



Versailles 1 : The Palace and the gardens



Directed by Jacques VICHET A documentary of 52'

Version Française
Version Anglaise

High Definition
Digital Betacam 16/9

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The Chateau of Versailles remains forever the emblematic symbol of Louis XIV, whose reign lasted for almost half a century. It is recognised as one of the most beautiful works of art of the 17th century France.

In the beginning it was the site of a modest chateau built by Louis XIII as a hunting lodge.

The site was then chosen by Louis XIV for the construction of the palace which stands there to this day, a symbol of royal absolutism and the incarnation of Classical French art.

In the 1670s, Louis XIV built the Grand Apartments of the King and Queen, a luxurious, stately reception area. The most symbolic of the rooms is no doubt the Hall of Mirrors, designed by Mansart.

During the next century, under the reign of Louis XV, the Chapel and the Opera were completed. The Chateau ceased to function as the seat of official power in 1789 with the French Revolution.

The gardens at Versailles initiated the tradition of the typical « French garden, » complete with labyrinths, fountains and other decorative statements.

The Orangery at the Chateau of Versailles was designed by Jules Hardouin-Mansart in the 17th century. Built between 1684 and 1686, before construction had even started on the Chateau itself, the Orangery is situated beneath the « Parterre du Midi ». It is made up of a central gallery of 155 metres in length, with a south-facing facade.