

History – Timeline of the castle ruins

- c. 1250

Peter von Resti, the first knight mentioned in the records. Construction of the Resti tower.
- 1275

Sir Werner the Elder von Resti, the bailiff of the Haslital valley, sealed the document of alliance between the Hasli territory and the city of Bern.
- c. 1300

First heightening of the Resti tower.
- 1333

Sir Werner the Younger von Resti, married to Katharina von Kramburg and a liege of the Habsburgs and bailiff of the Haslital valley, as were his ancestors before him, mediated between the Chapter of Augustinian Canons at Interlaken and the people of Obwalden.
- 1334

Werner drew up the protection contract between the people of the Haslital valley and the city of Bern.
- 1339

Werner came to the aid of the Bernese at the battle of Laupen.
- 1359

Sir Heinrich von Resti, the last of his dynasty, sold “my house and my household situated at Hasle...” Was this perhaps a reference to the castle?
- c. 1400

Probably in the context of the expansion of the trade route between Grimsel and Gries, the Resti tower was fortified and a defence storey and wooden brattices were added.
- c. 1430

Repair work on the brattices was carried out.
- 1617

The official place of execution of the Hasli territory was moved next to Resti Castle.
- 1834

Disbanding of the old Hasli territory. Resti Castle was sold to private individuals.
- c. 1840

The castle belonged to Melchior Rytz von Stein.
- 1904

Robert Roesti, a Montreux banker, bought the castle.
- 1915/16

First restoration under Emanuel J. Propper from Bienne. Cement joints, tufa imitation jambs, new battlements with four instead of three merlons each.
- 1931

The Meiringen Charitable Association purchased the castle.
- 1950

Plans to restore the castle and create a Hasli Museum were not realised.
- 1963/64

Renewed fruitless attempt to restore the castle.
- 2002

Architectural survey carried out by the Archaeology Service of Canton Bern.
- 2004

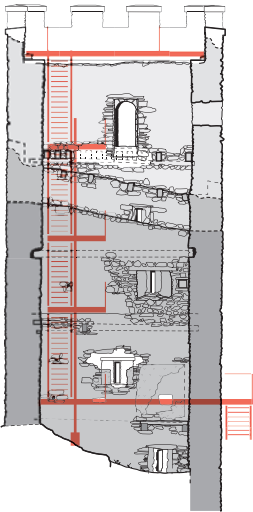
Restoration carried out by the owners, and the cantonal (Archaeology Service/ lottery fund) and federal authorities with support from private donors.

The 2004 restoration

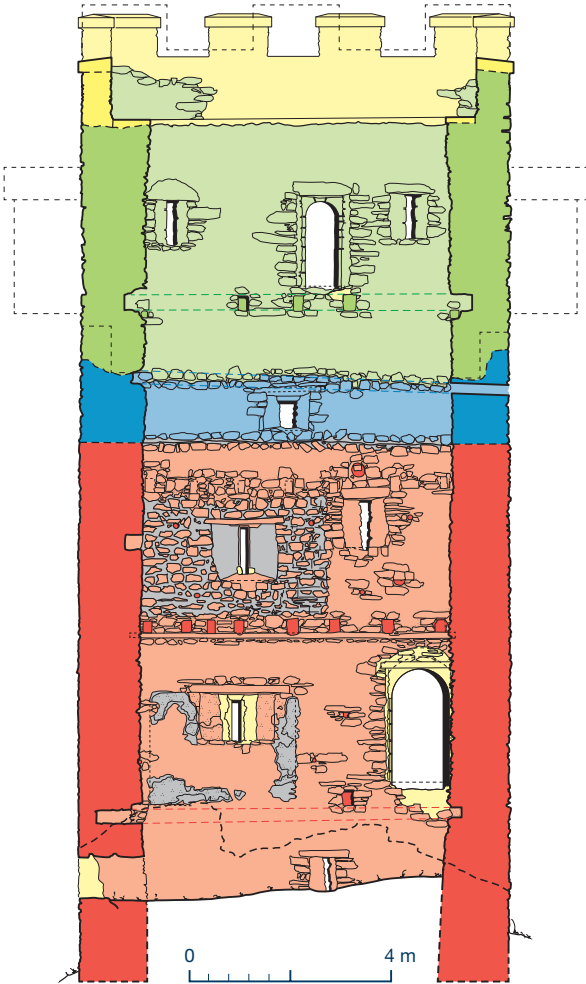
The walls were in relatively good condition before the restoration. Only the joints were deeply weathered, so deeply, in fact, that many stones had come loose; this, however, only came to light once the scaffolding had been erected! The capstones had also become leaky so that water was seeping into the masonry which led to frost shattering in the winter.

