

# Artefacts stored in the Treasury

Besides the works belonging to the **Town of Auch** and the **diocesan association** kept in the Treasury, thirteen works listed as **Historic Monuments (HM)** belonging to **towns in the Gers** are presented, to conserve and showcase them:



## BAZIAN

**Pietà or Mater Dolorosa**, end of the 15th or beginning of the 16th c., sculpted polychrome wood. From the former church in Saint-Yors, Bazian. Property of the town. Listed as an HM on 22 March 1972.



## CRASTES

**The Flight into Egypt**, sculpted group, 16th or 17th c., polychrome wood. From the church in Crastes. Property of the town. Listed as an HM on 25 January 1957.



## LAAS

**Processional cross**, 15th c., silvered and gilded copper on wooden core. From the church in Laas. Listed as an HM on 6 March 1970.



## PAVIE

**Virgin and child** known as Notre-Dame du Cédon, end of the 18th c., wrought and engraved copper. From Notre-Dame du Cédon chapel, Pavie. Property of the town. Listed as an HM on 1 July 1905.



## PELLEFIGUE

**Processional cross**, 16th c., silvered copper on wooden core, unidentified silversmith. From church in Pellefigue. Property of the town. Listed as an HM on 9 July 1976.



## SAINT-JUSTIN

**Reliquary bust of Saint Justin**, 1687-1689, Samson (?), silversmith in Toulouse, silver on wooden core. From church in Saint-Justin. Property of the town. Listed as an HM on 18 May 1960.

**Five goldsmithery works:** Ciborium, after 1838, Favier, goldsmith in Lyon, listed as an HM on 6 March 1970;

**Altar Cross**, 1777, unidentified goldsmith, listed as an HM on 18 May 1960;

**Processional cross with staff**, 1770, Louis I Dulaurier, goldsmith in Toulouse, listed as an HM on 18 May 1960;

**Chalice**, 1777, B. Samson, goldsmith in Toulouse;

**Incense boat and spoon**, 18th and 19th centuries, listed as an HM on 18 May 1960.



## SAINTE-CHRISTIE

**Two reliquary busts of Saint Christina of Tuscany**, ca 1630, polychrome and gilded wood. From the church in Sainte-Christie. Property of the town. Listed as an HM on 25 February 1959.

## OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

From 1 June to 30 September, every day, including public holidays:  
From 10 am to 1 pm and from 2 pm to 6 pm  
<http://tresor-cathedrale-auch.jimdo.com/>  
**Tel.: +33 (0)5 62 05 95 03**

## OFF SEASON

Guided tours for groups by a specialist "Pays d'Art et d'Histoire du Grand Auch" guide, bookings only.

## INFORMATION AND BOOKING

**Greater Auch Tourist Information Office**  
3, place de la République - 32000 Auch, France

**Tel.: +33 (0)5 62 05 22 89**  
<http://en.auch-tourisme.com/>

## DISABLED ACCESS

Accessible to those with visual, motor, mental and hearing disabilities.

## PRICES

**Admission fee:** €5 (full rate) - €2.50 (reduced rate) - free for under-18s

**Guided tour fees:** ask at the treasury reception or at the tourist information office.

**2-visit pass:** €8 (full rate) - €4 (half price) - free for under-18s

*Cathedral Treasury - Musée des Jacobins or Action Pays d'Art et d'Histoire*

**3-visit pass:** €10 (full rate) - €5 (half price) - free for under-18s

*Cathedral Treasury - Musée des Jacobins or Action Pays d'Art et d'Histoire*

## HELP WITH VISITS

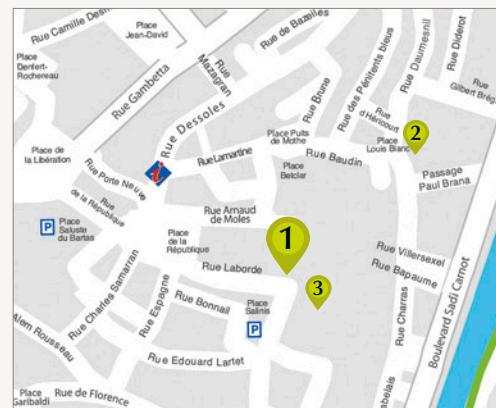
Loan of trilingual digital tablets, film on big screen, booklet in braille, mediation and museography for young visitors and disabled visitors, downloadable tour app, multimedia terminals.

Project Manager: **Ministry of Culture, DRAC Occitanie.**

Project Management: **Stéphane Thouin**, Architect-in-Chief of Historic Monuments and **Nicolas Calandre**, Architect, Agen. **Didier Blin**, Architect and Museographer, Paris. Graphic Design: **Christelle Bouvet**, [www.lezarius.fr](http://www.lezarius.fr), Toulouse.



