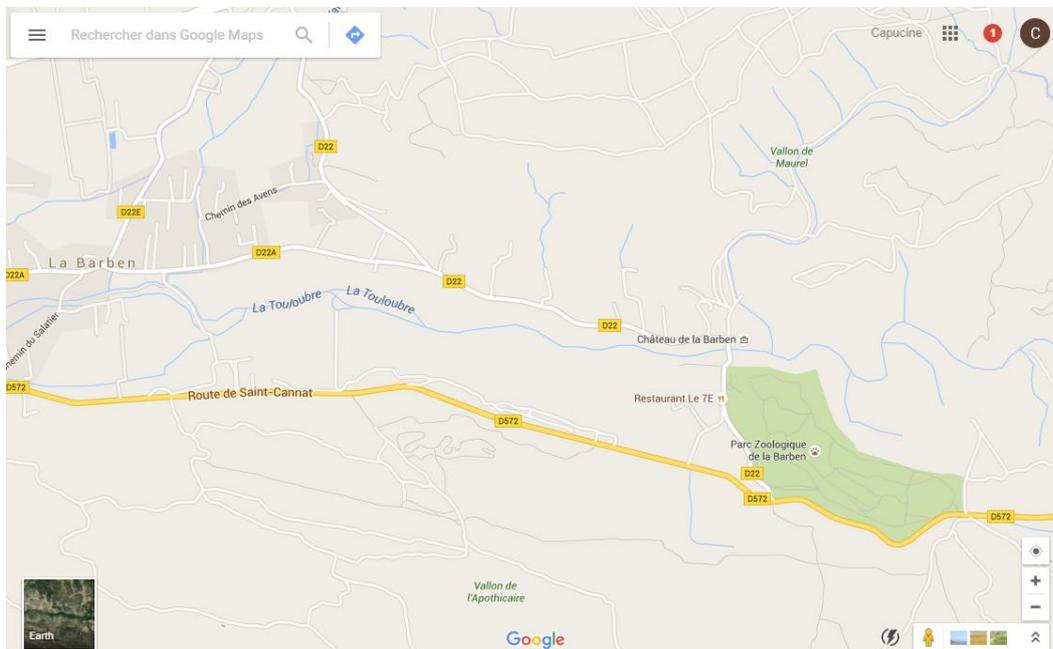
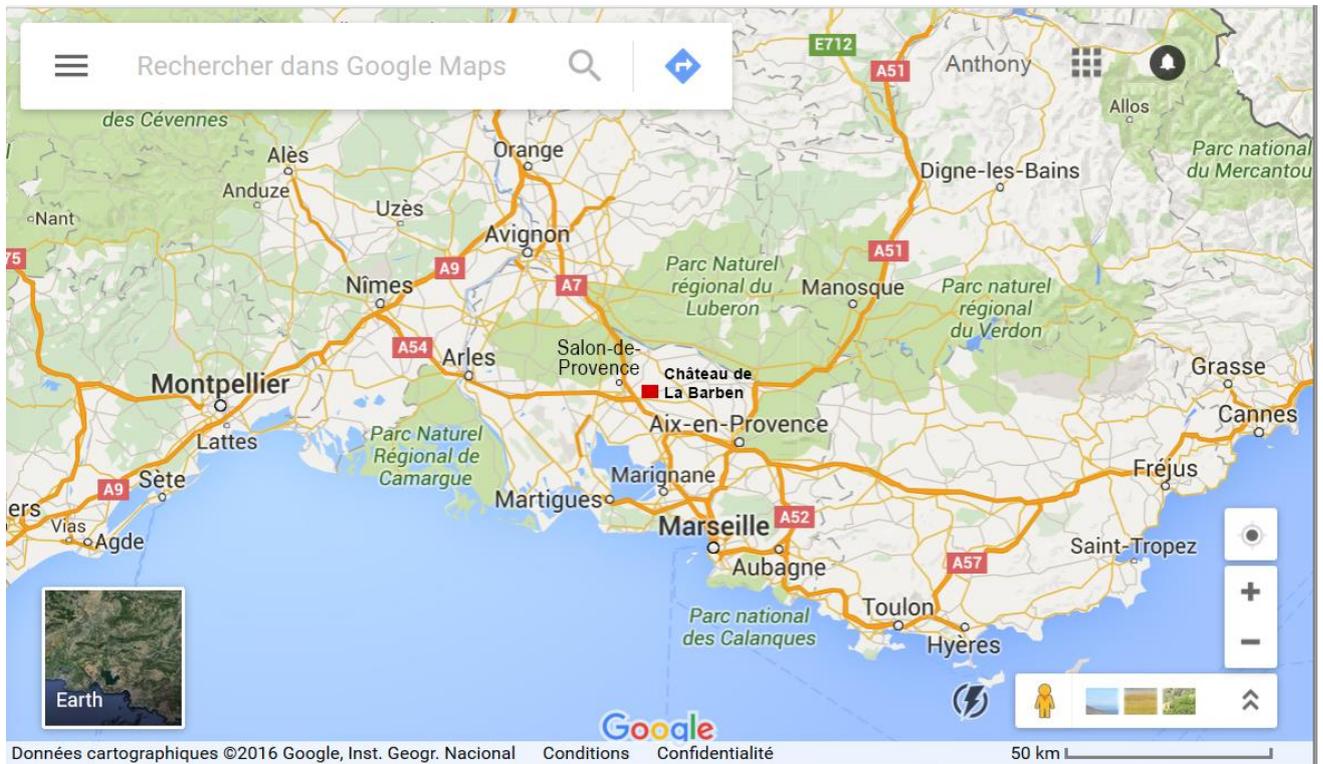


