

The Thermae Constantin were built in the 4th century AD also known as the 2nd golden age of Arles.

The Baths of Constantin have been officially a world heritage site since 1981.

The Thermae of Constantin.

The restoration of the Baths of Constantin began during the early 19th century, an arlesian architect lead a campaign for the restoration of the Baths and the idea of opening them up for public to view. In 1981 the Vault of the tepidarium cracked a few centimetres apart , it was then integrated back together . About 6 years on from this restoration work began on caldarium, the pillars were still in place but parts of the swimming pool were repaired. (See fig 2)



Figure 1, front exterior of the baths, Arles guide.

Most of the Roman baths built in the 3rd-4th century were found to be abandoned, neglected or even demolished apart from the Baths of Constantin.

The Baths of Constantine were an exception due to the fact that the likely imperial links of urban baths which were built during the 4th century.

At the start of the middle ages the ruins of the baths were left for refuge which were mainly used by stray animals. Even after the fall of the Roman Empire the baths were still in operation.

At the start of the 16th century Arlesian scholars were studying the remains of the stone and brick, in which they found neighbouring houses, only to discover the monument of a palace of the Emperor Constantine.



Fig 2, Set of pillars , Arles guide

In 1997 the medieval wall which was a part of the western part of the baths which ended up in a Aspe and a foyer.

There is evidence that there were 3 thermal parts of the Baths just like every Roman Baths this must have included the Caladarium,frigidariu and Tepiaarium. These sections were identified during the erection of the Obelisk in Arles in 1675.

In order to protect them from the weather that can hugely impact the building, the remains of the hypocaust were protected by the roof of tiles.

The presentation of the Thermae of Constantin is relatively untouched, various amounts of plants are surrounding the baths which could in fact be damaging the original brick causing parts of it to erode.

This also includes what appears to be the tourist information desk or a temporary building that stands out between the Roman architecture. The aspect of this ticket booth is unsympathetic, out of place and unnecessary as it blocks out the natural beauty of the Roman architecture surrounding it. (See fig 3)



Fig 3, ticket box. Arles guide.



Fig 5, interior of Baths. Arles guide

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The thermae of Constantin also used to be named the Palace of Constantin.



Figure 4, Baths of Constantin, Esteve 2016.

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