notary from Nice, rapidly re-sold the property to an industrialist, who restored the Château's former luxury and vivacity. At the time, a little train (still remembered by some of the older inhabitants of Saint-Tropez) ran through the pine wood. The Château found no buyers when the industrialist died in Cannes, and was once again faced with ruin.

Standing alone on the hillside, exposed to the four winds (and pillagers), it was widely believed to be haunted. Some paranormal believers even declared they had sensed positive and negative energy fields around the Château walls, hence adding to the site's exciting and mystical aura.

The Château was carefully restored to its original glory and extended in 1989 under the auspices of the chief architect of historical monuments, J.C Rochette.



Bought up in 1998 by a French industrialist determined to turn it into one of the Côte d'Azur's most luxurious hotels, Château de la Messardière is now living a second youth. Its turrets, domes, vaults and columns underline the powerful original architecture, while preserving all of the Château's former charm and character. Its exquisitely refined atmosphere comes from a subtle blend of Anglo-Moorish, Oriental, Mediterranean, Florentine and Provençal styles.

We are totally committed to upholding the spirit of La Messardière in the work we perform every year in the Château and its grounds. Overflowing with cork oaks, umbrella pines and cypresses, our gardens offer a true corner of paradise for both our guests and the wildlife we have undertaken to preserve.

Artistic creation also plays a predominant role in the Château's everyday life.

Victoire de la Messardière exhibits her work throughout the world – and naturally at her ancestors' castle!

Victoire's many creations are permanently on show at the *Galerie Victoire* and throughout the Château. Her world-unique interpretation of Oswald Wirth's Tarot game, comprising 22 works, took several years to complete and is instilled with the profound mystery and magic of this ancient, esoteric card game. She is currently working on the 26 letters of the alphabet...

We love all art forms, whether painting, sculpture, classical music, literature or cinema. We encourage numerous artists by exhibiting their works or instigating artistic events such as the "Best Summer Novel" literature prize. Art is one of our passions, and also allows us to pay tribute to the Château's 19th-century owners.

Our efforts to welcome artists and cherish the Château, its grounds and wildlife in line with our Environmental Charter, mean you can still enjoy the wonderful family spirit handed down here through generations.

Welcome to Château de la Messardière in Saint-Tropez, simply out of this world...

I wish you a delightful stay.


Alexandre Durand-Viel
Directeur Général