

Appendix 1 – Research

Research done with Chat GPT 5.2

1. Overview and Location

Kolossi Castle stands in the fertile Kouris River valley on the western outskirts of Limassol (Lemesos). The brochure stresses the valley's medieval wealth—especially sugar plantations, vineyards, olives, carob, cereals, and cotton—making Kolossi one of the key feudal estates of the Frankish period.

1.1 Origins and Early Ownership

The area took its name from its first feudal lord, **Garinus de Colos**. In **1210**, the Lusignan king **Hugh I** transferred the fief to the **Order of St John of Jerusalem (Hospitallers)**. The first castle was built then; remnants of that earlier structure survive around the west and east sides of the present building.

1.2 The Military Orders and the “Commanderie”

After **Acre fell in 1291**, the Hospitallers shifted their base of activity to Kolossi (**1306**). Ownership briefly passed to the **Knights Templar**, then returned to the Hospitallers after the Templars were abolished (**1308**). Even after the Hospitallers moved their command centre to **Rhodes (1310)**, Kolossi remained a major power-base—known as the **Commanderie**—confirmed by the Order's leadership in **1380**. It

operated less as a frontier fortress and more as the residence/command centre managing a large, productive estate (the brochure mentions **60 villages**).

1.3 Economy and “Commandaria”

A central theme is that Kolossi's fortification supported an economic engine: the Commanderie controlled plantations and trade. A headline product was the famous sweet wine of Cyprus—**Commandaria**.

1.4 Destruction and Rebuilding

The brochure notes a sequence of attacks (Genoese and Mamelukes) and destructive earthquakes that left the earlier castle in ruins. In **1454**, the Grand Commander **Louis de Magnac** built the stronger stone keep that survives today.

1.5 Building Description and Interior Use

The present castle is a three-storey, stone-built square keep about **21 m** tall with very thick walls (given as approximately **2.25 m**).

Ground level

- Largely storage
- Includes two underground cisterns

Access

- Entrance to the main level was historically by drawbridge

Notable art/features

- A Crucifixion wall-painting (16th century) survives
- Coats-of-arms (including Magnac with fleur-de-lis) appear in key spaces

Second storey

- Residential/accommodation rooms with large fireplaces

1.6 Defensive Features on the Roof/Terrace

The terrace includes embrasures and a machicolation above the main entrance—designed to repel attackers trying to force entry. The external east façade features a cross-shaped frame with a marble relief slab showing coats-of-arms (**Lusignan Cyprus, Louis de Magnac**, and Grand Masters **Jean de Lastic** and **Jacques de Milly**).

1.8 Later Noble Ownership and the Venetian Period

In **1488**, after **Caterina Cornaro** ceded Cyprus to Venice, her brother **George Cornaro** was rewarded with Kolossi and the Commanderie estate, plus the title “**Grand Commander of Cyprus**” for himself and his descendants. The title persisted in use long after the Ottoman conquest; in **1799** it passed to the **Motsennigo** family through marriage into the Cornaro line.

1.9 Associated Industrial Remains: Aqueduct and Sugar Works

On the east side of the castle, the brochure highlights surviving remains tied to sugar production: an aqueduct and a large vaulted room housing refinery and sugar-mill elements—part of a broader sugar production/processing complex dating from the Hospitallers’ control. These assets later became part of the Cornaro family’s wider financial network (alongside other installations in the area).

2. Architectural Significance

2.1 Architectural Significance

Kolossi Castle is presented as one of Cyprus’s most important monuments of medieval military architecture, with features that match a classic Crusader-era keep concept—a compact, three-storey square tower prioritizing defense while also serving as an administrative headquarters.

2.2 Classic Crusader Keep Design

A tall, thick-walled, three-storey square keep acts as a strongpoint and command centre—built to dominate the surrounding estate and control movement, storage, and administration from a defensible core.

2.3 Defensive Elements

The brochure highlights roof/upper-level defenses such as machicolations, embrasures, and battlements/parapets, supporting surveillance and active defense over the entrance and perimeter.

2.4 Integrated Complex: Protection + Production

Kolossi isn't described as "just a castle": it functioned as the centre of a large estate and production system. The keep and its courtyard areas sit next to industrial remains—aqueduct, refinery spaces, and sugar-mill ruins—showing how military architecture protected high-value agricultural and manufacturing output (sugar and wine/Commandaria).

Appendix 2 - Research

Extracted research text from the brochure

1. Inside Text

In the centre of the most abundant valley of southern Cyprus, at the western environs of Lemesos (Limassol), is Kolossi castle, one of the most significant monuments of medieval military architecture in Cyprus. This fertile valley at the mouth of the Kouris river was often mentioned by the medieval chroniclers for its vast expanse of sugar plantations, vineyards, olive groves, carobs, cereals and cotton plants and during the Frankish period was one of the most important fiefs.

