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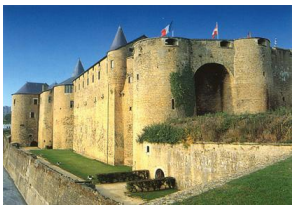

The Sedan Castle

View on the Sedan Castle

The **Sedan castle** is a medieval fortress of 35.000 m², one of the biggest castles in Europe, built by successive additions over the centuries. It is a key example of medieval architecture during the 15th and 16th century.

In 1424, the **Lord of Sedan** sold the small town and the priory to **Evrard de la Marck**, who went on to build a dungeon and a triangular wall. His son, **Jean de la Marck**, expanded the castle by building a forecourt, and adapted the castle to modern artillery conditions. Likewise, **Robert III** followed the work of his father by building four corner turrets in between the wall. Throughout the whole of the 15th and 16th century, the La Mark family worked on improving the defense of the site and its fortifications by adapting them to changes in armament and artillery. The castle was thus able to resist the siege by **archduke Maximilien in 1495**, and the one by **Charles Quint in 1521**. However the castle and its grounds then owned by **Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne**, the deceased spouse of Charlotte de la Marck, was confiscated by **Henri IV in 1606**, following a conspiracy in which the Lord of Sedan was involved. Returned to him after he was pardoned, the castle and its grounds were definitively ceded to the crown of France in 1642, after the failure of another conspiracy in which Henri's son, **Frédéric Maurice de la Tour**, was involved. The castle was transformed into a citadel and the barracks of royal, and then republican, arms. During the 17th century, **Vauban** carried out renovation work and built the door *"of princes"*. The castle acted as a forced-labor camp under German power during the First World War.
Finally, the castle was given to the town of Sedan by the French army in 1962, and from here on it went through significant restoration work. In 1965, the castle was listed as a **Historical monument**. It was opened to the public, with a guided tour for visitors in 1995. A number of events have taken place at the castle as well as the biggest medieval festival which takes place every year, in May.