



## Serrabone Priory

*Serrabone Priory* is a masterpiece of Romanesque art, founded in the 11th century. It watches over Boulès valley from the top of the “good hill”, in Catalan, “serra bona”.

### A SPOT OF HISTORY

In 1052, at the request of the Viscount of Brittany, Pierre Bernard, assisted by fifteen Augustinian monks, founded a priory around a small remote church on the outskirts of the Aspres. The priory was significantly altered during the 12th century, with the construction of the vaulted nave to the north and the gallery on the south side, then consecrated in 1151 and took the name *Santa Maria de Serrabona*.

The priory flourished up until the 14th century before individualism and the pursuit of comfort began to disrupt life in the community. Added to that was the political and military instability of the region. Violence spread within the priory and, in 1448, the dismissal of Prior Bernat Joer for “heinous crimes” marked the decline of Serrabone.

In 1592, Pope Clément VIII secularised all the priories of Roussillon. Attached to the chapter of Solsona, the priory gradually fell into decline. The last prior of Serrabone, Jaume Serra, was buried in 1612. The building was abandoned and fell into ruin.

It was not until the end of the 19th century that the priory was given a new lease of life. Upon the initiative of Jaubert de Passa, it was rehabilitated and then restored between 1906 and 1922. In 1968, the department of Pyrénées-Orientales acquired the site and has since been responsible for its maintenance, management, and promotion.

### INFO & CONTACTS

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### PHOTO CREDITS

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### HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS

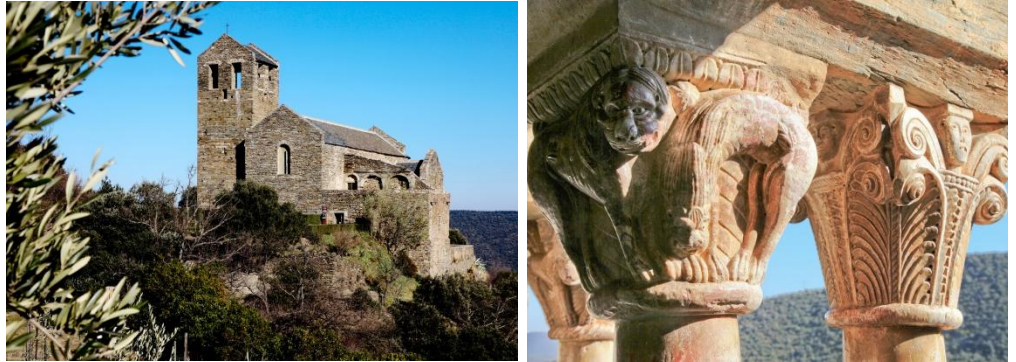
The priory was built using schist stone, and consists of the church and bell tower. The monument overlooks a vast protected natural area.

Inside, visitors will come across two major architectural features: **the cloister and the marble gallery.**

**The cloister** boasts a single bay with stunning open arcades framed by cylindrical pillars. The site is famous for its capitals carved with fantastic beasts and plant designs.

**The gallery** is itself a remarkable piece of workmanship carved from pink Villefranche marble. The nine columns all have a beautifully sculpted capital on the top.

These sculptures are outstanding examples of Romanesque art in Roussillon.



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