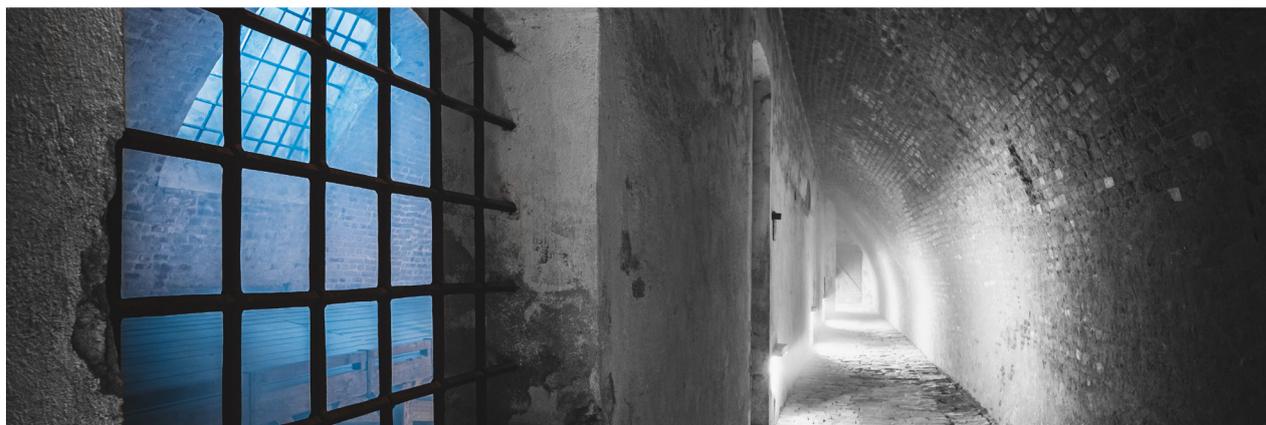


Accompanying materials
to the tour

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Casemates – prison



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Brno City Museum

| Špilberk Castle

Dear visitors,

Welcome to the National Cultural Monument, Špilberk Castle and Fortress, the seat of the Brno City Museum.

You are about to visit the casemates, which at the end of the 18th century became famous, or rather infamous, as one of the worst dungeons in the Habsburg Monarchy.

The casemates were built by order of Maria Theresa in 1742 as part of the new Baroque fortifications of Špilberk.

The moat in which you are standing originally surrounded the entire perimeter of the castle. In order to fortify the side walls and above all to gain more space for the reinforced castle garrison, the military engineers of the time had these brick corridors – CASEMATES – built into the former side moats. Loosely translated as “dark spaces”. However, in terms of military terminology, a CASEMATE is a corridor or room that is part of a fortification and should be resistant to shelling or bombing. There were several types of such casemates. Here at Špilberk we have two. The corridors in front of you were intended to serve as a storage area for military material, and the first floor housed bread ovens to supply the local garrison during a military conflict. The casemates in the next moat were to be used as shelter for the troops – they could fit up to 1,200 men. However, no major conflict such as the Swedish siege (1645) took place, so the casemates were never used to that extent in their original military function. In the following years they served as a storage area for military material.

A fundamental turn in their function came in 1783, when Emperor Joseph II



visited Špilberk and had these military corridors rebuilt into a prison. As part of his reforms, following in the steps of his mother Maria Theresa, he abolished the death penalty. As an alternative for the worst criminals – premeditated and serial killers – the punishment were to be life imprisonment and chaining in two provincial fortresses. The Schlossberg fortress in Graz was for prisoners from inner Austria. Murderers from Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Galicia were to be imprisoned at Špilberk in Brno.

These most serious criminals were chained in small wooden cells on the lower floor of the casemates, which you will see at the end of the tour. The conditions there were horrendous; the prisoners were not allowed to leave the cells under any circumstances and so the life sentence at Špilberk lasted a relatively short time, albeit spent in dreadful conditions. We're talking about weeks, months at most.

The upper floors were intended for minor criminals, i.e. robbers, forgers of official documents or arsonists. These weren't chained in their cells, they had to work. The official name of the prison was "C. and K. Correctional Institution at the Fortress at Špilberk" and these prisoners were to reform themselves by working. This meant heavy manual labour, mainly in the construction work on the Špilberk Fortress, six days a week, seven hours a day – depending on the season. The prisoners had only Sundays off. The casemates were used as a prison for about fifty years and then, due to the poor conditions, they were closed down in the 1830s and ceased to be used.

Meanwhile, the upper part of the castle was rebuilt to serve as a prison in the first half of the 19th century. At this time Špilberk became known as the Dungeon of Nations. In later years, the prison held not only serious criminals, but also po-

litical offenders from various parts of the Habsburg monarchy – namely Hungarian Jacobins (1795), Italian patriots (1822–1835), and Polish revolutionaries (1847–1848). In 1855, the prison at Špilberk was abolished due to its poor condition and the troops returned. However, it was no longer a fortress, only a barracks. During the World War II, Špilberk was the seat of the Wehrmacht, which had it rebuilt as a model barracks for the German armed forces and at the end of the war, they also structurally modified the northern casemates, where a shelter for the local garrison was to be built, similarly to the 18th century. The Czechoslovak army continued to use Špilberk also after the war, until 1959. In the 1960s, the Brno City Museum relocated to the castle, and stayed here to this day. Nowadays it houses museum exhibitions. Today, the casemates are part of these exhibitions and are one of the oldest publicly accessible sights with guided tours in Brno. They were opened in 1880. Of course, no longer as a prison, but as the first part of Špilberk open to the tourists. And so a new and so far the longest chapter in the history of the casemates began. To make the tour more appealing, the guides at the time used to share various legends. One of them is about the Rat channel. You'll visit that area soon.



