



Prince Eugene of Savoy

STRATEGIST, COLLECTOR, PATRON OF ARCHITECTURE

Prince Eugene of Savoy

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Foreword

Klaus Panholzer,
CEO Schönbrunn Group

2025 is a year packed with anniversaries for the Schloss Hof Estate: exactly three hundred years ago, Prince Eugene of Savoy purchased a large estate in the Marchfeld. It took only a few years for him to reconstruct the unimposing castle of that time to attain its present magnificence.

The Schloss Hof Estate and Schloss Niederweiden – which joined it a short time later – have been part of the Schönbrunn Group for ten years now. Both anniversaries offer excellent grounds for celebration, with a versatile programme and a special exhibition devoted to the founder of Schloss Hof.

Prince Eugene of Savoy is frequently associated with his military achievements against the Ottomans and the French. But the Savoyan was more than just a military commander. His diverse interests and uncommon passion for collecting – which is reflected for example in his voluminous library – will have pride of place in the special exhibition.

As commissioner of Schloss Hof he acted – in today’s sense – in a sustainable way by skilfully integrating the existing building into the future structural planning. Just as important to him as the resplendent interior design of the palace were the establishment of an estate farm and the layout of the spacious gardens. Schloss Hof was the nobleman’s last major architectural project, and he used it as his personal retreat, where he could recuperate from the stress of a military leader’s existence and enjoy his twilight years.

Twenty years or so after Prince Eugene’s death, Empress Maria Theresa acquired the estate and made Schloss Hof into a major cultural and political hub, which, down to the present day, has always embodied the history and glamour of this epoch.

The Schönbrunn Group’s extensive investments into the overall ensemble of the palace, the gardens and the estate farm have ensured that it shines forth once more in all its Baroque glory. And so the Schloss Hof Estate has yet again become a location steeped in history for the recreation and enjoyment of the whole family.

In particular, I wish to thank the authors of this book, which is being published for the special exhibition “Eugene of Savoy – The Man Behind the Prince” dedicated to the 300th anniversary of Schloss Hof Estate in 2025.

And I wish you much enjoyment on the trail to discover Prince Eugene and the Schloss Hof Estate!

Best regards,
Klaus Panholzer



Architectural History of Schloss Hof

“BUILT WITH EXTRAORDINARY
CARE AND DELICATESSE”

Katrin Harter

The year 2025 is a very special one for the Schloss Hof Estate. Namely, in 1725 – exactly three hundred years ago – the then 62-years-old Prince Eugene of Savoy-Carignan resolved to establish a country seat and estate to be built in the midst of far-reaching hunting grounds.¹ He found his dream location close to the confluence of the rivers Danube and Morava (March in German), about 45 kilometres east of the Imperial Residence City of Vienna and not far from Pressburg (Bratislava), at the time the capital of Hungary. Here he hired a crew of artists and hundreds of workers to create a residence which, despite later alterations, has retained its enchanting Baroque charm (fig. 1.1). This publication is devoted to extraordinary aspects of Prince Eugene as a person and to his rural residence Schloss Hof in particular, which he made what it is today – one of the most beautiful Baroque ensembles in Europe.

At first a retreat in mind,
then “luxury resort” in kind

In the 1720s Prince Eugene was one of the most influential personalities of the Habsburg Monarchy. Practically everything he had dreamed of on his ar-

←

Fig. 1.1

View of the overall ensemble of Schloss Hof

rival in Vienna (1683) had come true – wealth, patronage of the arts, political power and influence. The only thing lacking in his collection of properties was a retreat for recuperation and contemplation far removed from courtly society. And so, Prince Eugene succumbed once more to the “*teufelsbauwurm*”² – “devilish building tick” – a word coined by his friend and likewise famed as commissioner of buildings, Imperial Vice Chancellor Friedrich Karl von Schönborn (1674–1746). The prince acquired the high-ground, four-wing Renaissance castle *Hoff an der March* (fig. 1.3) and commissioned his “architect in residence” Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt (1668–1745) (fig. 1.2) to reconstruct it in several phases into a spacious country seat consisting of palace, gardens and estate farm.³ As had been proven several times in the past, the ingenuity of the architect was now put to the test yet again to adapt the existing structure.⁴



Fig. 1.2

Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt.

Oil painting by Jacob van Schuppen, c. 1720.

(Zamek Królewski na Wawelu – Państwowe Zbiory Sztuki /
Wawel Royal Castle–State Art Collection, Inv.No. 943)

Fig. 1.3

Hoff an der March.

Engraving by Georg Matthäus Vischer, 1672.

(LB NÖ, Sign. KU 1/O/144)

A big palace for a “little prince”

After a brief planning phase, major reconstructions began as early as 1726.⁵ In the same year Prince Eugene enlarged his property with the addition of the neighbouring domain of Engelhartstetten with the chateau that was later to be named Schloss Niederweiden.⁶ Originally, he merely envisioned a “*tusculum rurale*”⁷, that is, a comparatively intimate retreat. It was not intended as a major project, but, as building progressed, the ideas of the commissioner and of his architect became more and more elaborate and thus ended up as a palatial complex covering almost fifty hectares. The decision to settle just here in the most easterly part of the Marchfeld was also associated with a special subtext: the region near the so-called *Hainburger Pforte* – a natural gate in the Danube valley at the eastern border of Austria – had been fought over for centuries; forming a narrow valley between the Small Carpathians and the foothills of the Leitha Mountains, it was for a long time a bottleneck for enemy troops coming from the East. From now on it would be hailed as a haven where art and culture could flourish once more.

The first phase of the planned reconstructions affected the castle and the immediate vicinity. Two new longitudinal wings were added to the existing castle at the west. It is certain that financial considerations were not uppermost in motivating the commissioner and his architect to keep the existing building stock. The awareness of inheriting an old established domain must have been far more decisive, if we keep in mind that in Austria Prince Eugene could not resort to a family seat like other members of the nobility. This extension offered not only extra residential space, but also included the *Ehrenhof* – the Cour d’Honneur – as a spacious and prestigious entrance area. The palace, later painted in hues of yellow and white and with green shutters, featured a main entrance marked by a cartouche with the Savoyan coat of arms. The high, tiled roof rounded off the harmonious overall appearance (fig. 1.4).

Parallel to the exterior remodelling, Hildebrandt adapted the interior rooms in accordance with his patron’s requirements. The ground floor mostly accommodated all kitchens and personnel and utility rooms, but also state rooms such as the Billiard Room and – as connection between palace and gardens –

a *sala terrena*, a garden hall. Situated on the first floor were the prestigious state rooms, a banqueting hall and the chapel.⁸ In contrast to the custom for new Baroque buildings, the banqueting hall is not arranged central to the garden but is situated in the south wing outside the symmetry axis. This special feature of Schloss Hof was due to the integration of the existing building stock.⁹

The constructional and interior design work was completed at the latest in 1731, six years after Prince Eugene's purchase. He now received friends and acquaintances regularly "during exceptionally fine summer weather, at Your delightful chateau de plaisir in Hoff [Schloss Hof], which is now finished and ready."¹⁰

Among other projects, the existing terraces surrounding the palace were planned as a garden with parterre areas. Two oblong stables and coach houses were constructed on the top first terrace towards the west. The two new wings of the *Ehrenhof* and the design of the top terrace both reflected the eventual reorientation of the overall complex, away from the original north-south towards the new west-east main axis. This anticlockwise turnaround of ninety degrees would be emphasised even more in subsequent reconstruction phases by the sloping form of the terrain towards the east (fig. 1.5).

