



## GARDENY CASTLE

TEMPLAR KNIGHTS LLEIDA

### THE MONUMENTAL COMPLEX

The Gardeny monumental complex is one of the most outstanding legacies of Templar architecture built in Catalonia during the second half of the 12th century.

Profound alterations were carried out between the 17th and 18th centuries, trans-

forming the original medieval appearance of the complex to meet new defensive requirements following the introduction of artillery (with walls flanked by bastions and surrounded by wide open areas, ditches or retaining walls); nevertheless, numerous features of the sovereign enclosure have been preserved.

Today, the remains of what was once an imposing fortress are defined by a walled

perimeter flanked by towers, enclosing a magnificent inner courtyard around which the various buildings are arranged.

On the one hand stands the residential tower, a solid two-storey structure that brought together several spaces: storage areas, living quarters and the keep. On the other is the Romanesque church of Santa María de Gardeny, a unique building that was once the focus of great devotion and that still

preserves fragments of mural painting, contrasting with the architectural sobriety of the temple. This pictorial ensemble is of great historical significance, as together with that of the church of Sant Andreu de Cal Pallot in Puig-reig (Berguedà), it constitutes the only surviving examples of mural painting associated with the Order of the Temple in Catalonia. One of the fragments was restored in 2016 and is preserved in the Archaeological Archive of Lleida.

## TEMPLARS OF LLEIDA

Welcome to the Castle of Gardeny, a singular site that recounts a fascinating episode of our history, closely linked to one of the most enigmatic religious communities: the knights of the Order of the Temple.

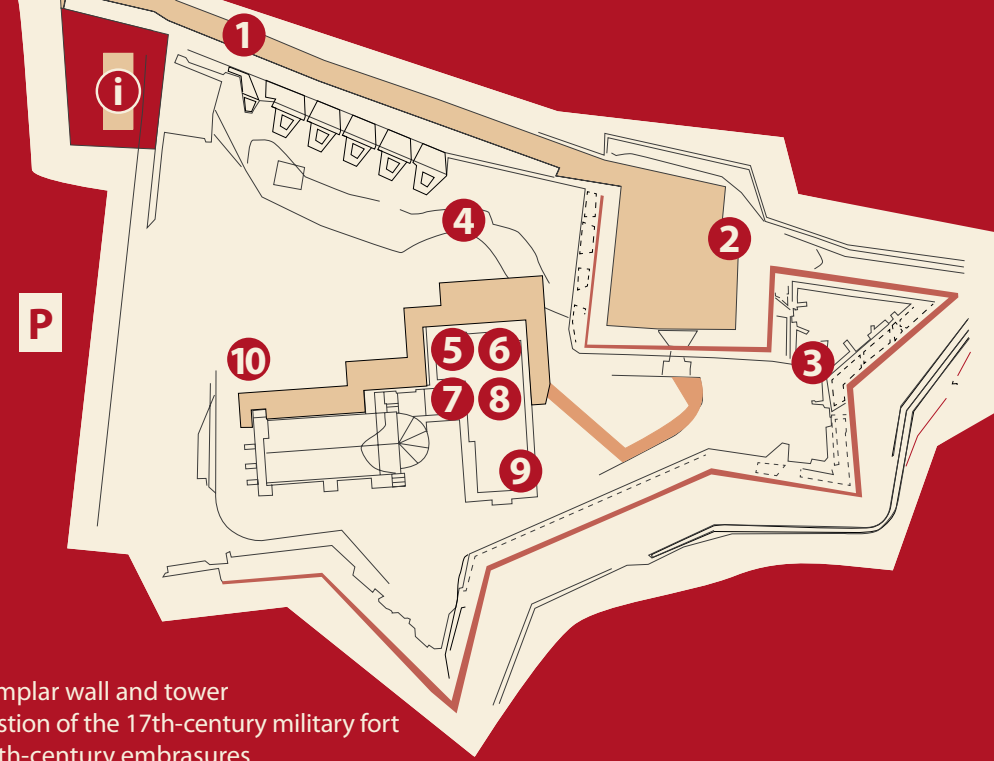
In 1149, the Templars received several properties as compensation for the assistance

they provided during the siege and conquest of the city of Lleida, among them the strategic hill of Gardeny, an elevation that had served as a recurring military encampment since Roman times. It was during the second half of the 12th century that the Order of the Temple built a magnificent conventual complex here, which would become the seat of one of the most powerful Templar commanderies of the Crown of Aragon.

## THE TEMPLAR HOUSE OF GARDENY

The first known reference to the Commandery of Gardeny dates from 1156, with Brother Pere de Cartellà— a member of the nobility who is thought to have taken an active part in the siege to liberate the city— as its first commander. Between the 12th and 14th centuries, the House of

Gardeny amassed such extensive assets that the community reorganised itself, creating new posts and establishing new commanderies, such as those of Corbins or Barbens, to manage the different sectors. As a result of this growth, the House of Gardeny experienced its period of greatest splendour in the 13th century and became one of the Order of the Temple's principal centres of decision-making.



1. Templar wall and tower
2. Bastion of the 17th-century military fort
3. 17th-century embrasures
4. Medieval conventual enclosure
5. Underground mine
6. Cellar of the Templar House
7. Keep
8. Refectory / chamber
9. Terrace / viewpoint
10. Church of Santa Maria de Gardeny

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