SO-CALLED RAT CHANNEL AND STORAGE AREA

Outside we mentioned the Rat channel. According to the old guides, the most vile criminals were supposed to be chained into these holes by their feet, in the lower part of the channel, and then left there at the mercy of famished rats. As was already said, this is just a legend. It was actually a drainage channel to bring water out of the back moat.

years for storing food. The prison was located on the upper floor, which you will visit in a bit. There you will see what a casemate prison looked like at the end of the 18th century.

This corridor was never used for prison purposes. It has not been significantly structurally modified. There are no air shafts for fresh air and daylight and there has never been a tiled stove. This tunnel may seem like a cellar. And that is in fact what this space was used for. First for military material and in later

↓ ARE THE CASEMATES AN UNDERGROUND STRUCTURE?

No. The casemates were built into the side castle moats and their vaults only roof over the space between the castle and the wall. They are therefore more or less at or just above the level of the surrounding ground. ←



ENTRANCE TO THE SOUTHERN CASEMATES

It goes without saying that every prison has its escape attempts. But escaping from the casemates was not easy. When the prisoners were brought in, they had their transport shackles removed and instead got permanent ankle shackles weighing between 2.5 and 4 kg. These were riveted on and the prisoner had to wear them for the entirety of his sentence. They could only be removed on rare occasions when the prisoner's life was in danger. What's more, a chain about half a metre long was fitted between their ankles to make movement even more difficult. If a prisoner still decided to escape, he had to run with these heavy shackles from the cell to the front guardroom, which we will visit in a moment. The guardroom, of course, was patrolled by

armed guards. If the prisoner managed to beat them, he still had to "run" to the front moat. As you probably noticed at the beginning, there are walls all around us. Moreover, this is a kind of a Špilberk rarity: there were two institutions operating here at the same time. A civilian prison in the casemates and the rest of Špilberk served as a military fortress. Soldiers regularly patrolled the walls, and if they saw any of the prisoners trying to escape, they could intervene. Thus, theoretically speaking, the casemates were impossible to escape from. In a moment, you will visit the guardroom.



THE GUARDROOM FOR GUARDS

The guardrooms were located at the beginning and end of each corridor, with mass cells for 11 to 50 prisoners in between. As you can see, the furnishings of the guardrooms was very simple. Wooden flooring, a table, a bench and a tiled stove. Today, the corridors appear very cold and gloomy. That's because they've been derelict. However, keep in mind that this space was occupied and well-kept all year round in the 18th century. During the winter months these spaces were heated, but of course only moderately, because heating was expensive and the prisoners spent a large part of the day

outside working. They only returned to the casemates in the evening to eat and sleep. The lighting situation was much the same. At the beginning of the corridor you will see the guardroom and then slowly proceed to the first cell.

INTERESTING FACT: FURNITURE
 Nothing of the original furnishings of the casemates has survived. The furniture you will see during the tour is all modern.

CELL AND PRISONER HYGIENE



You are now standing in front of a cell for 29 prisoners. They worked during the day and returned to their cells in the evening. They slept together side by side on this long wooden bed. They wore their shackles both during the day and at night. The guards checked the shackles every evening and then there was a ward round of the cells. To make sure the prisoners wouldn't escape, the guards were instructed to link 3 to 5 men lying next to each other by putting another chain through their ankle shackles and then attaching it to a padlock at the bottom of the bed. The problem was, of course, if someone needed to use the toilet. For this purpose, there were wooden buckets in the cells. By the way, taking these buckets out was also part of the prisoners' job. Not only in the casemates, but in the whole fortress. From reports, we now know that it took them 3--4 hours a day,

so a significant part of their working day. Personal hygiene in the 18th century was on a completely different level than it is today, especially here in the casemates. There were no showers or bathrooms. Besides the faeces bucket, there were two other buckets in each cell. One with drinking water and one with utility water. The prisoners had to wash themselves thoroughly every morning before they were led out of their cells to work.



SO-CALLED TORTURE CHAMBER

The installation you see in front of you refers to a similar torture chamber that was part of the original 19th-century casemates touring exhibition. That torture chamber was built here to make the tours more attractive. Torture, as this installation portrays, was never practiced in the casemates. For one thing, it was abolished by Maria Theresa in 1777, some six years before the first prisoners ended up in the casemates, but most importantly because the prisoners were brought to the casemates only after the

verdict of the court. There was actually a cell for 23 prisoners, with the same furnishings as the one you saw a moment ago. This is what all casemate cells looked like at the end of the 18th century.