The area was named Kolossi after its first feudal lord Garinus de Colos. In 1210 the fief was transferred to the military Order of St John of Jerusalem by the Lusignan King Hugh I. It was then that the first castle was built, the ruins of which are preserved around the west and east side of the present structure.

Having lost Acre in 1291, the Hospitallers transferred the base of their activities to Kolossi in 1306.

Image description - Wall-painting depicting the Crucifixion (16th century)

1306 ownership of Kolossi passed to the Order of the Knights Templar, which was in those days a very strong political power. The castle was returned to the Hospitallers in 1308 however when Pope Clement V issued an edict abolishing the Knights Templar.

Image description - Coat-of-arms of Louis de Magnac

In 1310 the command centre of the Hospitallers was moved to the island of Rhodes but the existing castle at Kolossi continued to be used as a seat of strong military power known as the Commanderie. This status was confirmed in 1380 by a decision of the leadership of the Order. Despite this however, the castle was used primarily as the residence and command centre of the Grand Commander of the Order rather than for the defence of the Kingdom. It was from the castle that the large plantations in the valley of Kolossi and the wider area, in which 60 villages were included, were organised, controlled and exploited.

Image description - Fireplace on the second storey

One of the most important products of the area that the Commanderie traded was the traditional sweet wine of Cyprus, which was named accordingly "Commandaria".

A sequence of attacks by the Genoese in 1373 and the Mamelukes in the years 1402, 1413, 1425, 1426 as well as a successive series of catastrophic earthquakes, rendered the castle into ruins.

In 1454 the Grand Commander of the Order, Louis de Magnac, built a stronger castle that can be seen today.

The castle is stone-built with three storeys, at a total height of 21 metres with walls measuring 2.25 metres.

The ground floor, including two underground water cisterns, was probably used for storage. Entrance to the first storey was via a drawbridge. In one of the two largest rooms on the ground floor, a wall-painting depicting the Crucifixion is preserved on the south wall; in lower left corner of the same wall one can see the coat-of-arms of Magnac with the fleur-de-lis. This is an indication that the room was probably used for worship whereas the adjoining room with a fireplace may have been the main area for meals and entertaining. There are two other rooms on the second storey that were used for accommodation that have two imposing fireplaces that bear on both sides the coat-of-arms of Louis de Magnac.

On the terrace of the castle, one can see embrasures as well as a machicolation above the main entrance that would have been used by the Knights to pour hot water on an enemy seeking to enter the castle.

On the east external façade of the castle is a cross shaped frame that encompasses a marble relief slab depicting the coat-of-arms of the Lusignan Kingdom of Cyprus as well as the coat-of-arms of Louis de Magnac and of two Grand Masters of

the Order of St John of Jerusalem, Jean de Lastic and Jacques de Milly.

In the east yard is a large age-old tree, more than 150 years old, known as Machaerium Tipu or Tipuana Tipu.

In 1488 George Cornaro, brother of the last Lusignan Queen of Cyprus Caterina Cornaro, acting in the interests of the Venetians, convinced his sister to renounce her sovereign rights to the island in favour of the Republic of Venice. He was then given as a reward the castle including the large property of the Grand Commanderie at Kolossi, which the Commanderie of Rhodes still controlled, as well as the title of Grand Commander of Cyprus for himself and his descendants. The family continued to use the title in pretence long after the Ottoman occupation of the island and in 1799 it was granted to the Motsennigo family, a member of which married the heiress of the Cornaro family.

Image description - Coat-of-arms of the Lusignan kingdom of Cyprus, of Louis de Magnac and of two Grand Masters of the Order of Hospitallers

On the east side of the castle one can still see the aqueduct, a large vaulted room, which houses the refinery and the sugar mill, parts of a large sugar production and processing installation that dates to the period when the Order of Hospitallers received control of Kolossi. This installation, as well as the sugar mill located at Seragia in Episkopi, were later

included in the network of financial activities of the Cornaro family in the surrounding area.

Image description - The sugar mill

2. Front / Outer Side Information (placed at the bottom)

2.1 Visitor Information and Notes

- Directional signs are located on the Lemesos (Limassol) – Pafos motorway (A6) and on B6.
- Limited access for persons with disabilities.

2.2 Contact Details

- © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus
- Tel.: 25 934907, 25 305157
- www.mcw.gov.cy/da
- antiquitiesdept@da.mcw.gov.cy