# *Le Château de La Barben*



*Like a dream . . .*

# Contact



Château de La Barben – 13330 La Barben

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# Background

The château of La Barben, situated between Salon de Provence and Aix-en-Provence, is one of the most beautiful castles in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region. The famous painter, Marius Granet, who was born in Aix-en-Provence, stayed there numerous times and wrote "La Barben is the most ancient and the most picturesque castle in Provence".

The location of this castle, which is situated in a grandiose setting overhanging an oasis of greenery that grows thanks to the water from the rivers Vallon de Maurel and la Touloubre, would be – according to some writers –, the old Pisavis not far from which the "Aurelian way" could be found.

The château, "castrum" of "Barbentum" in latin, was referred to in 1064 for the first time, in a property register that could be read at the Abbaye de Saint Victor in Marseilles who used to be the owner of the lands around La Barben.

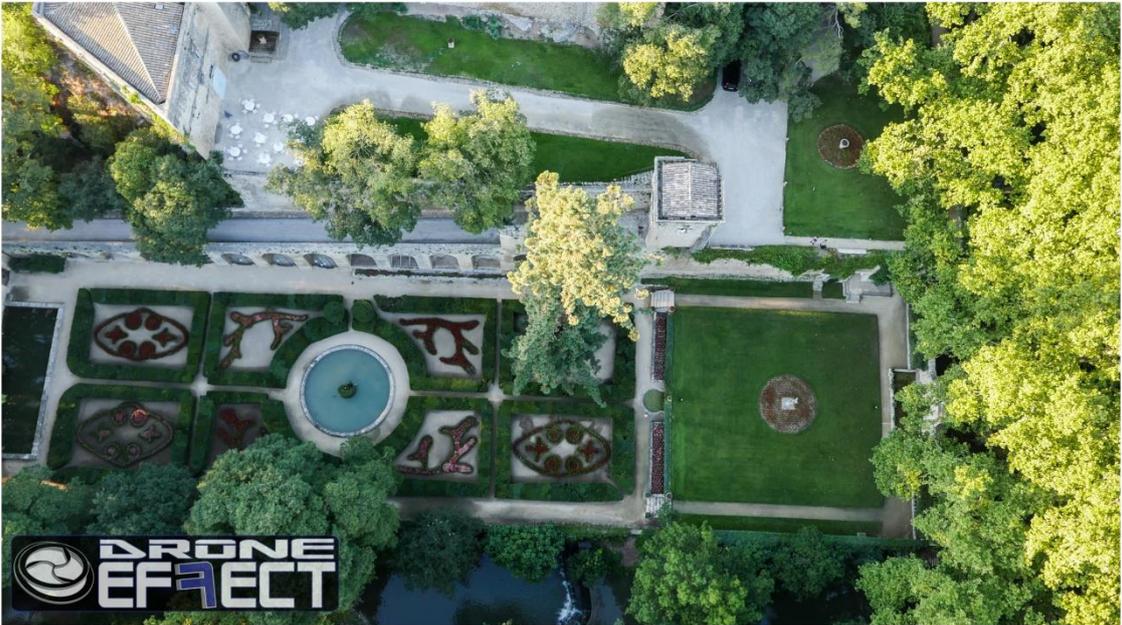
Situated on huge rocks that make it impregnable, the fortified castle was built for the defence of the area. Its towers, turrets and its hanging terraces are in perfect harmony with nature, giving this site its mysterious beauty.