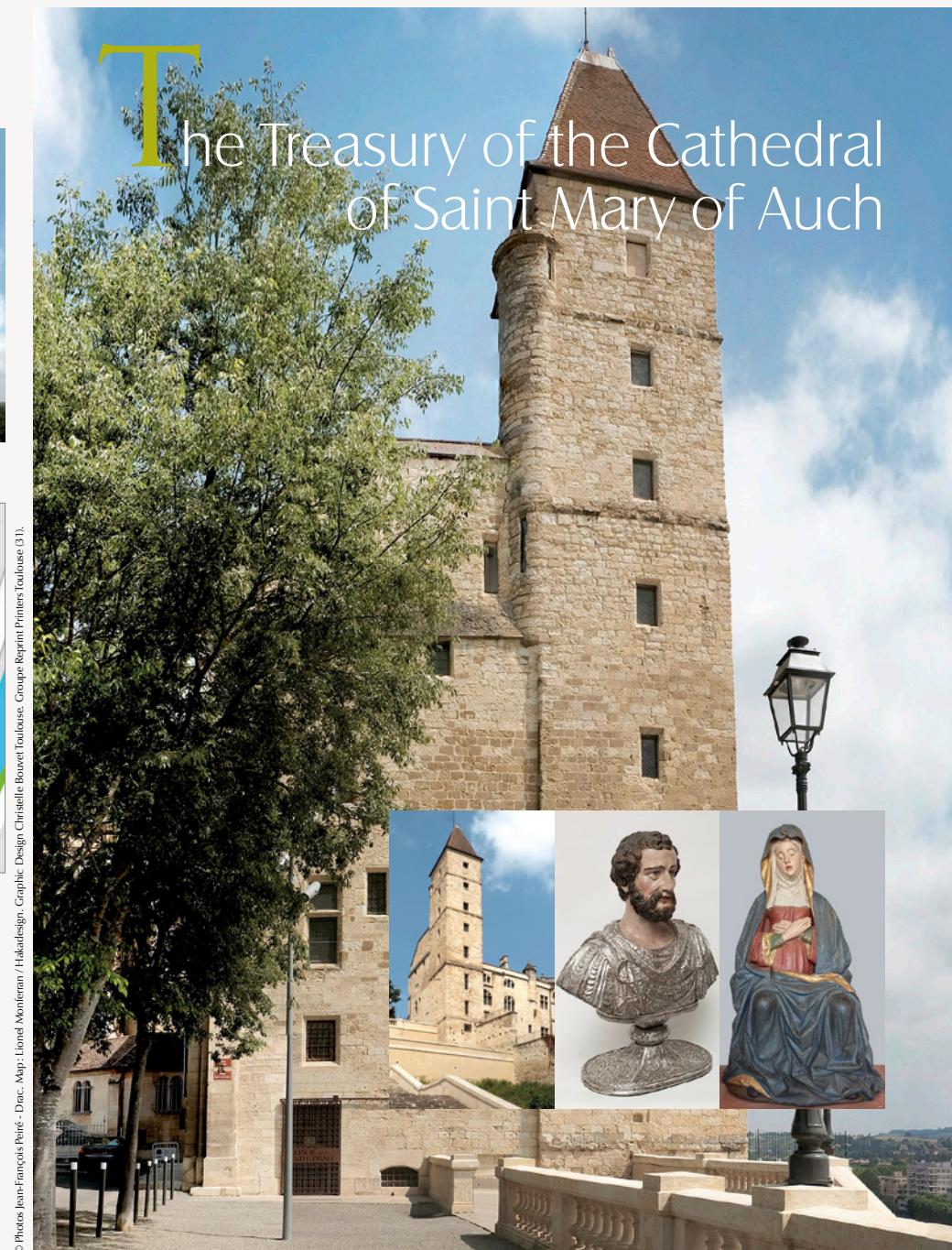
Photo of the monumental stairway and the Armagnac Tower.  
© Jean-François Peiré - DRAC.



- 1 Saint Mary's Cathedral Treasury  
Place Salinis, Auch
- 2 Musée des Jacobins  
4, place Louis-Blanc, Auch
- 3 Monumental stairway



Flyer produced by Drac Occitanie, 2017



# The Treasury of the Cathedral of Saint Mary of Auch

© Photos: Jean-François Peiré - Drac. Map: Lionel Monferran / H&Mdesign. Graphic: Design Christelle Bouvet Toulouse. Groupe Reprint Printers Toulouse (31).



Façade of the Officiality (ecclesiastical tribunal), 1844. © Gers Departmental Archives.

View of the entrance gate. © Jean-François Peiré - DRAC.

View of the north hall. © Jean-François Peiré - DRAC.

Portrait of a canon, oil on canvas, 17<sup>th</sup> c. © Jean-François Peiré - DRAC.