An exemplary estate farm

Simultaneously with the initial reconstruction work on the castle, several alterations were made that affected the ancillary buildings, the most striking being the new construction of a spaciouly planned estate farm by adapting sections of the earlier building. Viewed from the palace, a central, single storey building with raised central clock section now formed the new front façade of the *Meierhoff* farm building. In front of this main entrance to the estate farm, architect Hildebrandt incorporated into the sloping terrain a decorative, rectangular basin surrounded by a supporting wall, thus skilfully and artistically offsetting the height difference between palace and garden (fig. 1.6). Two large glasshouses were built at the side of the reconstructed entrance to the estate farm. The walled gardens in front would in future accommodate the most val-



Fig. 1.4
The Imperial Chateau de Plaisance Hof, view from the west.
Oil painting by Bernardo Bellotto, 1759/60.
(KHM, Inv.No GG 1673)

Fig. 1.5
The first stage of planning with the wings towards the west.
Detail from the *Mappa der hochfürstlich Printz Eugenischen Herrschaft Hof an der March [...]* by Abraham Maass, 1726.
(ÖNB Wien, KS, Inv.No. Rolle 101)



Fig. 1.6
The estate farm ensemble of Schloss Hof.
Watercolour, pen drawing by Johann Georg Windpässinger, 1727/29 (detail).
(ÖNB Wien, KS, Inv.No. K I 104.049)



Fig. 1.7
Johann Christoph Mader,
Court Sculptor of Prince Eugene.
Oil painting, anonymous, 1745/60.
(Belvedere, Wien, Inv.No. 6598)



uable of the prince's plants during the warm seasons, while the conservatories would house them during winter. Adjacent to the exterior of these orangery gardens were two laterally reversed square buildings on either side at ground level, each with an interior courtyard, also a pond for each at the rear. These buildings accommodated a hunting room, an inn with beer brewery and a bakery. The rear areas of the estate farm contained facilities for bustard hunting and for field guards, stables, a dairy (so-called "Schweizerei") and a large granary.¹¹ This new, larger dimensioning of the strictly symmetrical estate farm resulted in a hub of activity that was intended not solely for provisioning the palace, but also for large-scale agricultural production.

A Paradise Garden

"This garden could not be more beautifully designed in this spot,"¹² remarked a visitor approvingly on seeing the far-flung terrain in 1737, with the garden as the highlight of the last area to be laid out. In the final plan amendment around 1729/30, Prince Eugene had the idea of adding a prestigious garden. And so, the architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt and the inspector of Eugene's gardens Anton Zinner (1676–1751)¹³ began planning the layout of the slope at the east side of the palace; as early as 1730, six hundred workers started operations on terracing the terrain.¹⁴ The work was based on principles of the French Baroque garden as a strictly geometric garden on several levels with arboreal avenues, parterres and bosquets (fig. 1.1). The central main axis was accentuated by fountains gushing over the terrain, their gay water sprays enlivening the strict planning of the terraces. Besides the element of water, another design feature enhanced the Baroque garden: numerous stone vases and sculptures of mythological scenes were placed not only as decoration but also to convey specific messages. Directed by Prince Eugene's sculptor Johann Christoph Mader (1697–1761) (fig. 1.7), a figural programme was created that on one hand paid tribute to the art-loving lord of the manor, and on the other evoked the influences of the elements on nature.¹⁵ Thus, in the garden today we encounter four monumental reclining figures portraying the seasons, and, in one of the two figural groups at the great cascade, we can espy Mars the god of war being crowned by Fama (goddess of fame), while he triumphs over the figure of Envy (a female with serpentine hair) lying at his feet (fig. 1.8).

Prince Eugene would not live to see the completion of his garden on the Schloss Hof Estate. However, before he died, he made use of the estate whenever the time allowed to celebrate birthdays, alone, or accompanied by a small social gathering, or to hunt; or he loved – like today’s visitors – simply to escape from the humdrum of everyday life and relax. No wonder a later visitor described the view from Schloss Hof as the “*most beautiful prospect in the world across the Marchfeld, on one side all the way to Pressburg (Bratislava) and on the other to Vienna.*”¹⁶



Twenty years or so after Prince Eugene’s death, Schloss Hof and Schloss Niederweiden (purchased in 1726) together with the properties belonging to them experienced a second flowering when Maria Theresa acquired them. On her commission, both chateaux would be remodelled and given the appearance we are familiar with today (fig. 1.9).

↙ Fig. 1.8
Prince Eugene’s Glory in War.
 Sculpture group in the garden of
 Schloss Hof.
 Johann Christoph Mader and
 workshop, 1st third 18th C.



Fig. 1.9
 The palace as it is today after the addition of
 another storey by Maria Theresa

The Interiors of Schloss Hof

OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION
AND PRIVACY IN THE
"TUSCULUM RURALE"

Lieselotte Hanzl-Wachter

Should you wish to take a time trip today back to Prince Eugene's "*magnifique and beloved Hoff*",¹ it wouldn't be at all easy, because Schloss Hof now boasts very few – although important – elements from the rich and costly interior decoration and furnishings under Prince Eugene.² It wasn't so much destruction or deterioration that led to the loss of the Baroque interiors rather than new arrangements commissioned by later owners, first and foremost Maria Theresa and Emperor Joseph II. By the mid-1770s, interior designs of the time around 1730 were quite simply outdated. Prince Eugene's room ensembles were replaced by artistically distinguished, state-of-the-art interiors in Neo-classical style; nevertheless, some features did in fact survive from the time of Prince Eugene.

The Baroque interior

"[...] *Monsieur Le Fort has worked wonders with the furnishings, fireplaces and stoves*".³ This euphoric praise from aristocratic contemporaries was showered on the decorator Claude Le Fort du Plessy (1681/82–post-1754) for his designs for Schloss Hof. Besides Le Fort, the only names mentioned are the stucco



←

Fig. 2.1
Schloss Hof, ceiling, in the former audience
chamber of the residential apartment,
c. 1730 (with alterations c. 1775).

artist Alberto Camesina (1675–1756) and Santino Bussi (1664–1756). The surviving features most of all involve numerous, almost unchanged stucco works in some of the rooms on the ground floor and integrated into new decorations on the first floor, resulting in an odd mixture of Baroque ceiling design and neoclassical wall décor⁴ (fig. 2.1 & fig. 2.2).

Furnishings – classified as “*Schloss Hof Baroque*” – still exist today in various collections. Only few pieces have returned to their original location, for the room arrangements are known only in exceptional cases. Based on detailed descriptions, it was possible to identify the “moveable” furnishings, namely, seating and storage furniture, and paintings of the chapel and sacristy, and so present these rooms in their totality⁵ (fig. 2.3).

We owe our knowledge about the interior design of Schloss Hof under Prince Eugene to an inventory taken immediately after his death in April 1736, in which every single item is scrupulously registered room by room⁶ (fig. 2.4). Nearly all rooms are named, which informs about the functions and interplay of room groups and their typical furnishings. However, this does not involve the object-based registration of items with individual inventory numbers, but merely a description – for instance tables made of “*walnut*” or materials “*of white floral Beckin*”: hence a clear identification and exact room assignment of similarly described objects are not possible.

