

COMPLETION OF THE RESTAURATION OF THE SALON DE DIANE

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Communiqué de presse

After eighteen months of conservation works, the Château de Versailles has completed the restoration of the Salon de Diane, located in the King's State Apartment. Launched in October 2024 with the restoration of the painted and sculpted ceilings, the project continued from late 2025 with a second phase focusing on the room's walls, including marble revetments, woodwork, metal elements and gilding. The decorative scheme has now regained its coherence and legibility.

A major room in the enfilade of the King's State Apartment, the Salon de Diane occupied a strategic position in the ceremonial life of Versailles during the reign of Louis XIV: the Ambassador's Staircase, the principal and most formal access to the State Apartment, led directly into it. Dedicated to the goddess of the hunt and the night, the room is distinguished by the richness of its decoration dating from the 1670s: polychrome marble revetments, paintings set into the walls, a monumental fireplace, carved and gilded doors and windows, as well as bronze trophies and ornamental features. The painted ceiling depicts Diana in its central medallion, while the surrounding coves are adorned with scenes from Antiquity.

Between October 2024 and September 2025, a first phase of conservation work focused on the ceiling (comprising a central tondo and four coves separated by carved and gilded decoration), whose paintings suffered from significant issues of adhesion, flaking, surface soiling and extensive overpainting that obscured the original compositions. The second phase concerned the walls. The four overdoors, dedicated to Diana and painted by Claude II Audran and Gabriel Blanchard, were also restored.

The marble revetments of the Salon de Diane are a remarkable testimony to the harmony characteristics of the Louis XIV style, combining with great refinement several varieties of stone, including Sarrancolin marble, Brocatelle de Tortosa, white marble, green Campan and red Campan marble. These elements underwent extensive conservation treatment: deteriorated mastics and joints were removed, cracked or weakened sections consolidated, marble inlays (fills intended to imitate marble and compensate for losses) repaired, before new joints were applied and a final



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polishing restored the surfaces' brilliance an depth. The fireplace also benefited from comprehensive treatment, including its mantelpiece, hearth slab and metal elements.

The woodwork was likewise restored, with repairs to the preparatory layers and gilding. The gilded surfaces, which had become uneven as a result of earlier interventions, were cleaned and harmonised using traditional techniques. Ironwork and gilded bronze elements were restored and reinstalled, as were the metal frames that structure the decorative scheme.

This campaign also provided an opportunity to undertake stratigraphic and historical studies of the painted elements on the doors and windows, refining knowledge of the room's successive decorative phases and helping to establish a restoration methodology that respects the authenticity of the space.

Conducted without interrupting the visitor route, the project has now been completed, followed by a refurnishing campaign that notably included the reinstallation of Gian Lorenzo Bernini's bust of Louis XIV in the position selected by the Sun King himself in 1684.

Today, the Salon de Diane once again presents a harmonious ensemble in which the richness of the marbles, the subtlety of the paintings and the brilliance of the gilding are brought back into balance. This restoration forms part of the conservation and transmission policy pursued by the Château de Versailles to preserve the integrity of the Kings's State Apartment and reveal the full power of its decorative programme.

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