TORTURE
You can learn more about torture in the →Dungeon of Nations exhibition←

BREAD OVENS



These rooms may look like prison cells due to the bars. However, that is not the case. These rooms are related to the original, i.e. military, function of the casemates. The bread ovens mentioned in the introduction were located in these four rooms and could bake bread for 5,000 people in case of a threat to the fortress.

After the casemates were converted into prisons, these bread ovens were torn down and the chimneys that remained were expanded and used as air shafts so that the prison would get fresh air and daylight.



SO-CALLED IMMUREMENTS AND WOMEN'S PRISON

According to an early 20th-century legend, unfaithful women were allegedly walled up here, but this is nonsense. Just as prisons today are divided into male and female prisons, the same principle was applied in the 18th century. The casemates were ONLY FOR MEN. Women had their own prison under Špilberk in the so-called hornwork (in the outer part of the Špilberk fortifications). It held women who had committed serious crimes similar to those for which men were sent to the casemates. For the most serious offenders, such as female murderers who were sentenced to be

chained for life, this prison housed dungeons similar to those for men in the casemates.

THE PEŠKOVÁ CASE

One of the curious cases in the women's prison was the pregnancy of the prisoner Veronika Pešková, discovered by a doctor in February 1786. Pešková had become pregnant with another prisoner during her previous stay in the city prison in Uherské Hradiště. On 13 July 1786 she gave birth to a boy who was baptised in the chapel in Špilberk by the local chaplain and then handed over to the Brno foundling hospital.



THE LARGEST CASEMATE CELL

You have just entered the former largest casemate cell. It was originally white lime plastered, like the whole interior of the prison. There was a wooden floor and two long beds for 50 prisoners along both walls. There was a tiled stove in the corner. If there was need for air, it was enough to open the air shafts – the barred openings at the top of the vault. Their top part had window panes that could be closed in case of bad weather. There was very little light in the casemates during the night. According to the regulations, only three oil lamps were to be used to illuminate one, roughly 110-metre-long corridor. At night it was practically dark in here. The lamps helped more or less with finding one's way around, and

the guards had their own tin lanterns with a candle.

WHAT WERE THE RINGS ON THE VAULTS FOR?

The rings were already in the vaults of the corridors before the establishment of the prison (they were mentioned in the protocol on the handover of the premises by the army in 1785). They could have been used to hang pulleys or ropes to make handling heavier objects easier. One can still find the same ones today, for example in maashouses and passages of Renaissance houses.



FOUNDATIONS OF OLDER PRISON BUILDINGS

You are now standing in the back moat, which looked different at the end of the 18th century. A large part of this space was occupied by two buildings, the foundations of which you can see in front of you. The one closer to you was smaller, the other was two storeys high.

The ground floor was reserved for the most serious convicts who were imprisoned in the so-called dark cells. The cells on the first floor held the less serious convicts and also housed the guards' apartments. On the top floor there were rooms for prominent prisoners and the apartment of the governor of the prison. After a short time, these cells were overcrowded and it was necessary to speed up the reconstruction of the northern casemates (point to the entrance to the northern casemates entrance), which we will see in a little while. When the northern corridor began to be used as a prison, these buildings changed their original function. A tailor's and shoemaker's shop was built on the ground floor and a prison hospital was built on the first floor.

HEALTH CARE

Only seriously ill prisoners were allowed to be placed in the hospital. The others were to be excused from work and remained chained in their cells. Prisoners suffered mainly from various lung diseases, including TB, acute and permanent digestive diseases, especially intestinal diseases accompanied by diarrhoea (dysentery, typhus), dropsy, scurvy, etc. The condition of prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment deteriorated the most and the fastest, of course – intestinal problems, lung diseases, dropsy. Intestinal problems were treated by adding common salt to the water, and dysentery by medically dosed sauerkraut.

THE MILITARY APPEARANCE OF THE CASEMATES

When Joseph II founded the casemate prison in 1783, the corridors first had to be structurally altered. Their original military purpose meant there were no cells or guardrooms. They were just empty tunnels with a vaulted ceiling. And inside these tunnels, cells and guardrooms were built. That is why, before these tunnels were rebuilt, the first prisoners were put in these buildings in the moat.



PRISON CAPACITY

After the casemates were adapted for prison purposes, the adjacent corridor, originally also a passageway, was divided into several rooms. Guardrooms were placed at the beginning and at the end, and five mass cells with a capacity of 112 prisoners were built between them.

In total, the casemates could hold around 240 prisoners. However, the numbers varied and fluctuated considerably over time. In 1791, there were a record 349 prisoners (men and women) at Špilberk. The lowest number, i.e. 50, was held there in 1788. On average, there were between 100 and 200 prisoners at a time. The total number of prisoners who have been through the casemate prison cannot be determined.

PRISON ADMINISTRATION

The highest-ranking person in the prison was the governor (Oberprofos). He had to be able to write, read, count, speak Czech (though the official language in the prison was German), prepare clear reports and tables, keep accounts, be in good physical condition, have an honest character and be diligent. His daily duties included the assignment of work to prisoners, attending rounds of sick prisoners, preparing weekly reports, monthly statements, etc. His deputy was the Unterprofos and below them were the ordinary guards, mostly ex-soldiers, married Catholics. According to the regulations, one guard was to be assigned to every 10 prisoners.