The inventory names more than two hundred paintings. Here, too, only few can be identified or assigned to a specific room.⁷ Many paintings were removed from Schloss Hof as early as the eighteenth century: a series with depictions of Prince Eugene’s victorious battles from the state apartment (*Paradeappartement*) was sold to Turin in 1741 by his niece and universal heir-ess, Anna Victoria of Savoy (1683–1763).⁸ In 1766 – Schloss Hof was in Imperial ownership at this time – the appurtenances of two rooms in the north wing were changed, in the course of which 77 paintings were transferred to Buda Castle in Budapest.⁹

Comprehensive reconstructions in the 1770s included adding another storey and remodelling the two main apartments; many furnishings “wandered” as



Fig. 2.2
Schloss Hof, ceiling in the former “Cabinet”
of the residential apartment, c. 1730.

Fig. 2.3
Schloss Hof, sacristy.



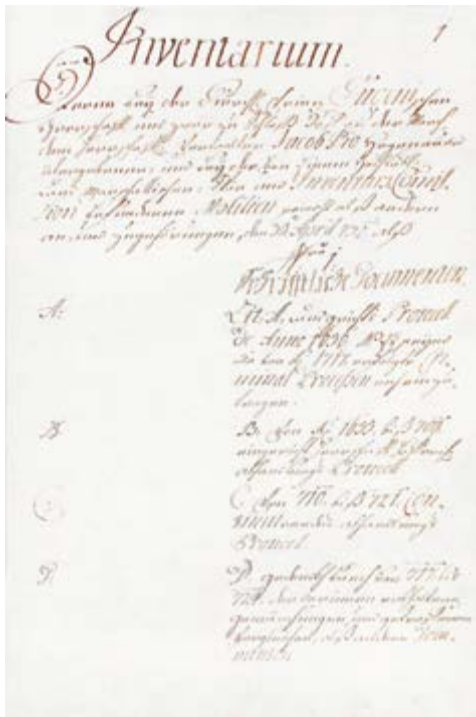


Fig. 2.4

Inventory of the furniture from Schloss Hof, 1736 (*Inventarium deren bey der durchl. Prinz Eugenischen Herrschaft und zwar zu Schloß Hoff an der March [...] befundenen Mobilien [...] den 30. April [1]736*).

(ÖStA HHStA, HA Hof an der March Bd. 38)

Fig. 2.5

Console table from Schloss Hof, c. 1730.

(BMobV, Inv.No. MD 074241)



a result onto the second floor and created space for new creations. But not everything was replaced. For instance, the solid console tables (fig. 2.5), fireguards and trestles for firewood on the first floor were kept, yielding a similarly odd mixture of old and new, like the marble fireplaces and stucco works. Here, the framing fillets with foliate and interlacing stucco were chipped off, while keeping the central motifs of the stucco ceilings with their mythological scenes (fig. 2.1).

The special features of Schloss Hof

*“the apartments are designed as thoroughly amenable, better furnished than the summer building in Vienna.”*¹⁰ It is hardly credible that Prince Eugene’s *“tusculum rurale”* might have been better furnished than his garden palace in Vienna, today named Belvedere. Yet the above-quoted Bamberg architect Johann Jakob Michael Küchel (1703–1769) visited Schloss Hof on 14 July 1737 and made what cannot be denied as an objective assessment. Unfortunately, there is no known furniture inventory for Upper and Lower Belvedere to verify this statement. Some depictions in Salomon Kleiner’s (1700–1761) work of engravings do indeed feature furniture (fig. 2.6), but in no way reflect a complete inventory.¹¹

Schloss Hof takes special place among Prince Eugene’s residences. Nowhere else were there so many guest apartments, which clearly define its function as hunting lodge and summer palace. The prince withdrew here with his circle of friends to “relax”. A total of thirteen apartments was available, seven *“Lady’s Rooms”* and six *“Cavalier’s Rooms”*.¹² The guest apartments each consisted of two sections: an anteroom – named *“Camer Jungfrau Zimmer”* (maid-in-waiting room) and also *“Quarderoba”* (wardrobe/dressing room) – with a staircase leading to an intermediate floor offering extra space for service and storage and to the larger bedroom for the guest. The main room was furnished with a four-poster bed – each *“Lady’s room”* accommodated two persons, the *“Cavalier’s rooms”* always one person – several seating items and a chest of drawers, while the anteroom availed of a commode, Spanish screen, washstand and wig stand, also plain furniture for servants.

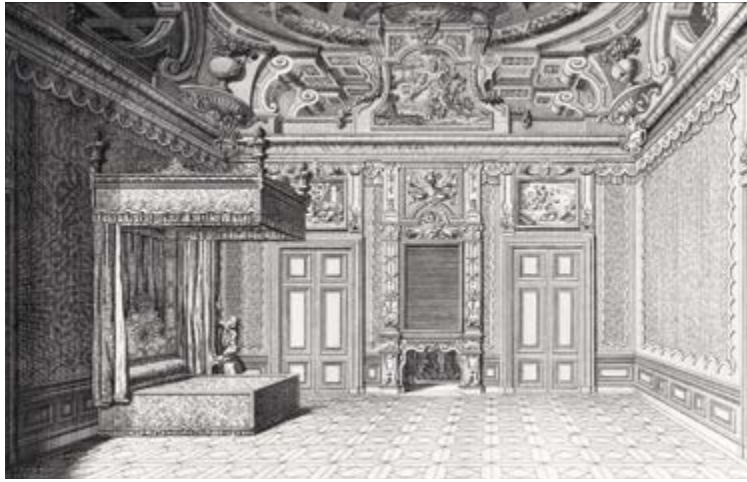


Fig. 2.6
 Bedchamber in the Lower Belvedere.
 Etching by Johann Jakob Grassmann after
 a preliminary drawing by Salomon Kleiner, 1734.
 (Belvedere Wien, Inv.No. BB_1012-096)

One of the guest rooms was striking for the size and kind of its appurtenances: above the fireplace hung a mirror, 1.72 metres tall and 1.25 metres wide; mirrors of this size were prized as special prestige objects. The wall hangings, drapery and upholstery were of painted and printed silk – as costly as those in the prince’s state apartment. In addition to the standard accoutrements named above there were two small, lacquered tables in the room. This “*Lady’s Room*” was directly connected to the salons and via these directly to the prince’s residential apartment, thus was placed at the disposal of the highest-ranking guests.

For Prince Eugene himself there were two room arrangements: a state apartment and a residential apartment. This corresponded in every way to the custom, but the final design was not so easy, for the palace was not a newly planned construction. From a contemporary point of view, numerous compromises had to be made in bowing to ceremonial and official representation. Seen together with the *in toto* enormous effort that went into reconstructing

Schloss Hof with its gardens and the estate farm, it is puzzling why a building was retained which did not fulfil the basic requirements.

Architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt (1668–1745) evidently found satisfactory solutions for Prince Eugene. Two new wings, added to the existing four-wing complex oriented towards the west, created space for extra rooms and enabled access via a Cour d’Honneur or *Ehrenhof*, rotating the main palace axis from south-north towards west-east. Banqueting hall and chapel remained in the same place, however, and were therefore unusual in placement, since they no longer lay in the main axis. To establish a solution compliant with decorous ceremonial, high-ranking guests were ushered either to the right to the Hall and state apartment¹³ or to the left to the salons and the residential apartment. One of the striking features of this arrangement was realised in the guest apartments, which were situated in all wings.

