



Duivenvoorde Castle opens for a new season

Descendants of the family take visitors on the new English-language audio tour of Duivenvoorde Castle, the new 'Galerie Steengracht' and unique Porcelain Room.

Duivenvoorde Castle in Voorschoten is open to the public again. Several rooms in the castle have been completely overhauled and the South Wing, which was privately occupied until 2019, has been completely renovated. Thanks to support from various funds, the unique Porcelain Room has been expanded to include spectacular 18th, 19th and 20th century tableware. New is the 'Galerie Steengracht' (in English: Steengracht Gallery) in the castle, with paintings collected by one of the owners of the estate and castle, Hendricus Adolphus Steengracht. Also new is the audio tour with text spoken by descendants of the three families who lived in Duivenvoorde for eight centuries.

Audio tour

Starting this spring, Duivenvoorde Castle also offers audio tours in English and a tour especially for families (NL). The history of 800 years Duivenvoorde is told in a very special way by members of the various families who have lived in the castle over the centuries. Baron Arent van Wassenaer van Catwijck tells about the five centuries of habitation by the Van Wassenaer family and Squire Jan Steengracht van Oostcapelle takes you through the stories of two generations of Steengracht. In their tour, Baroness Ludolphine and Baron Alexander Schimmelpenninck van der Oye tell you in a very personal way about their family, who left the castle in 2019.

In addition, the English public guide "Duivenvoorde a Birds-Eye View" is available in the estate shop. This richly-illustrated publication brilliantly describes the history of this 800-year-old estate. Beautiful stories and pictures of the noble residents, the art and library collection, and the special garden are included.

Gorgeous dinnerware

Until recently, merely a small part of the enormous porcelain collection collected by the various residents was displayed in the Duivenvoorde Porcelain Room. Several unique collection pieces have now been added to that. These include the splendid 18th century blue and white *Tournai* porcelain used by the family on a daily basis as well as the extraordinary 46-piece 'Green tea set', purchased in the 19th century from the Parisian porcelain manufacturer Rihouet et Lerouzey as a wedding present from Nicolaas Johan Steengracht to his wife Henriette.

Also from the so-called 'Steengracht porcelain' with red border and Steengracht van Duivenvoorde monogram, purchased by the Squire Hendricus Adolphus Steengracht, 12 exceptional examples were brought out of storage for the first time. Baron and lady-in-waiting Schimmelpenninck van der Oye finally purchased a tea set from the Porzellanfabrik Arzberg, Bayern at the beginning of the 20th century, of which 20 pieces are on display.

Golden acanthus leaves

One of the most extraordinary rooms is the 18th century Marot Hall. In 2014, a major restoration project started (with the support of several funds) to return the gilding in the Marot Hall to its former state. The beautiful console tables, mirror frames, picture frames, and acanthus leaves had been painted over with a thick bronze paint, a layer of paint that was highly discolored. All the gilded elements were restored and re-gilded. With the return of the last gilded ornament, the magnificent acanthus leaves, the major restoration project was completed. Visit the Marot Hall and experience how this special room has regained its former "golden grandeur".

Tent in the castle garden

This year, for the first time, a tent will be erected in the castle garden. Various activities will take place here, including on August 1st the multimedia opera *Händel goes Tinder*, in which social media playfully collides with the 18th century music of G.F. Händel. A very beautiful experience in the middle of nature. Just like the castle rooms in the South Wing, this tent can be rented for weddings, meetings, or parties for the first time this season.

Celebrate life at Duivenvoorde

It is possible to adopt a tree at the Duivenvoorde Estate. A tree to celebrate a birth, add luster to a jubilee, or to commemorate a person who has passed away. An old oak tree on the drive to the estate, a young beech or lime tree in the park, or a fruit tree in the orchard of the Leiden Garden. Each tree will have a sign with its own text and the name of the tree. Duivenvoorde guarantees the life of the adopted tree for 25 years.

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