



## CASTELLO di GABBIANO

ESTABLISHED 1124

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# History

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In the land survey presented by Tommaso Soderini in 1464 to the 'Officials' of the Land Registry of the Republic of Florence, it was noted that wine and oil were the most highly prized produce of the estate.

The construction of the cellars, whose vaulted structure demonstrates their use for wine production, was begun in 1124. In that epoch, the castle belonged to one of the most important banking families of Florence, the Bardi, who, in the second half of the thirteenth century, began the extension of the fortress by building perimeter walls and battlements in the typical Guelph style of the era.

The castle remained in the possession of the Bardi until the early part of the 15th century, when it passed to the Soderini family, one of the most politically influential families in Florence. It was the Soderini who were responsible for the conversion of the turreted manor house of Gabbiano in Fattoria, already completed by the late 15th century, according to the description in the "land survey" presented in 1480 by the father of Pier Soderini, Tommaso, to the Land Registry "Officials" of the Land Registry of the Republic of Florence.

In the course of the century, new buildings were added on several occasions, as can be deduced from the stonework, which reveals various phases of development, until it was converted into a large quadrilateral building, which also formed a kind of private fortalice, being furnished with four cylindrical turrets reinforcing the corners.

It was while in the possession of the Soderini that the Castle was converted into a structure more like the present one, with the construction in 1505 of round towers at the four corners of the castle, displaying French architectural influence. When the Soderini's struggle against the Medici led to them being declared rebels in the 16th century and banned from Florence, the Castle was abandoned for a long time. Only in the 17th century, when the Soderini were able to return to their homeland, was the Castle given new life, as the inscription on a sandstone plaque over the entrance door informs us.

Under the two coats of arms of the Soderini, the following is inscribed: "FRANC. SODERINUS SENAT.GASP.F.RURIS HUIUS IN FAMIGLIA RESTITUTOR SUB.A MDCLII" Above the coats of arms lies the motto that was dictated by Pier Soderini on the occasion of his election as gonfalonier, or standard bearer, which reads "IUS UT PALMA FLO" ("Iustus ut palma florebit").

From the 19th century onwards, the families who owned the property carried out various restoration works, fully respecting the features of the architectural complex of the Castle. In the complex of buildings annexed to the castle, there is the neo-classical style private chapel which was built in the 19th century under the ownership of the Del Turco family, according to an inscription inside the little church dating from the restoration works in 1957 by the Lemmi.

*Ivano Reali*