PRISONERS' WORK

The prisoners' work consisted mainly of work on and around the fortress. This was mainly carried out during the summer months. If the military command requested prisoners for work, the soldiers of the local garrison took over the supervision. Prisoners thus participated in the construction and repair of the fortress system not only at Špilberk but also in the city. In most cases, this consisted of heavy manual labour. The prisoners also helped to maintain the fortress, for example, by drawing water from the castle well. Above the well was a small house with a tread-wheel inside, in which eight prisoners tread and drew water out into the daylight.

It took them about fifteen minutes and the capacity of one bucket was 50 litres. They also cleaned the main channel and in winter they cleared the snow from the walls so that they would not get wet. They not only cleaned it, but also helped to transport it from Špilberk. The casemate prisoners also took care of the operation of the prison itself. For example, eight men would take out buckets of faeces every morning, which would take three to four hours, and another four men would clean the fortress of all the dirt. **The work ethic of the prisoners, or lack thereof, is a whole another chapter. There were even complaints about them not working and just chatting with each other. The**



Emperor then ordered to make their work really hard and to supervise them more closely so as not to give the public a bad impression.

The prisoners' work schedule

The convicts of Špilberk worked from Monday to Saturday, seven hours a day. During winter (October – March) they worked in the morning from 7:00 to 10:30. There was a lunch break between 11:00 and 12:00, only bread and water (the prisoners received hot food only three times a week and only in the evening, after the work was done). After lunch they worked from 13:00 to 16:30. At the end of the afternoon block, the prisoners would report to the back moat, where they would be assigned their work

for the following day. In the evening, they were served dinner and then there was a ward round, shackle check and a prayer. Sunday was a day of cleansing, both spiritual and physical. The inmates were to wash thoroughly and received washed clothes. Then they attended a service and did not have to work for the rest of the day. But they were not allowed to go out. They spent their free time in the casemate cells, which we will now move on to.



WHAT DID THE WELL HOUSE LOOK LIKE?

You can see the blueprints and a model of it in the exhibition →From Castle to Fortress←



FREIGHT ELEVATOR

The space you see in front of you is related to the original, military function of the casemates. It was built in the middle of the corridor. On the vault above you was a pulley with a rope, which the soldiers could use to pull material from the ground floor to the first floor. During the prison times, this area was walled off for security reasons.



MARKS ON THE BRICKS

These are the so-called stamps – the mark of the manufacturer of the brick. Those found on the floors in the corridors were fired at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. They were laid in the casemates during recent repairs to the paving.





PRISONERS' CLOTHING

This room has a partially equipped cell. This is what they may have looked like in the late 18th century. There are also mannequins in the cells to give you an idea of the simple interior furnishings: wooden floor, long bed, wooden buckets and tiled stove, but also of the prisoners'

clothing. The basic uniform consisted of trousers and a linen blouse, two hemp linen shirts, woollen stockings, leather boots and a hat. In winter, prisoners were given old military coats. All according to the prescribed Viennese model.

KITCHEN AND PRISON FOOD

Casemates' kitchen. The prison meals were simple. A normal prisoner was entitled to three quarters of a kilogram of bread and water every day from Monday to Sunday. Working prisoners then received a hot meat meal with a side dish and bread three times a week – Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. It was usually a quarter of a kilo of already cut beef cooked in a cauldron with a side dish, usually peas, groats or a mixture of these, and vegetables. As you can imagine, these rations were insufficient for the working prisoners, so in later years, on the intercession of the prison doctor, the weight of bread was increased to one kilogram per day on

meatless days.

Prisoners sentenced under Joseph II to the greatest punishment, i.e. to be chained for life, were not entitled to a hot meal at all! They were only given reduced rations of bread (less than half a kilogram a day) and water.

On the table you can also see the "kitchen service". The convicts ate with wooden spoons from wooden bowls, in later years from bowls made of black ceramic. The prepared food was then distributed by prisoners to the cells each evening after work.





CORRECTIONAL CELLS AND STAIRCASE

Both the insufficient food and the poor conditions were a source of dissatisfaction. Indiscipline was not tolerated in the prison, but the guards were not allowed to arbitrarily punish prisoners with beatings. Problematic prisoners could therefore be placed in isolation, in so-called correctional cells. You are now in one of them. These few rooms were rebuilt in the 1830s (during the reign of Joseph II, there was one large cell here at the end of the 18th century) and were intended for prisoners who were guilty of offences against prison regulations. These cells were used at the very late stages of the casemates' operation. In the 1820s, the upper part of Špilberk was rebuilt into a prison, to which the prisoners from the casemates were gradually transferred. These corridors were eventually emptied completely. Only a few rooms remained (again equipped with wooden floors, one or two beds and a tiled stove), which served as isolation rooms for problematic prisoners.

Staircase

The staircase in this room is not Baroque, it was built here by the German army during the World War II on the site of a former air shaft to connect the Museum of Italian Patriots on the ground floor of the north wing of the castle with the northern casemates.

↓ TRENCK, PELLICO, BABINSKÝ?