Having carried out a thorough architectural examination and building survey, the restoration project comprised new battlement capping and repair work on the lime mortar joints. Following the construction of a steel staircase, a new viewing platform was created and a better insight gained into the numerous preserved medieval features.

Below: Cross-section of the tower showing the new steel staircase and viewing platform.



Above: Viewing platform with battlements.



Architectural survey of the tower with its various building phases. Sc. 1:150.

- original tower from the period around 1250.
- first addition of a storey around 1300.
- second addition of a storey around 1390-1400.
- medieval(?) wall plaster.
- restoration in 1915/16.

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MEIRINGEN
Resti Castle ruins

Restoration: Meiringen Charitable Association, Archaeological Service of Canton Bern, Federal Office of Culture. Responsible: Architektengemeinschaft Banholzer/Huber/Thöni Meiringen; Richard Giese, Ghelma AG Meiringen; Urs Zumbrunn Kirchberg; Martin Portmann ADB.

Bibliography: Daniel Gutscher, Die Burgruine Resti in Meiringen. Zur bauarchäologischen Untersuchung und Restaurierung 2004. Mittelalter – Moyen Age – Medioevo – Temp medieval. Zeitschrift des Schweizerischen Burgenvereins 10, 2005/1, 1–13.

Picture credits: Cover and viewing platform: ADB, Daniel Kissling; architectural survey and reconstructions: ADB, Max Stöckli; cross-section of tower and ground-plans: ADB, Marc Müller; painting by Gottfried Stähly-Rychner: private collection; votive tablet: Heimathaus Schärding, Upper Austria.

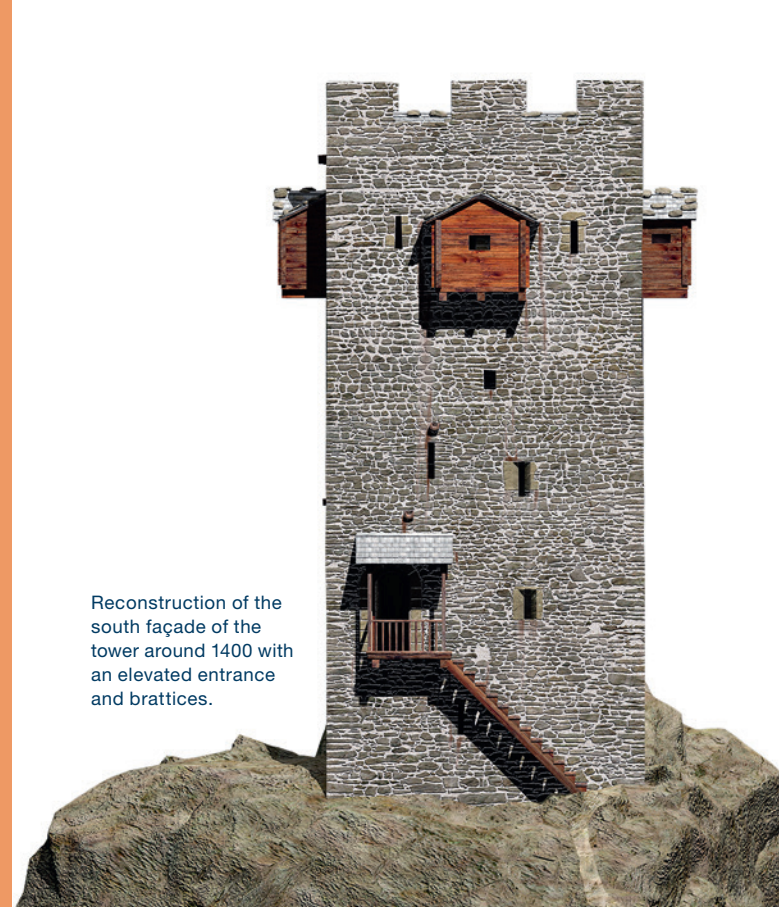
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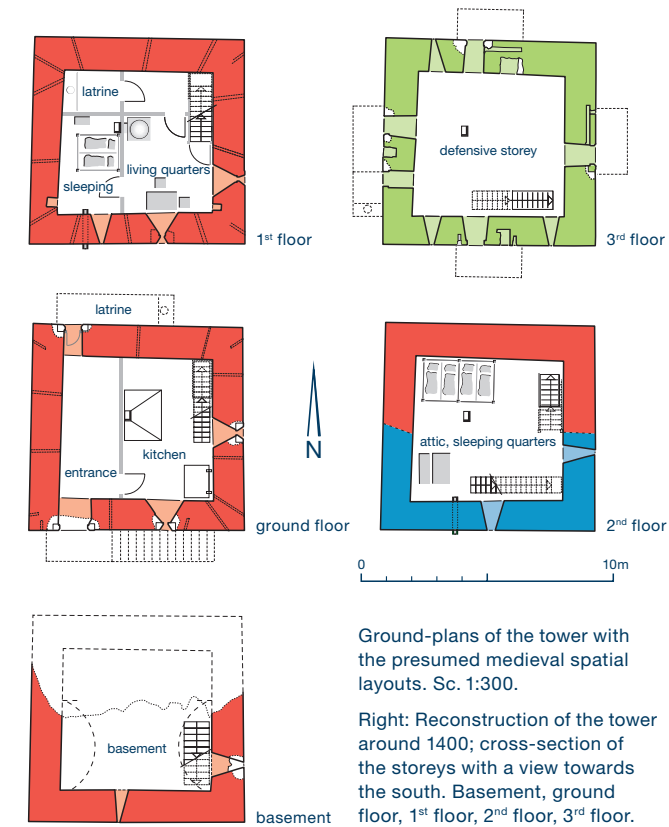