As soon as you go through the first postern, you discover all the architectural elements that are typical of medieval fortresses : watchtowers with pulleys from the former drawbridge, crenelations and machicolation, arrow slits, the coat of arms and the motto of the lords of the place.

After going up the monumental staircase, you will arrive at the grand terrace from where you will enjoy a splendid view that stretches beyond Salon de Provence and the Étang de Berre. From this terrace you can also reach the gothic chapel. To the south, between the medieval towers, a lovely little castle emerges with its wrought iron windows and balconies that date back to the classical era, and its magnificent Henry IV double staircase.

The château was completely transformed due to an important rebellion against the "Édit des Élus" (Edict of the elected concillors") issued by Richelieu in 1630. During the rebellion, a gang known as "Cascaveous" who was advancing on La Barben set fire to the forest and a part of the fortress. King Louis XIII condemned the Aix communities which had participated in this riot to give compensation to the Lord of La Barben. Gaspard de Forbin, got 1500000 livres to restore his castle. The medieval fortress firmly built high on the rocks, took advantage of the Age of the Enlightenment and became a castle where austerity and classicism combined to give this building a unique picturesque charm.

In 1909, the region was rocked by a major earthquake, destroying the western medieval tower known as the "Palamède tower". Two years later, the owners had it rebuilt on the same rock.





# Visits

## **- Standard tour**

Qualified lecture guides bring the past back to life during the entire visit that lasts one hour.

Arriving at the main terrace after going up the monumental staircase will enchant anyone who loves Provence.

The tour of the chapel and of a dozen rooms that are entirely furnished will enable visitors to learn about the history of Provence, its architecture, its furniture and also about the lives of people who are famous in Provence and France.

From the winter school holidays and during all standard tours throughout the year, a great "riddle game" is organized and offered to all children, aged 4 to 12 and accompanied by their parents.

Children receive a booklet. While listening to the guide and looking around them, they have to answer a question in their booklets about each room.

At the end of the visit, the answers enable children discover the riddle and to win a souvenir.

***Rate : 9€ / pax***

## **- Tour with medieval activities**



From February 16, in the subterranean passages and dungeons, a company of medieval knights will enable you to discover how people lived in the Middle Ages. You will discover weapons of war, the usual equipment of knights and the daily life of people who used to live in the château.

Throughout the visit, you will be encouraged and invited to participate in this mysterious XIIIth century life.

***Rate : 9€ / pax***

## **- 3 Treasure hunt around the Castle.**

A short trail goes through the hill. At each step a new game. A surprise at the finish line.

***Rate : 5€ / pax***



Photo from Wang Zhiping  
[wangzhiping.blog.siyuefeng.com](http://wangzhiping.blog.siyuefeng.com)



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# 来在 *La Barben* 的城堡庆祝 您的婚礼

## **Privatization of the castle includes**

**1 - A large park place which can welcome up to 300 cars**

**2 - 10000 m2 French style gardens, designed by Le Nôtre and listed National Heritage with:**

- An alley of centenary plane trees bordered by an expanse of grass, well shaded, which leads to 2 wrought iron gates
- 8 boxwood beds, decorated with embroidery full of flowers and a gigantic redwood tree surround a circular pond. The space is bordered by the Touloubre stream which brings freshness and the relaxing sound of its waterfall
- Under the access ramp to the castle, there are orangeries used for cloakroom and toilets and greenhouses
- A 400 m2 lawn, ornate in its center with a graceful goodess, accessible by 2 staircases on the sides. A monumental fountain, surmounted by 3 nice dated fire pots, finishes the gardens
- 2 vaulted long rooms are used by the caterers and as a dance floor.
- It is possible to mount a tent on the lawn

