

CHILLON CASTLE FOUNDATION
FONDATION DU
CHÂTEAU DE CHILLON
Avenue de Chillon 21
CH - 1820 Veytaux
Tel.: +41 (0)21 966 89 10
Fax: +41 (0)21 966 89 12
Email: info@chillon.ch
www.chillon.ch



Veytaux, 16 January 2018

PRESS RELEASE

In 2017, Chillon broke its all-time visitor records with over 405,000 visitors and will rise to the challenges 2018 poses

The Chillon Castle Foundation ended 2017 on a high with over 405,000 château de Chillon™ visitors: the highest number in its history. However, Veytaux Municipal Council's decision to increase leisure tax by 40% threatens to cast a shadow over these shining results. Maintenance and decoration work, along with a new exhibition, are on this year's agenda.

Exceptional 2017 results

Chillon Castle Foundation (*La Fondation du Château de Chillon* - FCC) is pleased to announce its record visitor numbers for 2017, with 405,319 visitors having crossed the drawbridge. This is a 10.3% increase compared with 2016. This success is down to the quality, variety, and originality of its cultural offering, including the temporary *Medieval Factory* exhibition (+14% visits compared with 2016), the centennial performance of *The Soldier's Tale*, the Clos de Chillon submersion ceremony in Lake Geneva, and winning the first prize for Swiss wine tourism. Claude Ruey, President of the FCC, said "These extraordinary results are the fruit of the strategy that was put together by the Foundation, its advisory board and management team from 2002. The canton was right in choosing to privatise the castle's management and conservation through a private foundation. The weakening of the Swiss franc and the revival of Asian tourism also worked in Chillon Castle's favour. Moreover, 76% of visitors came from overseas.

In terms of visitor origins, Swiss visitors still top the rankings, representing 24%. The Chinese are in second place (+15% compared with 2016), followed by the Americans (+12%). French visitors came in fourth (similar numbers to 2016), with Korean visitors rounding off our top five (+46%). Chillon Castle, therefore, remains the most visited historic monument in all of Switzerland.

Considerable challenges for 2018

This positive situation we find ourselves in has, unfortunately, been overshadowed by Veytaux Municipal Council's decision to increase leisure tax by 40%, a decision that seems to have no objective grounding and to be of no particular benefit. Claude Ruey, President of the FCC, was shocked by the decision, stating "We, at the heart of the castle, will not be implementing this increase, which seems to have no objective reasoning behind it. This additional cost will be covered by the FCC itself. This will have significant implications on our finances, and an overall fiscal charge of 345,000 Swiss francs, which is more than the 250,000 CHF subsidy provided by the canton." In other words, this means less funding for annual restoration, conservation and maintenance work, and diminished funds for the cultural and events programme (17% reduction in comparison with that of 2017).

Marta dos Santos, FCC Manager, added "It would be out of the question to increase castle entry prices in 2018, given the inconvenience caused by the work on the site." It should be noted that the FCC generates most of this

**CHILLON CASTLE FOUNDATION
FONDATION DU
CHÂTEAU DE CHILLON**

Avenue de Chillon 21
CH - 1820 Veytaux
Tel.: +41 (0)21 966 89 10
Fax: +41 (0)21 966 89 12
Email: info@chillon.ch
www.chillon.ch



revenue through its own activities (over 90%, 65% of which came from 2017 admissions) and only receives a 5% subsidy for castle restoration and maintenance work.

Despite this, Chillon Castle will face the challenges 2018 poses head on, in particular by carrying out maintenance and decorative work on the outer part of the castle, building a cafeteria and opening a new exhibition.

The work on the castle exterior, commencing in mid-January, will transform the castle's surroundings. The aim is to improve the site by preserving and showcasing its characteristics as a whole – its constructed, natural and scenic qualities – as well as integrating the necessary infrastructures and developments to get the most out of the castle. More specifically, the main developments will include restoring the *via italica* – a road used in the Middle Ages by merchants and pilgrims – for pedestrian use, renovating the site's technical networks, and building a café/restaurant pavilion. Building work will be put on hold during peak season (April to August) and will resume from September for a period of around 12 months.

Finally, the new exhibition *Mouthwatering. Eating and drinking in the Middle Ages* will open its doors on the 13th September, accompanied by several cultural events (lecture series, educational workshops, feasts, medieval taster sessions and shows). Here, visitors can learn more about etiquette, tableware and recipes from Master Chiquart (Amadeus VIII the Duke of Savoy's head chef). They will also find out why children drank wine and what sorts of food acted as markers for social strata: *oratores*, *bellatores* and *laboratores*. We have a whole programme in store for you!

CHILLON CASTLE FOUNDATION
FONDATION DU
CHÂTEAU DE CHILLON
Avenue de Chillon 21
CH - 1820 Veytaux
Tel.: +41 (0)21 966 89 10
Fax: +41 (0)21 966 89 12
Email: info@chillon.ch
www.chillon.ch



© Fondation du Château de Chillon

Photos :

[Medieval Factory](#)

[Immersion du Clos de Chillon lacustre](#)

[Histoire du soldat](#)

[Château de Chillon](#)

[Guided tour and wine-tasting](#)

Media contacts:

- Mr Claude Ruey, FCC President, +41(0)79 210 84 13
- Ms Marta dos Santos, FCC Manager, +41(0)21 966 89 29 or +41(0)79 944 87 66
- Ms Lise Leyvraz Dorier, FCC Communications Manager, +41(0)21 966 82 45

#Chillon #ChateauDeChillon #Chilloncastle #SchlossChillon