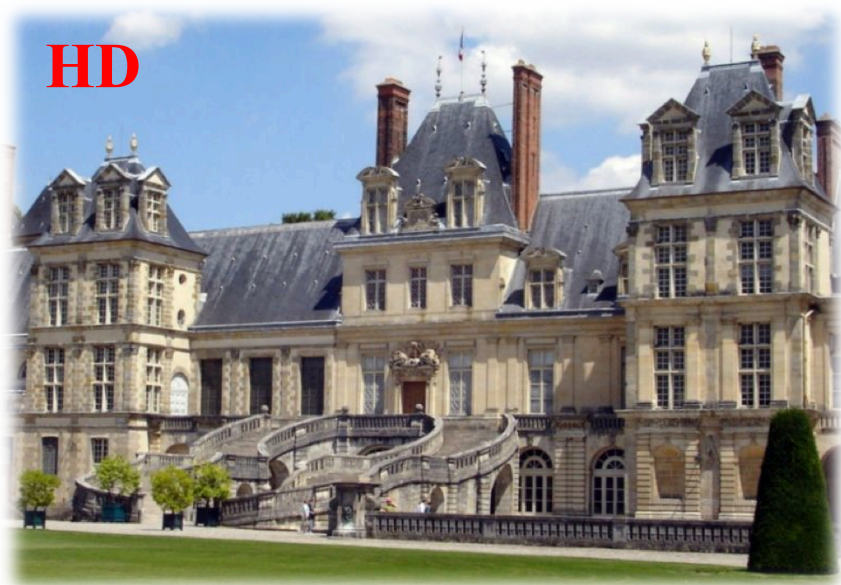




History of royal residences : The Châteaux of Napoleon Ier



Though the Château de Fontainebleau was refounded on initiative of François 1st and Henri IV, it usually brings to mind Napoleon Ist.

The man who restored it, who turned Fontainebleau into one of the seats of the Premier Empire after having been a royal city.

Bonaparte refurnished the apartments and in 1804 hosted Pope Pius VII who had come to consecrate him, then held him here in custody and only rarely stayed here between military campaigns.

The capital of horses, that is the title Fontainebleau gives itself.

And with good reason, between horseback hunting under the Ancien Régime and the military presence in the XIXth century, the city long echoed with the sound of horse hoove, and a special military school created by Napoleon Ist later became Saint-Cyr.

A modest château surrounded by parks and forests, Napoleon's wife Josephine chose the Château de Malmaison in 1799.

Napoleon settled there when he returned from his campaign in Egypt.

He even moved the seat of government there between 1800 and 1802.

Its at Malmaison that Napoleon decided on the bill for the Légion d'Honneur, it is where he negotiated the Concordate and ceded Louisiana.

The Château de Compiègne also contains a beautiful ensemble of Empire artworks.

Napoleon and his second wife, the Archduchess Marie-Louise of Austria, settled here in 1810. The Empress' bedroom is especially sumptuous, while the Emperor's is strikingly solemn.

Though the Emperor never resided at the Château de Versailles, he had the Grand Trianon at the back of the park restored for occasional stays.

Today still, the apartments decorated during that period draw visitors in.

Directed by Jacques VICHET

French Version
English Version

A documentary of 52'

High Definition
HD Cam & Digital Betacam 16/9

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