

Mountain fortress

The first records of a castle built by the Hohenstaufens date back to 1147. Staufenberg, as it was called at the time, sat high above the Alsace plain at an altitude of more than 700 metres. This rocky, promontory site was ideal for observing the main routes in the region, and provided a strategic fall-back point. The fortress changed its name to Koenigsbourg (royal castle) in around 1192.

The castle was handed over to the Tiersteins by the Habsburgs following its destruction in 1462. They rebuilt and enlarged it, installing a defensive system designed to withstand artillery fire. This was the golden period for the Hohkoenigsbourg ("Hoh" meaning... "High!")