**3 - Honour terrace and terrace called Palamede located inside the castle**

- One accesses inside the surrounding wall by the great gate surmounted by the watch tower
- Immediately after, there is a large terrace overlooking the french style gardens with a lawn covered surface in the shade of high boughs of the plane trees, the feet of which bathe in the stream 20 meters lower
- A succession of small terraces, surrounded by stables and pigeon house, lead to the main entrance door of the castle
- The monumental staircase allows the access to the honour terrace, located dead south and by the Henri IV staircase to the terrace called Palamede. They have an unobstructed view over the surrounding countryside, the lights of Salon de Provence and the Alpilles range
- From the main terrace, one accesses to the pretty gothic chapel dedicated to Sainte Roseline de Villeneuve, where it is possible to celebrate a wedding with an audience of about 70 persons
- On the main terrace, there are 2 orangeries, one used as a cloakroom and the other as a dormitory for children, and a guard room used as a dance floor.

**4 - The ceremonial rooms on the first floor are composed of the gallery of paintings and, in a row, the Directoire dining room.** They are available only in case of rain or strong wind.

### **Number of guests**

The french style gardens, for the cocktail, can welcome 400 people

The honour terrace , for the dinner, can accomodate 300 persons

In case of withdrawal inside the castle due to bad wheather , the limite is 200 guests

### **Length**

The services : caterers, flowerists,DJs, decoraters..., could start putting in the day before the party from 8 am to 6pm and the wedding day from 8 am

The privatisation starts mid afternoon, depending of the arrival time of the guests and stop early morning without any time limit.





See videos on Youtube : Eternal Provence  
- Private wedding in a medieval castle : 08/08/14  
- Once upon a time : 18/11/14







# Bed and Breakfast

The château of la Barben, that is a real jewel of the patrimony of Provence, will welcome you in its magical setting and you will be accommodated in its magnificent bedrooms and suites : Breakfasts and table d'hôte dinners are served in the big dining-room, the medieval kitchen or on the terrace. WiFi

## *Suite Granet*

It is composed of a blue roomy bedroom decorated with white gypsum sculptures dating back to the 18th century.

The furniture is genuine 18th Century. In the bedroom, you will appreciate a double bed (1,8 m. wide / 6 ft wide) topped by a canopy in authentic 18th Century Liberty print.

The room next door is a small sitting-room, in which you will enjoy the same white blue atmosphere and will rest on a genuine 18th Century bed (1,2 m. wide / 3.5 ft-wide).

The bathroom, that is in harmony with the other rooms composing the suite, is made of marble and equipped with a bath and shower. Separated toilets. Facing both south and west, the room is very sunny and its different aspects will enable you to have a magnificent view of the Salon de Provence countryside.



## *Suite des Amours*

It is situated in the Palamede tower, the big circular tower in the western part of the château. It is composed of a big large bedroom with a living area in which you will admire a majestic stone fireplace.

The canopied fourposter bed is 1.8 meter wide (5,5 ft wide) and dates back to the Renaissance. The furniture is genuine 18th century. Stone coloured linen soft furnishings. The bathroom is huge with a central bathtub designed for two people. From the Italian shower, you will enjoy a view of the river and hundred year old plane trees. Separated



toilets.

From the private south-facing terrace of this suite, you will have a magnificent view of the landscape.

## *Chambre Elisa*

The walls are covered with Liberty print and the furniture is authentic Louis XVth. Big double bed (1,8 meter wide / 5,5 ft wide) topped with a silk canopy. You may also have twin beds. The big bathroom with two windows is equipped with a retro style bathtub, and a shower. Separated toilets. In this room facing east, you will have a view of the rising sun and hills of scrubland.



## *Tables d'hôtes*

The castle of La Barben invites you to share hosts' table in the evening in various places. From the large dining room to the old medieval kitchen for a friendly meal with the owners or on the terrace, taste provencal dishes prepared by the chef of the castle.



See updated rates on our website: [www.chateaudelabarben.fr](http://www.chateaudelabarben.fr)

# *Shooting and movies*



# Le château joue les vedettes

Une série chinoise, regardée par 145 millions de personnes, a investi l'édifice

Il est particulier, fort beau et son histoire de la révolte paysanne aux amours de la belle Joséphine ne peut que séduire. Aussi, rien d'étonnant à ce que le château de la commune ait été choisi pour recevoir l'équipe venue de la province de Schangdong de "Family on the go" ou "Wen Zhou liang jia ren", une série que les Chinois adorent et qu'ils sont 145 millions à regarder ! De quoi en faire pâlir plus d'un.

