Medieval tower

The medieval tower, which offers a 10m lookout point, is an architectural reminder of the former Château de Moirans, at the northern tip of the town walls. It is mentioned in the documents concerning the division of the county of Sermorens between the dioceses of Vienne and Grenoble in 1107. There was once a tannery at the foot of the tower.

This circular tower, covered with tuff, rises up from a segment of the ancient medieval ramparts. The tower, which dates back to the 13th or 14th century, stands within a triangular space. It is likely that there were two other similar towers completing the fortifications at the other two points.
15m in diameter and around ten metres high, it comprises four floors. The viewpoint is accessed via a spiral staircase with a supporting pillar at its base.

The château was separated from a first terrace by a water-filled moat with a bridge over it. Various residential structures were built along the narrow streets of this terrace. The communal oven also stood in this sector. A channel from the Morge river meant that the inhabitants had access to water supplies without leaving the town.
Moirans thus had one of the oldest known Charters of Franchise or Freedoms in the Dauphiné region (after 1164), attributed by their Lord Geoffroy.
After 1270, the château was included in the delphinal domain, thus becoming implicated in the on-going conflicts between the Dauphins and the Counts of Savoy (conflicts which started in the 12th century). However, it is likely that the two missing towers were destroyed by the Wars of Religion.

Tannery

In the 17th century, an adobe shack was built against the tower. It was used by Guiges Barral, blacksmith, then Claude Roulet, chamois artisan and merchant from La Tronche in 1736. His grandson, Joseph, a leather-worker, set up a tannery on the ground floor of the shack. After being tanned, the skins were set to dry upstairs in the open air.

This activity continued until the early 20th century.

MOIRANS (Isère). - Ruine d'une Tour romaine (IIIe siècle)