Room hierarchies

*“Furnishings and tapestries vary according to the difference in the chambers. In the first antechamber they are not as costly as in the last. The closer the antechambers are to the prince’s chambers, the costlier the furnishings.”*¹⁴ Décor and furnishings of a princely apartment in the eighteenth century maintained a distinct hierarchy of rooms, or were differentiated according to location and usage, a self-evident arrangement to the people of this time. A town palace – *Stadtpalais* – was ranked the highest. The most expensive materials were used here; for instance, “warming” velvet would be suitable for all-year-round usage. In contrast, cooling silk was hung in garden buildings and rural chateaux, which were frequented during the warmer seasons.¹⁵

The arrangement of rooms making up an apartment of at least three rooms meant an increase in costly appurtenances in them. This means there were more “*Lichter*” (lights) – thus candles; mirrors were installed above the fireplace instead of relief sections, figural depictions – rated higher than still life in the genre hierarchy – adorned the supraportas. Hence, fitting out apartments meant maintaining complicated specifications that are frequently incomprehensible today.



Fig. 2.7.1 & 2.7.2
 Printed and embroidered silk taffeta,
 China, 1st third 18th C.
 (BMobV, Inv.No. MD 20062 und MD 20063)

Despite this there was scope for individual solutions capable of communicating a certain self-assured independence in questions of official representation and prestige – an option exploited in particular by Prince Eugene.¹⁶ In Schloss Hof both in the state apartment as well as in the residential apartment he cultivated the ceremonial that was customary in France – corresponding to his background: the official area did not end in the audience chamber as at the Viennese Court but in the bedroom, which thus became a room of high state with the costliest furnishings.

The state apartment directly adjacent to the Hall was decorated in a uniform colour scheme. Shutters and wall panelling – socle panelling, pilaster strips and supraportas – were painted white and adorned with gilded ornaments.

Fig. 2.8
 Embroidered silk taffeta, China, 1st third 18th C.
 (MAK, Inv.No. T 9070)



Textiles for curtains, upholstery and the state bed came from China: silk with painted and printed (fig. 2.7.1 & fig. 2.7.2) or embroidered motifs (fig. 2.8) on white ground. All three rooms were equipped with open fireplaces harbouring firedogs and fire irons with gilded, partly figural brass elements of French provenance. Above each fireplace a “*Spiegl glass*” – looking glass – was hung. Furnishings “*carved of walnut and stained brown*” were at hand for use: seating furniture, console tables at the window pilasters – in their place in the bedroom two “*chests of drawers*” – trestles for firewood and fireguards. Light was provided in each of the first two rooms by an “*English glass pendant lamp*”, also, in all three rooms, two double-armed “*French*” gilt-brass sconces on both sides of the fireplace.

The state apartment showed little sign of the required hierarchy. All three rooms were based on a triple axis, the glass mirrors above the fireplace practically the same size – around 2 metres tall or more and 1.25 metres wide; the number of flames in the centrally hung chandelier is not known. Glass arm chandeliers from Schloss Hof mostly have six or eight arms (fig. 2.9). This means that the first two rooms were probably lit by ten to twelve candles and the state (*Parade*) bedroom merely by four (!) candles.

The differences in the rooms depend on their various functions. In the “*Parada Ante Camer*” (antechamber) fourteen paintings parade the victorious battles fought by Prince Eugene.¹⁷ The “*Andertes Parada oder Conversations Zimer*” (“second parade or conversation salon”) contained mainly seating furniture,¹⁸ and the state bedroom (“*Parada Schlaff Zimmer*”) was dominated by a voluminous four-poster bed. Apart from this, two lacquered tables are worthy of mention.¹⁹

The residential apartment connected to the salons in the north wing made an entirely different impression. Socle panelling, supraportas and shutters were “*of oaken wood*” with gilded ornaments. These were joined by textiles of red damask in the antechamber, in the audience chamber they were of yellow and white silk, also wall hangings made of blue damask, and upholstery of yellow Atlas in the bedroom (fig. 2.10). This room offered the prince a grandstand view towards the east onto the terraced garden and further towards the



Fig. 2.9
Crystal chandelier from
Schloss Hof, c. 1710.
Photograph, c. 1940.
(MAK, Vorbildersammlung, Mappe 177 B)



Fig. 2.10
Embroidered silk taffeta,
China, 1st third 18th C.
(MAK, Inv.No. T 9066)



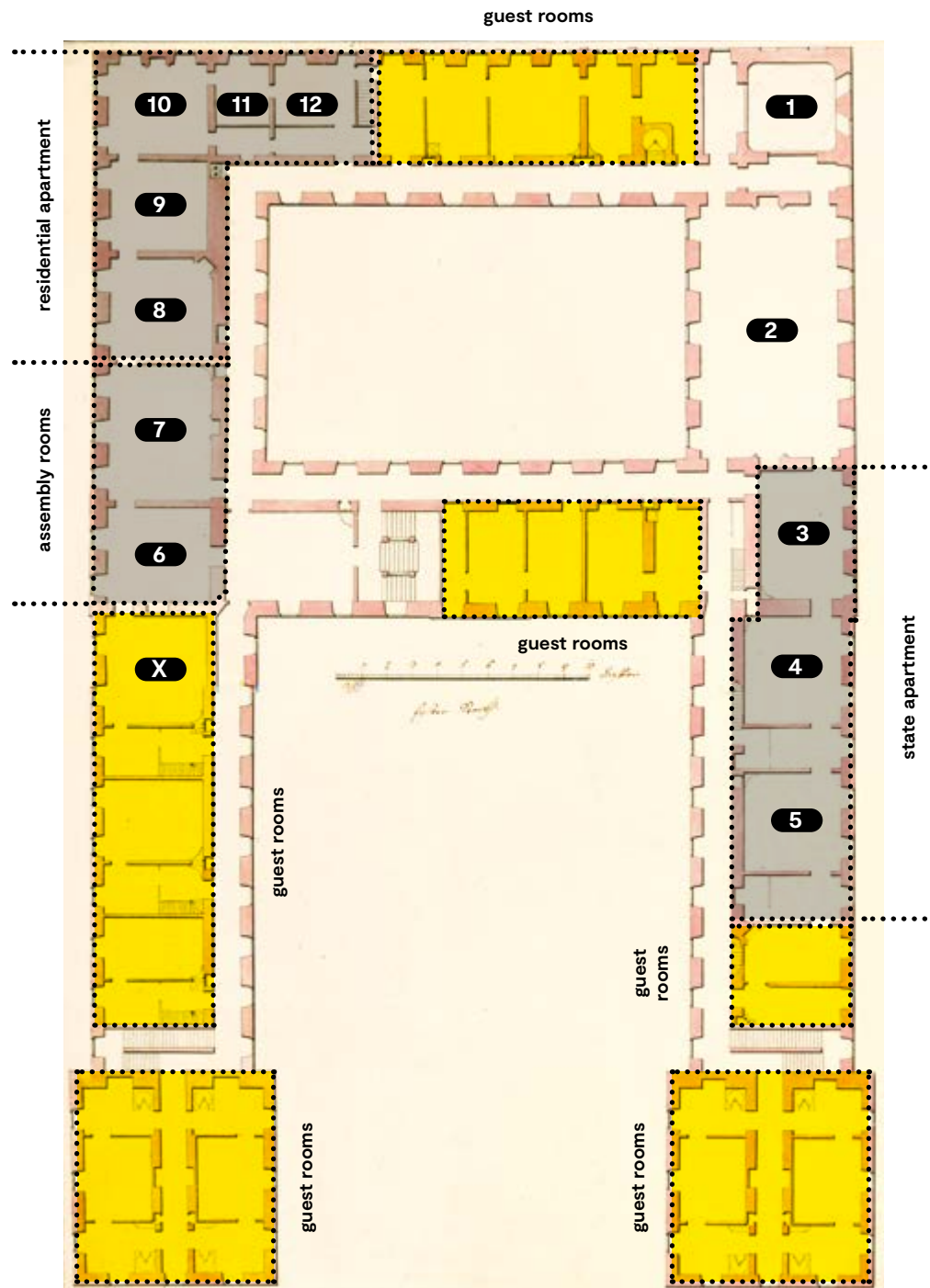
Fig. 2.11
Schloss Hof, chapel.

