

The Castle of Wolfsegg – Knight's Fortress and Haunted Castle

Finally! On January 26, 1933, following long and tough negotiations, Georg Rauchenberger signed the contract of purchase that made him the rightful master of Castle Wolfsegg. It was not out of vanity that he wanted to become the owner and lord of the castle. He was sincerely concerned for the building, which was gradually falling into complete disrepair. Rauchenberger knew about the castle's patchy history, and he made it his task to preserve it for posterity.

The name of the castle probably goes back to Wolf von Schönleiten, who presumably built it around 1300. He made a good choice of a place to erect a fortified residence. Perched on a rock cone in the middle of a valley, the castle looks fortified and defiant, visibly declaring who is in charge in the area.

The rock underneath the fortress has far more to offer than just a good view. Out of sight of enemies or visitors, there is a cave underneath the castle, about 500 meters long and reaching groundwater level. In the Middle Ages, the access to fresh water was of great strategic advantage, in particular, in this otherwise water-poor, karstic region. At the same time, it was no easy task to fetch the water from the depths of the dripstone cave. Two shafts with a total depth of 25 meters had to be overcome. In later times, people no longer used the cave for water supply, but only for garbage disposal. The cave entrance was finally completely closed. It is not open to the public nowadays, as it offers a habitat for a large number of native bats.

As stately and sturdy as the castle overlooks the village of Wolfsegg, its history was extremely volatile. The castle already fell to the dukes of Bavaria in the 14th century and from then on kept changing hands – as feudal tenure, in pawn, or as property sold. Wolfsegg was fortunate to be of little strategic importance from a military point of view. The fortress therefore escaped destruction by warfare. Nevertheless, the once noble castle had visibly deteriorated.

Some people may have avoided the castle out of fear of the ghost of Wolfsegg – the White Lady. She is said to have been haunting Castle Wolfsegg since the 15th century, and many people swear to have seen the ghost of a woman in a white linen gown on the castle premises.

The apparition of the White Lady of Wolfsegg traces back to a tragic tale. Once upon a time, the lord of the castle was traveling, and his wife stayed at home. Unable to cope with the management of the property on her own, she asked a lord from the neighborhood for advice and support, which he readily gave. When the lord of Wolfsegg Castle returned home, he wrongly suspected his wife and his neighbor of adultery, and in his rage murdered his innocent wife. Ever since, she roams the castle at night, dressed in her white gown.

This tale did not become popular in Wolfsegg before the 20th century, and the unexplainable apparitions of fog and light have only been reported since then. By no means, however, does this diminish the spooky eeriness of the White Lady of Wolfsegg.

One thing was clear to Georg Rauchenberger: The castle with its rich history and abundant tales must be preserved! His indefatigable effort and personal commitment eventually led to success in rescuing the house from irrevocable decay. Until this day, Castle Wolfsegg welcomes its visitors on a time trip into the medieval past as they pass through the castle gate.