L'équipe de tournage s'est d'abord installée à Marseille où plusieurs de ses sites et de ses monuments ont été filmés. Dernièrement, réalisateurs, comédiens, figurants, cameramen, assistantes de production, soit plus de quarante personnes, sont reçues au château par les propriétaires des lieux, Madame et Monsieur Pillivuyt. Pourtant, lors du repérage d'octobre l'édifice était passé inaperçu. Heureusement, un ami de Kong Sheng, le réalisateur, le lui a fait découvrir en janvier.

"Le château était bien celui qu'il recherchait, indique une assistante. Pour inclure les séquences qui y sont tournées, l'histoire a été modifiée, indique-t-elle. On a demandé des renseignements sur la porcelaine qu'on trouve au château car il y a une histoire de collection de porcelaine. On s'est intéressé à son histoire et les noms ont été changés".

Pour l'occasion, les comédiens sont devenus baron et baronne d'un jour recevant un jeune couple héros d'une série ro-



L'équipe de "Family on the go" ou "Wen Zhou liang jia ren" a tourné au château de La Barben pendant trois jours. Ici, les comédiens en compagnie du réalisateur et de Madame Pillivuyt. / PHOTOS F.C.

mantique à souhait dans laquelle la belle et riche jeune fille se retrouve face à un dilemme: quel homme choisir entre un riche prétendant qui roule en Ferrari et un jeune homme peu fortuné mais aux qualités de cœur indéniables ?

## "Une très belle expérience"

Pour tourner la deuxième saison de cette série, une équipe chinoise est en France jusqu'au 29 janvier. Elle est assistée par un producteur français Renaud Cohen qui est un habitué de ces tournages. A ses côtés Li Jingxiang assistante de production. L'expérience est pour eux fort "intéressante", devant assurer le casting des comédiens, des figurants, faisant les repérages, choisissant des lieux de

tournage à Marseille bien entendu avec les Terrasses du port, la Major mais aussi à Serre Chevalier où se rendra l'équipe de Family. En attendant, cette dernière aura passé trois jours dans la commune, filmé l'intérieur, les extérieurs du château et aura donné la possibilité à des comédiens de jouer avec leurs homologues chinois, chacun dans sa langue maternelle. Ce qui était une première pour Jean Duvert alias Monsieur le Baron.

"Je suis plus un acteur de théâtre. La télé ce n'est pas pareil, on doit se retenir. L'expression va être importante, la gestuelle aussi. Ici, on reprend deux ou trois fois, c'est le cinéma. De plus, ce n'est pas tous les jours qu'on travaille avec des chinois, c'est une très belle expérience. Plusieurs traducteurs nous donnent les in-

dications, nous aident. Notre voix sera reprise en chinois, ce n'est pas elle qui est la plus importante", indique Jean Duvert, qui partage ses sentiments avec Jean Pierre Barthélémy. "Je suis un figurant, j'interviens dans la prise mais je ne parle pas, indique ce dernier. J'ai déjà fait des pubs, jouer dans Plus belle la vie, à l'Opéra. Pour moi c'est un véritable plaisir, je rencontre des gens, on peut échanger. Aujourd'hui, on parle chinois et moi je suis muet".

En espérant que l'Empire du milieu ne le reste pas face aux beautés de notre région en visionnant la série ou alors que ce soit d'admiration, car beaucoup attendent une retombée de cette expérience avec la venue future de touristes chinois.

Françoise Castelas



Pour tourner la deuxième saison de cette série, l'équipe chinoise est en France jusqu'au 29 janvier.

# *A day among truffles*

## **Go and discover truffles**

With a truffle expert and his dogs, you will try to find and pick up truffles in the fields around the castle .



Then, with our chef, you will cook a dinner based on truffles, taste and appreciate this fabulous mushroom.



Dish example : roasted veal, parmigiano, black truffle.

*A day in the fields of lavender,  
olive trees and vineyards.*



Tasting sessions of olive oils and wines