Devín or Hainburg Gate, to the north onto the spacious and state-of-the-art orangery buildings with their costly plants, also onto the estate farm. The room arrangement was enhanced by a cabinet (fig. 2.2) such as was also the case in the Prince's Viennese residences, furthermore by a wardrobe/dressing room and – as expected for a hunting lodge – a “Gewöbrzimmer” – a gunroom for stowing hunting weapons.

In contrast to the state apartment, the residential apartment showed a distinct enhancement within the room arrangement. A 1.56 metres-tall and 1.25 metres-wide mirror was installed not in the antechamber but was first encountered above the fireplace in the audience chamber, and the accompanying sconces were adorned with mythological figures – Mars and Minerva. In the bedroom the fireplace was installed in the centre of the window pilasters on the east wall and thus came closer to the ideal of Baroque symmetry than if placed in the corner, as was the case in the other rooms of the residential apartment. The looking glass at 1.79 metres hanging above it was taller than in the audience chamber – although somewhat narrower at 1.14 metres – and only this room boasted a second mirror on the north wall, at 2.13 metres the tallest in the palace. Here, too, the adjacent sconces were adorned with figures. The neighbouring cabinet matched the bedroom's colour scheme and was fitted with a mirror – smaller this time – over the fireplace. The oratories of the palace chapel provided eighteen stools upholstered with “*tops of fig-coloured Turin damask*” for the prince and his high-ranking entourage.

The view from above into the chapel transports us to the era of Prince Eugene: the ceiling fresco by Carlo Innocenzo Carlone (1686–1775), the stucco by Alberto Camesina and Santino Bussi, the altarpiece after the original by Francesco Solimena (1657–1747)²⁰ all combine to create a room that most impressively embodies the artistic intentions of Prince Eugene's era ²¹ (fig. 2.11).

← Fig. 2.12
**Ground plan of the first floor
of Schloss Hof, c. 1726.**
(Albertina Wien, Inv.No. Az 9152 (13/3/1), detail)



Rooms designated according to the inventory from 1736

- 1 Chapel with oratories
- 2 Banqueting hall

State apartment in the south wing

- 3 "Parada Ante Camer" (antechamber),
from 1775 antechamber of the apartment of Maria Theresa
- 4 Second parade or conversation salon (reception room),
from 1775 – after renovation – two-axis reception room of the Maria Theresa apartment
- 5 "Parada Schlaff Zimmer" (state bedroom),
from 1775 – after renovation – partly a two-axis sitting room,
the other part a two-axis bedroom in Maria Theresa's apartment

Assembly rooms in the north wing

- X Lady's room (guest room), from 1775 bed room of the apartment of Joseph II
- 6 "Caffee Zimer" (coffee room), from 1775 antechamber of the apartment of Joseph II
- 7 "Taffel Stuben" (dining room), from 1775 dinnig room of the Imperial Apartment

Prince Eugene's residential apartment in the north wing

- 8 "Ante Camer" (antechamber), from 1775 gaming room of the Imperial Apartment
- 9 "Audienz Zimmer" (audience chamber), from 1775 bed room of the Imperial Apartment
- 10 "Schlaff Zimmer" (bed chamber), from 1775 sitting room of the Imperial Apartment
- 11 "Cabinet", from 1775 servant's room of the Imperial Apartment
- 12 "Quardaroba" (dressing room) bzw. "Gewöhr-Zimer" (gunroom),
from 1775 dressing room of the Imperial Apartment

The Baroque Garden of Schloss Hof

“COULD NOT BE MORE
BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED
AS IN THIS SPOT”

Thomas Baumgartner

The Baroque Garden of Schloss Hof, today restored for the most part in its Baroque appearance, is one of the most important of its kind in Europe. Like the premier example of the Belvedere Garden in Vienna, this is thanks to the creative aspirations of Prince Eugene, his architects and horticultural artists, and, like Belvedere, it did not happen in one fell swoop but grew out of humble beginnings to bloom in all its Baroque glory.

The humble beginnings

Although evidence exists of gardens for the early seventeenth century Renaissance castle and its *Meierhof* (farmyard) gardens, these must have been purely kitchen gardens.¹ Nor is there a sign of gardens on the only view we have of Schloss Hof from the seventeenth century (cf. [fig. 1.3](#)). The first small Baroque pleasure garden must have been kept on the old bastion system surrounding the castle under the Chief Court Master of Falconry Johann Albercht Count St. Julien-Wallsee (1681–1743), whose family owned the domain of Hof since 1661.²

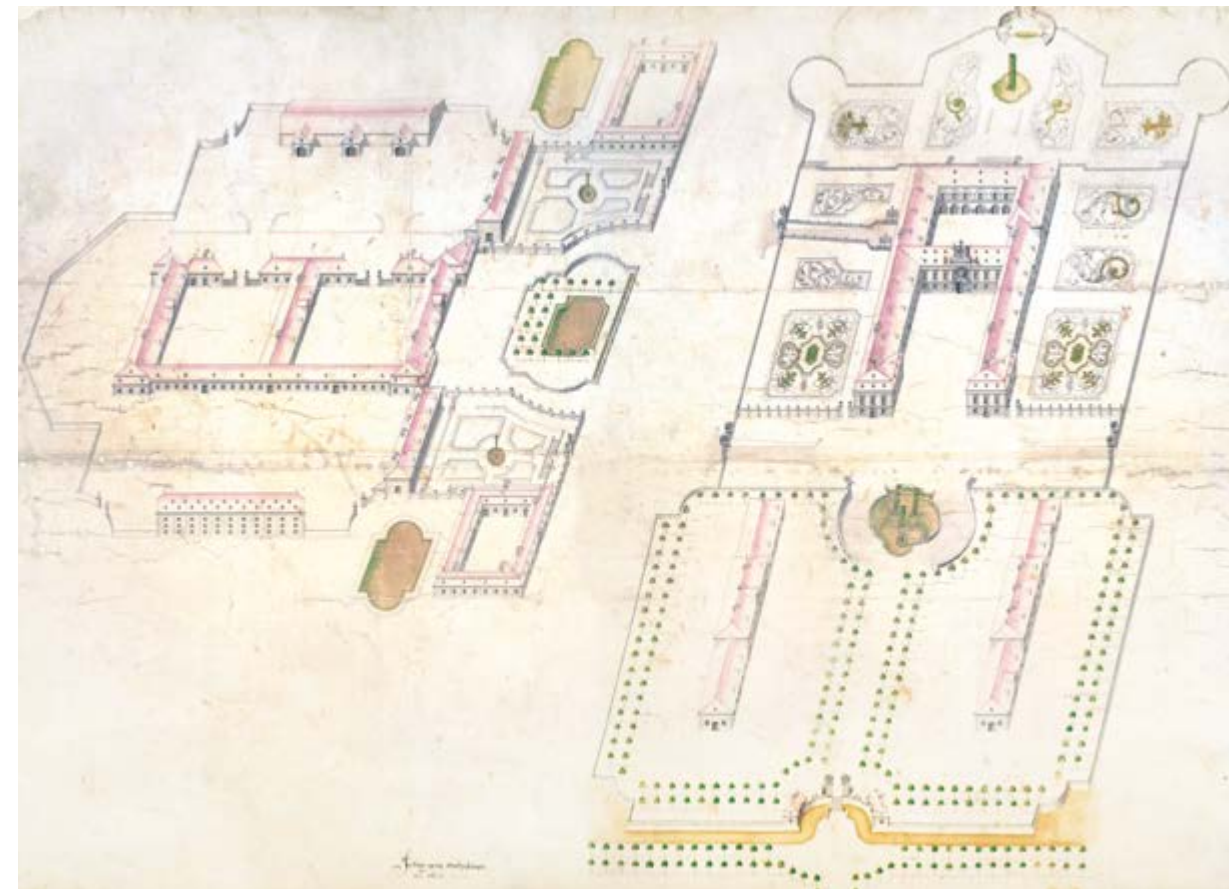


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Fig. 3.1
Overall view of the garden from the east.
The Imperial Chateau de Plaisance Schloss Hof, garden side.
Oil painting by Bernardo Bellotto, 1759/60 (detail).
(KHM, Inv.No. GG 1674)