When the casemates were opened to the public in 1880, it was decided to present part of the first floor of the casemates as the prison of famous Špilberk prisoners. This installation remained here almost unchanged until the end of the 20th century. That is why many visitors today think that it was in these rooms that, for example, František Baron Trenck, Silvio Pellico or Václav Babinský were imprisoned. However, none of them were prisoners in the casemates. Either they were at Špilberk before the casemates were converted into a prison, which is the case of Baron Trenck, or, in the case of Václav Babinský, after the abolition of the casemate prison.



SO-CALLED BARON TRENCK'S CELL

This room was presented in the 19th century (i.e. at the time when the casemates began to have guided tours) as the cell of the famous commander of the Pandurs, František Baron Trenck, who, in fact, was imprisoned in the building in the back of the moat. This was actually the guardroom.



EXHIBITION

You've seen the first floor of the casemates, designed for less serious criminals. Offenders such as embezzlers, arsonists and various robbers. Had you been sentenced to be chained for life for premeditated murder under Joseph II, you'd have been taken to the lower level of the casemates, the worst part of the prison. There it was more or less certain that you would never see the light of day again. In a moment you will see for yourself just how dreadful the conditions of these prisoners were.

There is also an exhibition in this corridor, which was installed to mark the 140th anniversary of the opening of the casemates to the public. The panels show what the tour was like in 1880, and you can also see a number of historical photographs.

You can explore the exhibition after the tour.



MORGUE

The room in front of you with the small barred window, originally a guardroom, was later used as a morgue for the short-term storage of the remains of deceased convicts. **For hygienic reasons, prisoners were not buried within the fortress grounds, but outside the city walls, in mass and unmarked graves. You'll soon see the worst part of the prison. If a prisoner was sentenced to the most serious punishment, he was taken in shackles to the lower floor. It must have been clear to him upon entering just what awaited him. These corridors were dark, cold, damp and probably smelly. Why? I'll explain in a moment.**

↓ COMMEMORATIVE PLATE ABOVE THE ENTRANCE TO THE CASEMATES

"This part was restored in 1742 by the noble field marshal Mr. John Christopher, Freiherr of Seher - Thoss. Dedicated to all the past events of the war in Moravia and the fortress of Špilberk, the military tribune, Mr. de Rochepine took care of this fortress and confirmed the above inscription. Now this place has been restored by Mr. Ant. Costa - Rossetti, nobleman of Rossanegg, commander-in-chief of the engineers and governor of the military buildings. In 1880."



CHAINED FOR LIFE – THE WORST FORM OF PUNISHMENT

You're on the lower floor of the casemates. In the 18th century, both corridors served as passageways and 29 of these wooden cells were built in the front section. Each cell was designed for one man. Similar cells were also in the women's prison under Špilberk.

You can take a look at the end of the corridor to see the reconstructions of the cells for the worst criminals. There are also mannequins to give you an idea of what it meant to be sentenced to be chained for life under Joseph II. The meals were simple: bread and water. The convict was not entitled to any meat. Meat was reserved only for working prisoners.

The conditions in this part of the casemates were literally inhumane. There was no light and no heat. Minimum of daylight, practically none. There were no air shafts as there were on the first floor, but only vents in the vault. Prisoners were not allowed to leave these cells under any circumstances. If they needed medical attention, the doctor had to come to them. They weren't even allowed to be moved to the hospital.

They were chained here with a chain about a metre long (weighing 10 kg). This chain was connected to the middle of the chain between the ankle shackles. The most serious offenders were also chained in other ways. Either by a ring around the body, around the neck, or even by handcuffs, chained to the side walls of the cell. The chains had to be just long enough to allow the prisoner to get food to his mouth and also to lie down on the floor and get up again. These conditions make it clear that life sentence did not last long. We're

talking about weeks, months at most.

The minimum was fourteen days, the longest time here was spent by one Wentzl Gromann, who also died here. It was this type of punishment that gave Špilberk the reputation of being the worst dungeon (that it undoubtedly was) at the end of the 18th century in what is now the Czech Republic. The end of this five-year long era of cruel punishment at Špilberk was brought about by the reforms of Joseph's brother, the Emperor Leopold II, who abolished it and instead reintroduced the death penalty, which was paradoxically much more humane for these convicts. The remaining prisoners were to be released from these cells and moved to the upper floor of the casemates among the other prisoners. After a period of time, when they had grown stronger again, they were allowed to take part in the work process. You will now leave the 18th century and figuratively move into the 20th century. Note the rooms to your left.

↓ RECORD-HOLDER GROMANN

Wentzl Gromann spent 20 months and 2 weeks chained in a dungeon on the lower floor of the casemates.

At the end of August 1786, the city doctor, Dr. Lintz, requested that Gromann be released from his shackles, which were causing him pain and the risk of gangrene, due to his serious condition. He suffered from a severe cough, respiratory problems, chest dropsy, diarrhoea, and ulcers on his limbs, face, and abdomen. Although the request was granted, the sick man had to remain in his cell, where he died only two days later.



Casemates during the World war II – so-called gas chambers and a bomb shelter

After the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Špilberk was seized by the Wehrmacht (German army), which had the entire castle rebuilt in a romanticized style into its model barracks. These modifications were carried out mainly by political prisoners who were held there between 1939 and 1940. When the reconstruction was completed, the barracks were handed over to the Wehrmacht in 1941. The prisoners were no longer there by the handover, they were either released or in most cases sent to other prisons or concentration or extermination camps. Until the end of the war, Špilberk was used by the German army.

