

The Hotel Bouchu

This vast hotel was built in 1641 for Jean Bouchu. He was the president of parliament in Burgundy and wished for a home which permitted him to greet, welcome and entertain guests.

At this time, the nobility had a great influence on the social life and the intellectual life. The members of parliament built a hotel between courtyards and gardens which showed their importance. The parliament provided the town a prestigious architectural heritage. More than 100 hotels were built between 1480 (the settlement of the parliament in Burgundy) and 1789 (the French Revolution).

The hotel Bouchu was passed down to the oldest son of the president, and then was sold many times. The family d'Esterno was the last one to inhabit the building from 1803 until 1884, when the town purchased it. Then it became a high school, an academy of music, before the settlement for the General Headquarters of the army in 1928. From 2000 the town has used the hotel for cultural activities and associations like ICOVIL. The main entrance is from the XVIIIth century.



Classical architecture outside

Pierre le Muet, a dijonese architect, has influenced this architecture. Settled on the remains of the ancient hotel de Molesme (XVth century), which basement and cellar are already visible, the new hotel was completed in 1643. Its composition includes, a large central main building, surrounded by two wings and put on ground level foundations.

The plain simple decoration uses horizontal (smooth) rustication from ground floor to cornice, framing the windows on two levels.

A horse-shoe shaped stairway gives access to the central entrance.



Exceptional decoration inside

The central hall leads to two main rooms. The biggest one (80 m²) has kept its woodwork. There, the ceilings from the XVIIth century, give an idea of the original decoration.

The beautiful chimney in black molded marble, is just an architrave put on two jambs; this innovation is a Le Muet's idea, for chimney blocks to be included in the wall.

The decoration in the ancient dining room is inspired from classical antiquity and more specifically from Pompei paintings and murals.

The head of the household's private quarters were probably on the first floor in one of the wings while those of his wife were on the second floor.

The rooms of the kitchen are in the basement and a small spiral service staircase led to the first floor.

The two wings, on each side of the courtyard, house two independent entrances that serve from the door steps to the two twin hall entrances.

The Hotel Bouchu was one of the most famous hotels built in the middle of the XVIIth century in Dijon. The prestigious architecture expresses the desire of the owner to show his richness and wealth.