After Prince Eugen had acquired the domain of Hof in 1725 and a year later that of Niederweiden, Abraham Maass produced a map of the newly acquired properties, designating both the contemporary building stock as well as the intended extension plans³ (cf. fig. 1.5). He already included the Court d'honneur (Ehrenhof) wing planned by architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt (1668–1745) annexed to the west side of the castle, also the stables in front and with this the new west-east orientation of the castle complex. But he also drew small sections of Baroque garden on the bastions of the other three sides of the old castle, which must have already existed at this time. And archaeological excavations in 2004 unearthed evidence of the parterre garden on the south side with its fountain basin, formerly placed in front of the Banqueting Hall.⁴

But scarcely had it been noted down on paper, the modest extension of the complex at first planned only as a “*retraite*” – a private retreat – no longer satisfied the prince. And so, his architect in residence Hildebrandt together with the garden engineer Anton Zinner (1676–1751), who had already proved his mettle in the planning of the Belvedere Garden, tackled the second planning phase.



A new beginning

Now the old seventeenth-century fortress was to give way to a modern bastion complex surrounding palace and stables. It included not only two round bastions pointing east – more to enable a view of the Morava/March and the Hungarian Gate than for potential purposes of defence – but also a central, double outside staircase. This would surround a wall fountain and lead to a small square enclosed by the bastion walls (the so-called fountain grotto), which opens through an ornamental, parcel-gilt, wrought-iron gate onto a vineyard sloping down to the Morava plain, thus transitioning into the surrounding landscape.

Fig. 3.2 ↗
Palace and estate farm ensemble of Schloss Hof.
 Watercolour, pen drawing
 by Johann Georg Windpässinger, 1727/29.
 (ÖNB Wien, KS, Inv.No. K I 104.049)

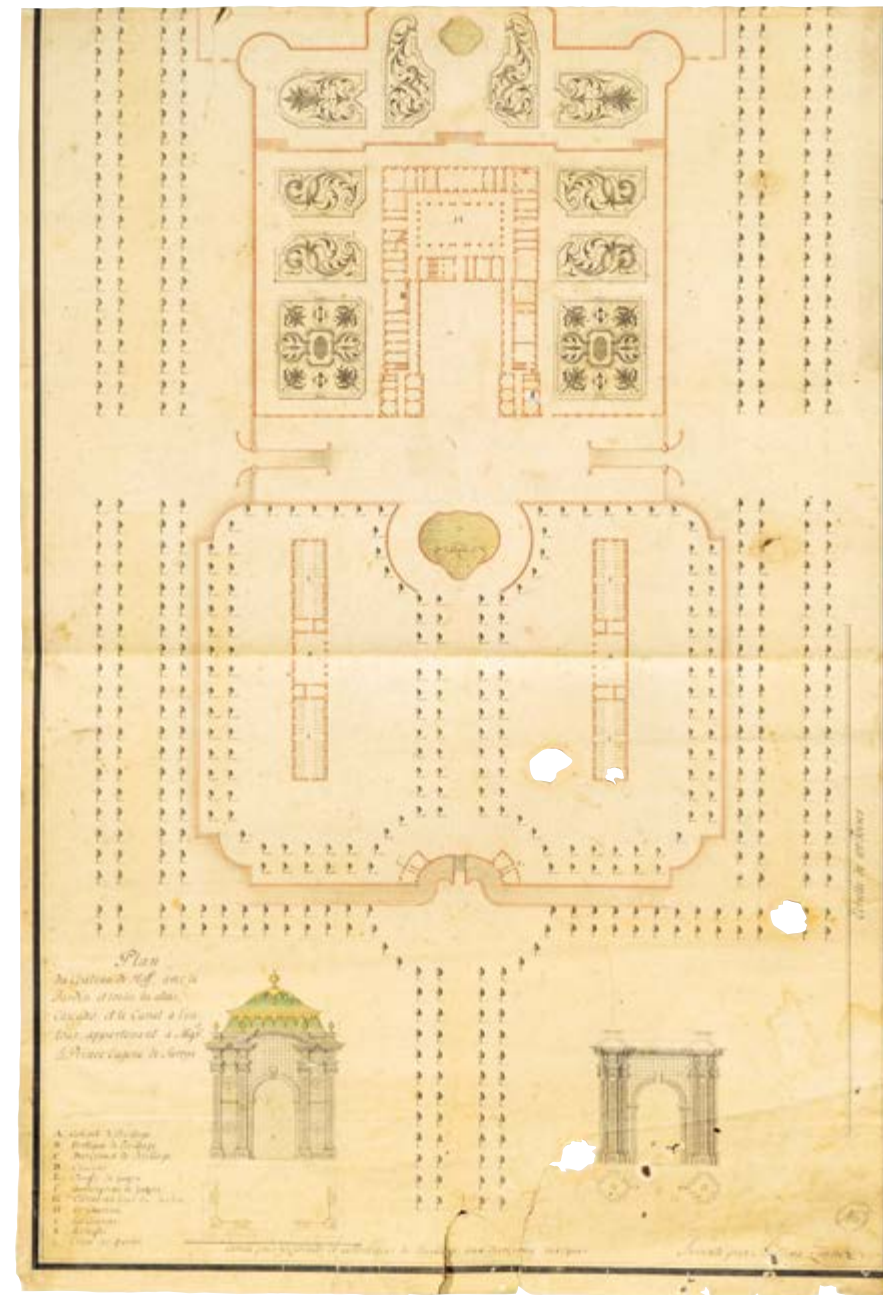
For the areas on the bastions surrounding the palace Zinner planned garden parterres with a total of ten elaborate *parterres de broderie*.⁵ A special role was played in this second plan by the arrangement of the *Meierhof* – the estate farm – north of the palace, which Prince Eugene wished to have developed as a model estate farm based on classical-antique model. Here, too, gardens would form an important component of the concept. Accordingly, the planning genius Hildebrandt placed two laterally reversed orangery gardens at the front façade of the *Meierhof* complex facing the palace, including large, state-of-the-art glasshouses. Here, some of the prince’s abundant exotic plants – he was an enthusiastic collector – could be optimally presented and cultivated in both summer and winter.⁶

This second planning phase is documented in rich detail in the large axonometric aerial view of the planned palace and estate farm prepared by the master builder Johann Georg Windpässinger (c. 1693–1766)⁷ (fig. 3.2). By proceeding thus, palace and estate farm complex could be completed in its essentials according to Windpässinger’s plan by the end of 1729.⁸ On his visit to Schloss Hof as early as September 1729, a close friend of Eugene’s, Field Marshall Johann Joseph Philipp Count Harrach (1678–1764) described the impressive interior decoration of the palace and the grandiose arrangement of the ensemble created by the approach situation with the stables and buildings of the estate farm.⁹ However, his description lacks the orangery gardens with their glasshouses, still under construction, and also the large pleasure garden; the ensemble ends with the gate to the fountain grotto leading to the neighbouring vineyard. But, as Count Harrach writes in conclusion, “*the ideas for the future are wonderful and splendid*”.¹⁰