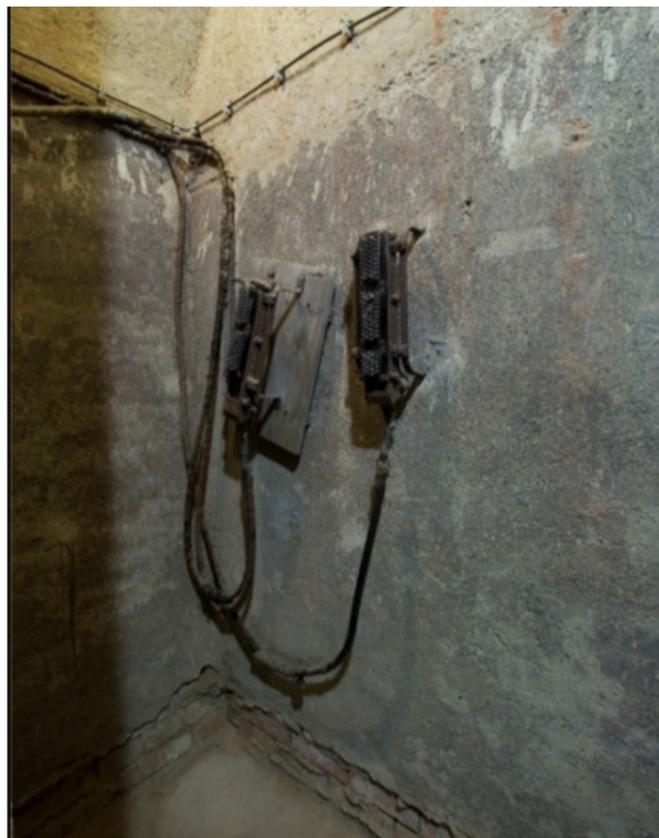
As the end of the war approached, Brno, then an important industrial centre of the Protectorate, became the target of several Allied air strikes. At this time, there was a rush to complete and equip some public bomb shelters in the city. At the turn of 1944/1945, intensive construction works began in the casemates, which had been closed to the public before. Every military facility had to have a bomb shelter for its garrison, and Špilberk was no exception. However, construction did not begin until the very end of the war, and therefore when Brno and Špilberk were liberated by the Red Army, the casemates remained unfinished. Soviet soldiers found them in April 1945 in the same condition as you see them now. Since it was known in Brno that the Nazis used Špilberk as a prison during the war, articles appeared in post-war newspapers that the Nazis intended to use it not as a shelter but as an execution site for the Czech people. According to these articles, gas chambers were to be

placed in the rooms we passed by. As of now, we have no historical documents to confirm or refute this theory. However, if we consider that the casemates were intended to serve as a shelter for the local garrison in the 18th century (i.e. in their original military function), then the intention to use them for a similar purpose during the World War II is much more likely.



Casemates during the World war II – so-called execution chamber

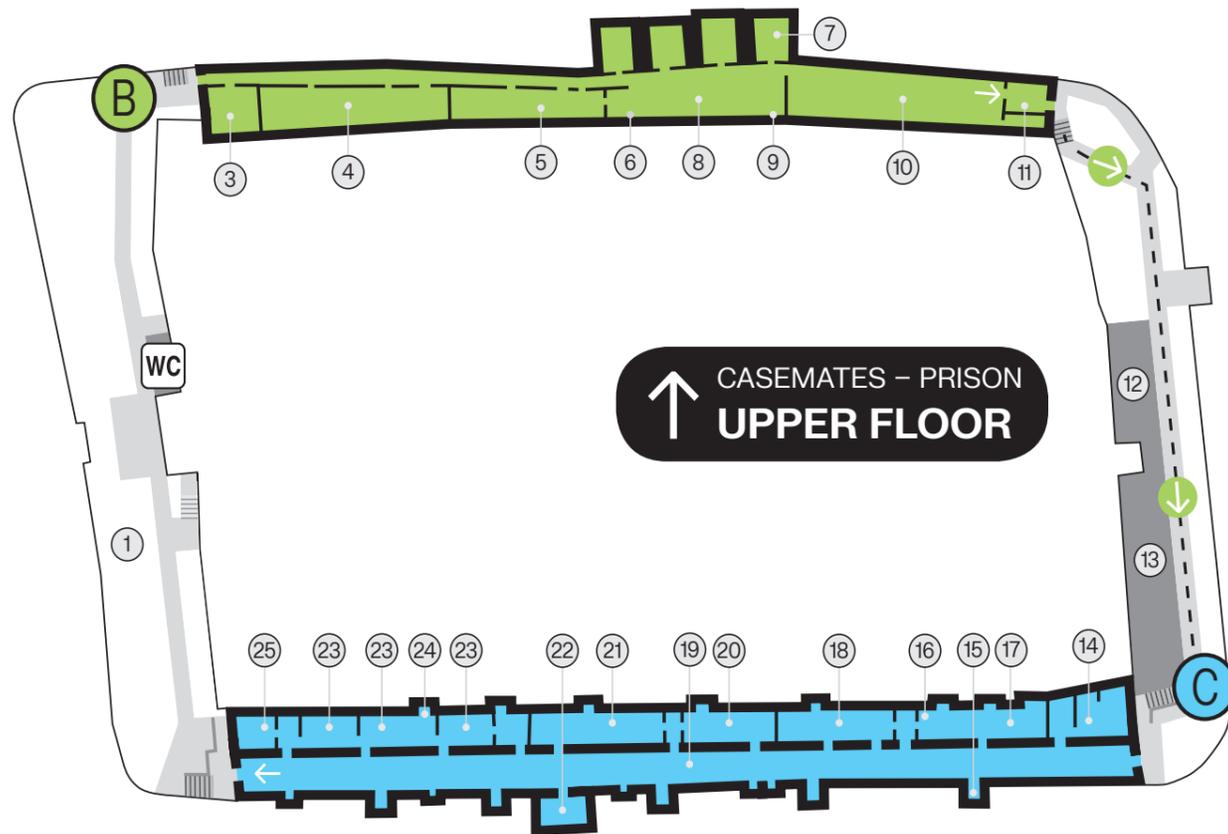
This room was presented by the guides after the World War II as an execution chamber. It was here that the Nazis supposedly executed Czech patriots. There was supposed to be an execution bench here and a special sewer (a hole in the ground) that was supposed to drain the blood. We do not know what this space was actually used for.