Monstrance, J.-A. Chertier, Parisian goldsmith, 19<sup>th</sup> c. © Jean-François Peiré - DRAC.

Chasuble embroidered by an Ursuline nun (detail), Auch, ca 1880. © C. Aribaut

Jesus healing the sick, oil on canvas, after Jean Jouvenet, 18<sup>th</sup> century. © Jean-François Peiré - DRAC.

View of the former capitulary hall (video room). © Jean-François Peiré - DRAC.

# A new treasury in historic rooms

In the literal sense, a treasury refers to a series of valuable objects collected over time and which have been hidden or lost. The term is also employed to refer to **a place in a religious building in which old and precious objects, works of art, archives and liturgical objects are gathered**. The treasury was once accessible only to certain members of the clergy (canons). Despite heavy losses due to looting, transformation into coins, and fires, forty or so churches still have treasuries reflecting the extraordinary quality of the region's collections of sacred art, including the churches of Sainte-Foy in Conques (Aveyron) and Saint-Sernin in Toulouse, which are among the most precious in France. For the most part, the objects that have come to us have the particularity of still being used in worship.

## An accessible treasury

As part of the policy to restore State-owned cathedral treasuries, the

Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs (DRAC) of Occitanie (Ministry of Culture) decided, in 2009-2010, to reorganise the former treasury in new premises. Project management and funding was provided by the French State. To accommodate the new treasury, the lower rooms of the former **canons' building (or chapter)**, the **vestiges of the earliest cathedral** and the lower section of the **Armagnac Tower** were refurbished. The treasury was reorganised and installed in these rooms, which had previously remained closed to the general public. The 300 m<sup>2</sup> exhibition area was inaugurated in September 2015, featuring nearly 200 objects and works of art, paintings, sculptures, gold and silver-plated objects and sacerdotal vestments, all inventoried and restored, and most of which are **listed** as historic monuments. The work of the people involved in the restoration (restorers, architects, museographers) is presented in short films in the rooms.

Day-to-day management of the treasury is entrusted to the Greater Auch local authority services and the tourist information office, which is responsible for keeping the treasury open during the high season. The rest of the year, tours are provided by the services of the "Pays d'Art et d'Histoire du Grand Auch".

## An interpretation centre Auch Cathedral

The interpretation centre is open to visitors in an exceptionally high-quality modern museum setting and incorporating access facilities for all visitors (videos, interactive terminals, tablets, documents in braille, etc.). It presents the **cathedral** and its **sumptuous 16th-century decor** (stalls, sculptures, stained-glass windows) as well as the history of the medieval rooms, a fitting showcase for the treasury. It thus helps to enrich the history of the Gascon capital, opening its little-known collections to the public and enhancing visits to the Cathedral and the Musée des Jacobins.

# E exploring the collections

The treasury of Auch Cathedral brings together a number of works dating largely from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Items from the Middle Ages which featured in the original treasury were lost at the time of the French Revolution. The objects have been grouped into ten themes covering history and art history: the **great Archbishops of Auch** (evoked by their portraits), the history and role of the **canons**, the **regional goldsmith trade** and **Marian devotion** and the **worship of saints**.

## An exceptional collection

The treasury's **liturgical ornaments** trace the history of the cathedral, its bishops and the fashions of the Ancien Régime, since the same fabrics were used for clothing, furnishings and the liturgy. They bear simultaneous witness to fashions and the decorative arts. The treasury boasts 200 sets of ornaments (kept in storage), two or three of which will be presented in rotation in a display cabinet, owing to the very strict

conservation standards for the fabrics. Over and above the large orders with chasuble makers in Paris and manufacturers in Lyon in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the works embroidered by the **Ursulines of Auch** stand head and shoulders above trade production and show the inventiveness and artistic quality of this religious community based in Auch.

## A treasure trove of goldsmiths' work

The many works by **goldsmiths** provide a good illustration of the liturgical equipment acquired by parishes in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some are quite exceptional, such as the silver-covered **reliquary bust of Saint Justin**. Intended for practice, the adornment of Catholic worship and the veneration of relics, numerous religious objects are the work of local and national artists and craftsmen, particularly goldsmiths. The highly regulated goldsmiths' trade and its techniques are relatively well understood thanks to the hallmarks identifying the objects.

Some very rare goldsmiths' pieces from the 18<sup>th</sup> century come from the workshops of the master goldsmiths of Auch (the **Affre** dynasty), Toulouse (the **Samson** dynasty) and Bordeaux. The production of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is due to local goldsmiths (from Toulouse and Tarbes). The clergy also called upon renowned Paris and Lyon firms, the **Faviers** and the **Poussielgue-Rusands**, as well as **Jean-Alexandre Chertier** of Paris.