The garden in all its Baroque glory

The hitherto completed extension – despite its splendour – was not enough for the prince, who was now 66 years of age and availed of the necessary financial means. The prince, a passionate devotee of horticulture, loved to extol the joys of “*pleasurable gardening*”¹¹ in the circle of like-minded friends; besides the Belvedere Garden and the new standards it was setting, he wished to create another and even more spacious garden in Schloss Hof. As Harrach

Fig. 3.3
Fragment of the garden plan of Schloss Hof:
Plan de Chateau de Hoff [...].
Watercolour, pen drawing by Anton Zinner, c. 1729.
(SKB, Inv.No. SKB 008221)



also implied, he had already commissioned Hildebrandt and Zinner to plan and execute a garden *parterre de broderie* on the palace bastion and the large pleasure garden next to the fountain grotto, all the way down to the Morava/March plain.

Harrach wrote in early May 1739 already that the prince had meanwhile doubled the number of artisans and workers engaged on his building sites in Schloss Hof and on the estate and gardens of Niederweiden – then under construction – to a workforce of 200, and 300 day labourers had been signed on in addition. A month later he mentioned about 600 workers, probably underestimating the number, for, in March 1730, the administrator in charge, Sebastian Fux, had even told of “more than 800 persons, artisans, craftsmen and day labourers.”¹² This huge workforce was needed to manage the complex shifting of the terrain to transform the vineyard into a terrace garden.

Its actual layout was not known until two spectacular finds cropped up in 2006 in the shape of two plans. One of them is thought to be the first known plan of Zinner’s in his own hand (fig. 3.3). However, the top half of the plan is missing, so the original garden arrangement (based on Hildebrandt’s general plan) can be only inferred from the accompanying legend. The preserved half of the plan presents a detailed representation of the top part of the arrangement up to the fountain grotto with the ten *parterres de broderie*, which were also drawn – but with less skill – by master builder Windpässinger. Although the newly planned part of the garden is missing, it is described by the legend. It names the elaborate *treillage* or trellised pavilions, for instance, which Zinner drew in two elevations, also the terrace with *boulingrins* (“bowling greens”, sunken, stepped lawns). Surprisingly, a canal sourced by the Moldava/March and its tributaries was also planned around the garden, but never executed.

The garden that was actually executed is finally shown in the second discovered plan, which was first made after 1760 and also reproduces the first changes (fig. 3.4). Along with the three paintings dated 1759/60 by Bernardo Bellotto (1722–1780), it enables us for the first time to document the High Baroque arrangement of the garden. Stairways lined by statues and vases lead from a small front terrace at the fountain grotto gate onto the first terrace of

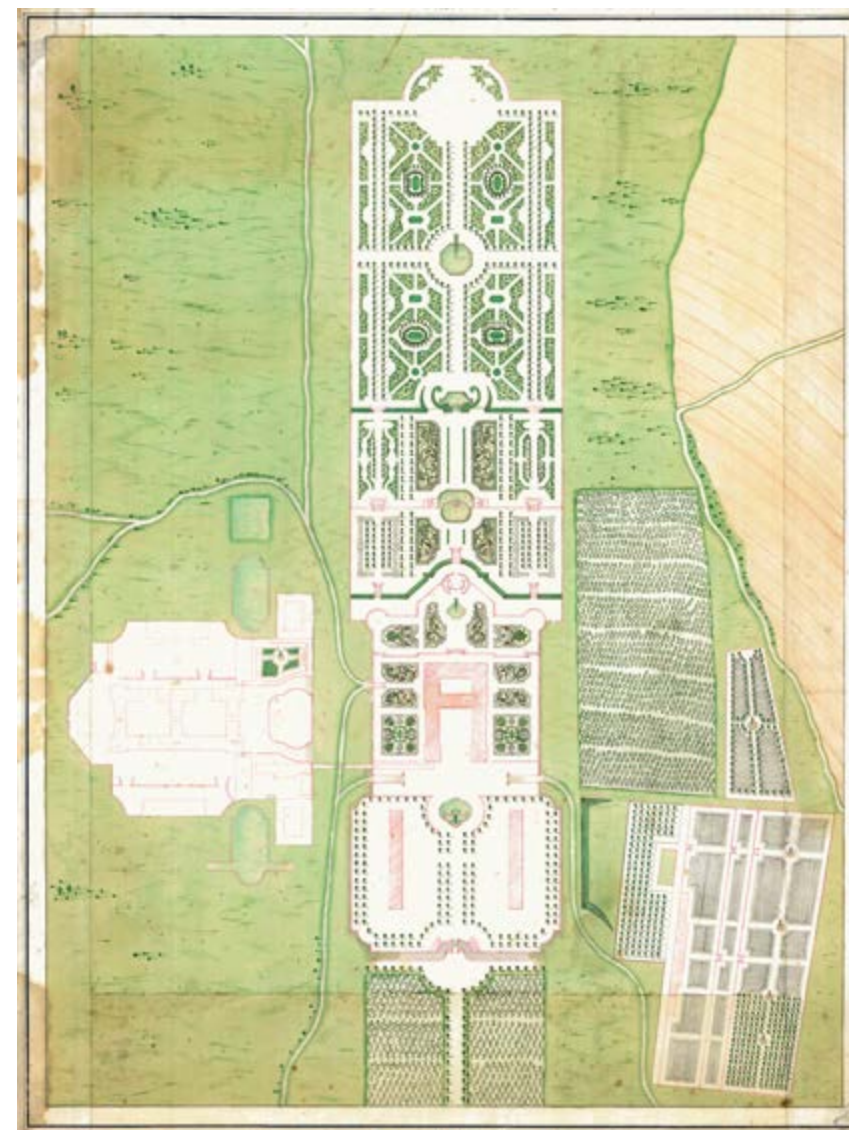


Fig. 3.4
Plan of the overall ensemble of Schloss Hof.
Watercolour, pen drawing, anonymous, post -1760.
(SKB, Inv.No. SKB 008008)



Fig. 3.5

View of the garden from the north with the treillage terrace.
Detail from: The Imperial Chateau de Plaisance Schloss Hof, view from the north.
Oil painting by Bernardo Bellotto, 1759/60.
(KHM, Inv.No. GG 1675)

Fig. 3.6

Certificate of Johann Paul Baumann,
issued and signed by Anton Zinner, 1 January 1736.
(SKB, Inv.No. SKB 008012)



the new main garden. At the side of the central broderie parterres, treillage constructions with *berceaux* (pergolas) invite strollers to take a walk in the shade. The constructions consisted of a total of twenty portals, domed and angular pavilions of trellised work about ten metres high, connected through 230 linear metres of pergolas, which were six metres high. The domes of the four large pavilions were frescoed in their interiors, their roofs and vase tops gilded. They formed the most resplendent and imposing treillage construction in the European region, even surpassing the treillages of Versailles¹³ (fig. 3.5).

At the end of the terrace a five-metre high, multi-stepped cascade fountain forms the centre of the garden plan. Its wall reliefs show scenes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and opulent sculptural decoration with Eugene as centrepiece, personified as the god of the sun, Apollo.¹⁴ The side steps lead subsequently to the next terrace, which again has broderie sections, flanked here by bosquets (small hedges).