The Resti ruins are situated on a mighty cliff fall above Meiringen. The castle was built in the 13th century by the von Resti dynasty, who were part of the noble ruling classes of the Haslital valley, as a residence and centre of their manor. From 1400 onwards it was a fortified watchtower on the trade route between Grimsel and Gries. In the 19th century the ruins were a popular motif of romantic landscape paintings often bought by tourists, typically showing mountains, pastoral scenes and ruins.

Gottfried Stähly-Rychner, Meiringen before the fire of 1891, private collection.



Reconstruction of the south façade of the tower around 1400 with an elevated entrance and battices.



concealed within the walls and battlements, and which sloped towards the west for draining purposes. The tower was thus probably regarded as impregnable. On each side, a round-arched door opened onto a wooden brattice, which consisted of a log construction resting on cantilever beams and was covered with a small saddle roof. These brattices are known to have been repaired around 1430.

A tower castle in the Haslital valley

Located to the east of Meiringen the Resti ruins are the predominating castle complex of the Haslital valley. It was at the centre of the local manorial system and served to protect the traffic routes within the valley plain and as far as the Grimsel, Joch, Susten, Grosse Scheidegg and Brünig Passes. The only part of the castle still visible today is its tower, perched daringly on a mighty cliff fall that must have broken away from the “Miliflue” rock face at some stage in the past.

On a south-westerly facing surface, the approximately 19 m high Resti tower stands on a square ground-plan of 8 by 8 metres. It is not known whether the Resti ruins were a tower castle or whether a curtain wall and adjoining buildings once existed. The complex belongs to the Meiringen Charitable Association and is under the protection of the cantonal and federal authorities.

The core of today’s tower was built around 1250. The lintels and window sills preserved in the masonry have been dated to this period by dendrochronology. However, there was probably a predecessor building, because the first floor still contained timber components, i.e. remnants of floor joists and a lintel of the south window, which belonged to an earlier structure that dates back to the period around 1180. This



Tower with elevated battices. Votive tablet by Bernhard von Seyboldsdorf, 1499. Heimathaus Schärding, Upper Austria.

12th century tower stood either in the same location or, more likely, in the village. We know that many local nobles lived in timber-built estates in the villages up to the 13th century and only then moved their residences out of the settlements and onto elevated locations. This was not linked with a greater need for protection, but rather served to highlight their status by separating themselves not only socially but also physically from their subjects.

In 1250 the tower was only about 9 m high and covered by a wooden monopitched roof. In its interior, over a small cellar, was the entrance level with a kitchen, corridor, latrine gallery and watch balcony. On the first floor, in the south-eastern corner was the living room. This room, which in larger castles would have been called a knights’ or great hall, was quite modest and very little would have separated it from the living quarters of an Alpine herdsman. A closed room (probably the lord’s bedroom) and a corridor (with a latrine)

completed the layout of this storey. The next upper floor was the attic. Due to its sloping roof beams, one could only stand upright on the northern side of the attic. This was probably where the servants slept and where stores were kept.

Around 1300 a storey was added, whose function, however, remains unknown. The roof was still monopitched and sloped towards the south. In contrast to its predecessor, however, it was lowered and concealed behind the battlements, and thus no longer visible from the outside.

Yet another addition was built in 1390–1400 and consisted of a further storey above a fireproof defence platform, which provided protection against the dreaded incendiary arrows. The platform consisted of beams set very closely together which carried a heavy floor probably made up of floor boards and stone slabs set in lime mortar. This construction was covered with a saddle roof which was