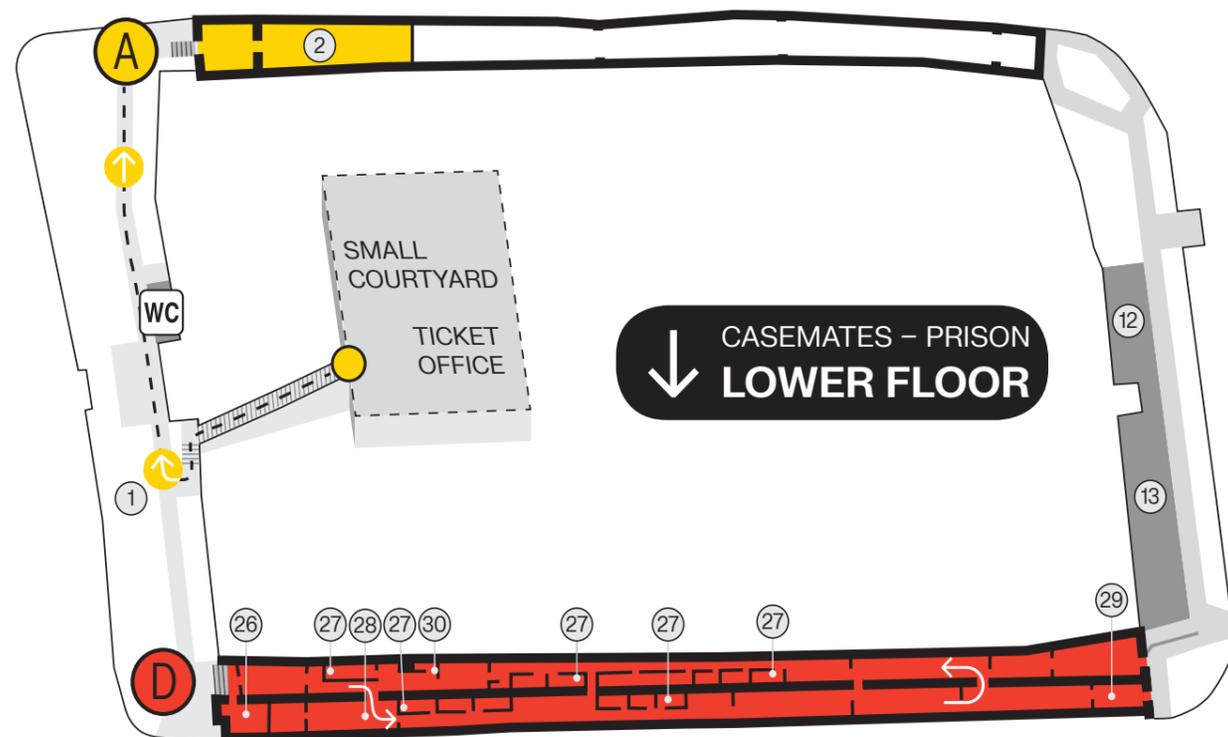
Casemates during the World war II – telephone exchange switching station

The casemates were not finished by the end of the World War II. Only a non-functioning shell of the original equipment remained. In its ideal state, it should have been a telephone exchange switching station, used for transferring calls. It was a product of the German company Siemens und Halske, today's Siemens. After the war the German army left Špilberk, and the casemates were again open to public in July 1945. There are still guided tours being held today. To sum up the almost three-hundred-year history of these brick corridors, the prison was located here for less than 50 years, and the dungeons you saw at the

beginning of the corridor were used for approximately the first five years of the prison's operation. The casemates have been the oldest tour route of Špilberk Castle with over 140 years in operation. This is many times longer than the prison that Joseph II founded here in 1783.