From here a smaller cascade and side steps lead on to the lowest and largest garden terrace. This consists of four bosquets with central *boulingrins* grouped around a central octagonal basin with fountains. Finally, an imposing wrought-iron gate at the end of the garden opens the view onto the surrounding landscape. The sculptor Johann Christoph Mader (1697–1761)¹⁵ executed the garden sculptures and artistic smith Johann Georg Oegg (1703–1782) the wrought-iron lattices and gates (fig. 3.1).

A garden for posterity

However, Prince Eugene never lived to see the completion of his second grandiose garden plan. Just a few months before his death on 1 January 1736, Anton Zinner – now promoted to building and garden inspector – wrote a certificate for the garden assistant and journeyman Johann Paul Baumann, who had assisted in the garden the previous fifteen months¹⁶ (fig. 3.6). This indicates that the horticultural arrangement was probably finished for the most part, but the architectural and sculptural accoutrements might not have been completed by then. Namely, one year after Eugene's death, the Engineer Lieutenant and Architect of the Prince-Archbishop of Bamberg, Johann Jakob Michael Küchel

(1703–1769), described his visit to Schloss Hof while on his study trip: “half is completed of the third central cascade in the lower garden, numerous avenues lined with hornbeams and cabinet to be seen everywhere” and “it is a pity that at this time four parts of the same are overgrown with thistles, weeds and such.”¹⁷

It was probably left to the following owner, Prince Joseph Friedrich of Saxony-Hildburghausen (1702–1787) to finish the garden; he had been presented with the Schloss Hof Estate as dowry gift from Eugene’s heiress Anna Victoria of Savoy (1683–1763) on their wedding in 1738.

Fig. 3.7

Picture of Schloss Hof after the addition of another storey in 1775 with unaltered garded parters. Pen drawing by Franz Zoller, pre -1796. (Albertina Wien, Inv.No. 17368)



Fig. 3.8

Aerial view of palace, garden and estate farm ensemble of Schloss Hof, c. 1930. (ÖNB BA, Inv.No. AF 7705)

Fig. 3.9

Aerial view of palace, garden and estate farm ensemble of Schloss Hof.

After Prince Eugene and his circle of artists had created a garden of European ranking, which was furthermore “the seat of thousandfold joys in the times of Emperor Francis I, Maria Theresa and Joseph II,”¹⁸ it was subject to many vagaries of fate in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (fig. 3.7) and lapsed slowly into a state worthy of *La Belle au Bois Dormant* (fig. 3.8), a sleeping beauty. It was only thanks to the reconstruction measures started in the 1960s, the extremely informative excavations of horticultural archaeology in the 1980s and 1990s and ultimately the elaborate restoration, reconstruction and revitalising measures in the early 2000s that the former Baroque glory of Prince Eugene’s Schloss Hof Garden could be kissed back to life again¹⁹ (fig. 3.9).



Prince Eugene as Passionate Patron of Architecture

“THE MOST PERFECT BUILDINGS”
AND “INCOMPARABLY BEAUTIFUL GARDENS”

Anna Mader-Kratky

The whole of his life, Prince Eugene invested enormous sums into purchasing building plots and properties, which he ordered to be newly built or remodelled, shying neither cost nor labour and bent on high standards of prestige.¹ These major investments made him the foremost patron in Baroque Vienna, and contemporary literary descriptions of the city praised for instance his Viennese summer palace, stating that he “*spared neither effort nor money*” to make it “*one of the most perfect buildings*”, and that no words could describe his “*incomparably beautiful garden*”² (fig. 4.1). However, Prince Eugene, as fifth and youngest son from a collateral line of the House of Savoy, did not come into the necessary financial means through inheritance but through his achievements on the battlefield and the resulting social and economic advancement. When the young Eugene joined the Imperial army in 1683 and fought against the Ottomans before Vienna he was penniless and at first had to find accommodation in the Imperial capital and residence city with the Spanish ambassador, Don Carlo Emanuele d’Este (1622–1695).³

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Fig. 4.1
Upper Belvedere, garden façade
after a design by Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt



Fig. 4.2
Town palace of Prince Eugene in Vienna,
erected as of 1697 after designs by
Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach and
later Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt.

The Winter Palace, a fitting residence in town

Not until ten years later could Prince Eugene afford a residence befitting his status, the deciding factor being his promotion as Imperial Field Marshal (1693). He decided on a bourgeois district of Vienna, where an aristocratic *Palais* had never been built until then. In 1694/95, he purchased two houses on Himmelfortgasse and commissioned Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723), then Vienna’s leading architect, to build a *Stadtpalais*, a town palace, which is today generally known as *Winterpalais*⁴ (fig. 4.2 & 4.3). On commission of his patron, Fischer von Erlach had to plan the façade in such a way that its “endless” extension to the left or right would be feasible any time the properties were available for purchase. So Prince Eugene “thought big” right from the start, although the core building, ready in 1696, offered him all the interior amenities of an aristocratic palace in that day and age. And in fact, he had his town palace extended in 1708 by twelve window axes to the east and in 1723 by another five to the west, so that today it boasts an impressive total of 24 axes.

A challenge confronting the architect was the palace’s situation in a narrow alley, where the architecture had to unfold its full impact. It was therefore deemed important to make the building distinctly higher than the neighbouring houses by giving it a duplex socle storey. This increased light incidence into the prince’s apartment on the *bel étage*. But the building was intended to impress most of all through the opulence of its façade decoration, which alludes to the military achievements of the building’s founder. No less effective was Fischer von Erlach’s richly stuccoed entrance to the palace, illuminated by an oval window from above (fig. 4.4.1). The stairwell is installed at the end



Fig. 4.3
Town palace of Prince Eugene in Vienna.
Engraving by Johann August Corvinus after a
preliminary drawing by Salomon Kleiner, 1725.
(SKB, Inv.No. SKB 008081)

of the elongated entrée at the right; here, the architect managed to integrate a spacious staircase in a restricted space, the object of much amazement at the time: “One extraordinary feature is the staircase in the small space, planned with such ingenuity that it evokes the appearance of the largest building in the world.”⁵ (fig. 4.4.2). Four mighty atlantes by the sculptor Giovanni Giuliani (1664–1744) heave the stair landing forcefully up aloft, fusing architecture and sculpture into an inseparable unity.⁶

Fischer von Erlach was responsible for the interior design of the town palace, but there must have been disagreements with Prince Eugene, for he dismissed the architect and found a worthy successor in Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt (1668–1745). Hildebrandt matched his patron’s taste so well that the prince promoted him to become his extremely busy “architect in residence” and transferred all further building commissions into his hands.

Fig. 4.4.1 & 4.4.2
View into the entrance (left)
and the staircase (right)
of Prince Eugene’s town palace in Vienna
after a design by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach
and with statues by Giovanni Giuliani.



Fig. 4.5

Prospect of Prince Eugene’s garden and the buildings belonging to it.
Engraving by Johann August Corvinus after a preliminary drawing by Salomon Kleiner, 1731.
(Belvedere Wien, Inv.No. BB_1012-005)



The Belvedere, a summer seat like a royal palace

Every self-respecting noble family with the necessary capital commissioned a prestigious town palace to be built in the Imperial capital and residence city and furthermore a smaller summer palace as seasonal retreat before the gates of the city. Whilst his winter palace was still under construction, in 1697 Prince Eugene purchased plots of land on Rennweg and ordered the sloping terrain to be terraced for the planning of an extensive garden.⁷