

**FONDATION DU  
CHÂTEAU DE CHILLON**

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## PRESS RELEASE

**2018 was a strong year for Chillon, marked by transformation and challenges, with a record-breaking total of 402,000 visitors for the second time.**

For the second time, Chillon Castle welcomed over 400,000 visitors, closing the fiscal year on a total of 402,847 tickets. These results form part of an ever-improving visitor strategy. The year was marked by exterior maintenance and decoration work, along with the laying of the first stone in a new cafeteria. To round off in style, Chillon Castle won first prize at the *Prix des Mérites de l'Économie Riviera-Lavaux* economy awards in the *Rayonnement* (Influence) category.

### 2018 results exceed expectations

The Chillon Castle Foundation (*Fondation du Château de Chillon* - FCC) is delighted with its 2018 visitor numbers; 402,847 visitors passed through the doors to the fortress on Lake Geneva. Despite the record set last year (2017) President of the Foundation, Claude Ruey, and Managing Director, Marta Sofia dos Santos, were very pleased with the results of the 2018 fiscal year: "During a year of historic, extensive restoration that also saw a World Cup, the Foundation played its cards right, making provisions and cleverly adapting its cultural events calendar." Backed by its management, the FCC has seen positive results across its cultural offering and in its ticket numbers, especially with its two successful temporary exhibitions: *Medieval Factory*, a fun installation on inventions from the past; and the ongoing exhibit, which visitors can see (again) until 28 April, *Mouthwatering - Eating and drinking in the Middle Ages*.

In terms of visitor origin, the Swiss still top the rankings, representing over 22% of visitors. The Chinese are in second place (+1% in comparison with 2017), followed by the Americans (+12%). French visitors (consistent numbers) came in fourth place and South Korea rounded off the top five. It should be noted that the fortress has become a cultural tourism destination of particular interest for the Gulf States. In 2018, the FCC also edited a new castle room guide in Arabic, now one of 15 languages available. All visitors receive one of these guides at the castle entrance. Chillon Castle, therefore, remains the most visited historic monument in Switzerland and one of the best preserved in Europe.

In the first edition of the economy awards, held by Promove, the FCC had the pleasure of being awarded first prize by the panel in the *Rayonnement* (Influence) category on 29 November in Montreux. This prize recognises those who have contributed to the region's standing (international renown, image, tourism and events).

Boutique and Bazaar customers reported complete satisfaction. Bottles of the red and white Clos de Chillon wines – matured in barrels in the castle cellars by our partner, Badoux Vins – were a huge hit. Proceeds from sales go towards the castle's restoration. Many products linked to the temporary exhibition were welcomed by lovers of all things medieval, such as the beautiful catalogue, medieval cuvées, Chillon cervoise and leather notebooks.

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## Exterior restoration work and cultural challenges for 2019

Exterior work, which began in mid-January 2018, is currently being carried out within the framework of the *Jardin anglais* (English Garden). The plan is to completely re-landscape the site to build a pavilion/cafeteria in front of the castle. When the first stone was laid on 6 December 2018 – in front of an audience of elected politicians, construction workers, Friends of Chillon Castle and the castle team – Claude Ruey, President of the FCC, stated, "The site at Chillon Castle, a real Swiss cultural platform, will extend our welcome area. Our aim is to welcome ever more visitors from across the world, perform consistently better in terms of tourism, and to restore and constantly preserve Chillon; aims set by the State of Vaud, owner of the estate, and the Foundation overseeing the work and preservation." The pavilion/cafeteria will seat 80: 60 inside and around 20 on the outdoor terrace. Barring unforeseen circumstances, the site is due to be inaugurated during the 2020 Easter period, with an open day for members of the public. In the meantime, in the interest of transparency and the transferral of the FCC's historical knowledge, and architectural and landscaping know-how, anyone interested in the works will be invited to attend a tour of the building site in 2019.

This year, the Chillon Castle Foundation is taking visitors on a tasty, artistic voyage as part of its cultural offering. Master Chiquart, chef to the Duke of Savoy, will continue to surprise with his Gargantuan 15th-century menus until 28 April 2019, as part of the temporary exhibition *Mouthwatering - Eating and drinking in the Middle Ages*. He will also be running adult cookery workshops and tasty tours! In his [web series](#) (in French), François Chiquart gives a virtual account of the tribulations of a banquet peppered with pitfalls. All episodes can also be found on a touchscreen in the Castle's Coat of Arms Hall.

From 29 August, the heart of the fortress will be decorated with fantasy canvases, mysterious vessels, and bright and shady creatures alike. Famous regional artist, Christine Sefoloshka, will be exhibiting her contemporary pieces throughout the world, "casting off" from Chillon Castle until 24 November.

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*Le château de Chillon™ et sa plage (Chillon™ Castle and its banks) by © Rafael Rojas*

Photos available to the media:

[Mouthwatering - Eating and drinking in the Middle Ages](#)

[English Garden and the laying of the first pavilion/cafeteria stone](#)

[Chillon™ Castle](#)

[Guided tours and interiors](#)

[Tour and wine tasting](#)

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