DIRECTION OF THE TOUR



DIRECTION OF THE TOUR



FRONT MOAT

- 1 Plan of the moats and casemates - conversion to a prison (1784)
- A B SOUTHERN CASEMATES / (the so-called Leopoldian tract)

A LOWER FLOOR (1742) – not used for prison purposes

2 The remains of a drainage gutter from the rear moat, connected to drainage shaft under the southern wall of the front moat.

B UPPER FLOOR – converted into a prison in 1785, used since approx. 1790

3 Room for prison guards (1785) – installation

4 Cell for 29 prisoners (1798) – installation

The tiled stove was heated from the preserved hearths in the corridor

5 Cell for 23 prisoners

6 The upper casemates were partially illuminated by daylight coming through the skylight shafts during the day, and by five oil lamps in the corridor at night

7 Bread ovens (1745), later demolished and their chimneys extended into ventilation shafts (1805)

8 Cell for 27 prisoners (1798) – the damaged wall of the corridor was mostly removed in 1980. In 1785–90 there were 31 wooden cells for life convicts here and in the previous two cells.

9 A reminder of one of the most famous Špilberk legends. The carved brickwork in the wall (built in 1785) served to create the nonsensical legend of walled-up unfaithful women with water dripping on their heads. The idea and its installation were created at the beginning of the 20th century.

10 The cell for 50 prisoners (1798) – the largest one at Špilberk – still spans the full width of the casemate corridor even after the modifications to the prison. Plank beds were located on both long sides, the stove in the back corner was heated together with the stove of the guards from the adjacent chamber.

11 Room for guards – entrance to the rear moat (1785)

REAR MOAT

12 Remains of a ground-floor prison building (built in October 1783). Cell for 8 prisoners, an anteroom with a hearth and a room for two guards

13 The foundations of a two-floor prison building (1st half of the 18th century)

On the ground floor: cells for 16, 22 and 8 prisoners, a room for two guards and two anterooms with hearths (1783–84). The first and second floors were originally intended for the so-called state prisoners and people of higher status. In 1783, the second floor housed the apartment of the chief prevost (prison warden), a room for guards and three rooms for state prisoners, two of which were converted into a shoemaker's and tailor's workshop in 1785. On the first floor, in addition to the room for the subprevost and two guards, there were also four cells for a total of 28 prisoners (1783), that were converted into a prison hospital in June 1784. The change of its functions reduced the capacity of the building from 80 prisoners (1783) to 45 (1785). Most of the famous prisoners from before 1783 were probably imprisoned on the upper floor of this building, including Baron Trenck, the colonel of the Pandurs, who died at Špilberk in 1749.

The building was rebuilt in the 1st half of the 19th century; after 1850 it was demolished and the moat was filled up to the floor level of the upper floor of the casemates. During an archaeological survey, the

Note: Dates in brackets indicate the year of foundation or first written mention. Installation refers to a museum installation that is an attempt to reconstruct the original condition based on conserved sources.

foundations of the building were discovered and the moat was lowered to its original level (1991).

C D NORTHERN CASEMATES / (the so-called Josephian tract)

C UPPER FLOOR – rebuilt as a prison in 1784, restored in 1992.

The prison corridor conserved its original form from 1742, the second corridor was divided by walls into guards' rooms, cells and anterooms with a hearth

14 Guards' room with an anteroom.

15 Skylights – they were bricked up before 1880 and the above-ground part was demolished. Partially restored to its original form (1992).

16 The tiled stove was heated from the hearths in the hallways, using beech wood.

17 Cell for 21 prisoners (1784)

18 Cell for 18 prisoners

19 The opening between the upper and lower floors may originally have been used for transporting stored material. It was not used at the time of the prison's existence and was probably bricked up. Restored in 1880.

20 Cell for 12 prisoners – installation

21 Cell for 22 prisoners – installation

22 Prison kitchen (1784)

A corresponding area of the night watchtower (walled entrance) was destroyed in 1809 when part of the Špilberk fortification was blown up by French troops by the orders of the Emperor Napoleon.

23 Cell for 33 prisoners – the largest one. Later modifications have been conserved here, i.e., the cross-walls from 1833, where only corrections were made from the original cells for short-term harsh punishment, and the additionally created passages for visitors. Evidence of the structural changes (1833, 1880, after 1921, 1945, etc.), that the casemates went through.

24 The staircase connecting the casemates with the north wing of the castle was built for visitors between 1939–1941 in the place of the skylight.

25 Room for guards (1784)

D LOWER FLOOR – reconstruction of the Josephian cells (1784–90), German army modifications into an air-raid shelter (1945)

26 Room for guards (1785), later used as a mortuary.

27 Structural modifications of the German army into air-raid shelters for the Špilberk garrison from the end of World War II (winter 1944–45).

28 The so-called Josephian cells, wooden chambers for the worst criminals sentenced to life imprisonment, made by order of Joseph II (September to December 1784) and removed in May 1790 by decision of Leopold II. On the lower floor there were 29 of them in 1785 (reconstruction from 1992 according to original sources).

29 Room for guards (1785)

30 Torso of a switchboard for a Siemens & Halske telephone exchange in a German army air raid shelter.

