



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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Master of Science in Sustainable Architecture

*Abstract*

## **Title**

*The showcase of the Flavors of the Occitan Valleys:  
Recovery project and economic evaluation for a tourist-gastronomic  
enhancement scenario for the Castle of Montemale di Cuneo*

*Tutor/ Antonio De Rossi*  
Correlator/ Manuela Rebaudengo

*By/ Miriam Ravaioli*

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For more than thirty years now, the Castle of Montemale of Cuneo located in Grana Valley has been left in conditions of complete abandonment and due to the raging degradation that is increasingly leaving evident traces on the structure, a timely action is required to save it from an inexorable point of no return.

Considering some important rising local projects for the development of the land, the ideal time may now have come to bet on this splendid architectural object and give it back the visibility it deserves, by inserting it into a strategic axis of opportunities for the tourism promotion of the Grana Valley and more generally of the other Occitan Valleys in Piedmont: lands that historically have been united by a vast heritage of authenticities able to capture a tourism made by intrigued people, in particular referring to the food and wine production of that areas.

The following study, starting from an accurate analysis of the local tourist supply and demand and then moving on to the search for territorial existing networks and policies with which to tighten potential synergies, aims to give a new life to the castle by converting it into a multifunctional attraction focused on the promotion of typical Occitan Valleys's products: a showcase in which customers will be informed about the products, can buy them and taste them in the same place, with the possibility to take accommodation and to enjoy of a variety of other services designed to make guests forging a link with the territory. A new dynamic use of the structure able both to attract external tourism in the area, and to integrate the local community, from the user's point of view and from that of the operators working on the territory, returning to the inhabitants part of that missing relationship of "representation" that the castle has historically assumed towards the village it dominated.

The project for the reuse of the castle was developed starting from the historical analysis of the architectural object and the interpretation of its spaces, studying its complex internal articulation and trying to adapt to it a multidisciplinary of functions capable of satisfying its usability by heterogeneous and demanding users. The design focused on the accessibility of the site and on the removal of architectural barriers was a priority and complex issue that then characterized the aesthetic and formal choices, becoming the real concept of the project: the insertion of new vertical connecting blocks placed externally with the aim of undermining the pre-existing structure as little as possible, through the combination of elements with incisive and declared contemporary characters in order to make the intervention distinguishable but at the same time dialectically compatible. The same attitude and the same morphological language were chosen for the project of the renovation and expansion of the spaces, such as the restoration of the roof and the overlap of a new block on the panoramic terrace.

Trying to imagine a realistic and detailed level of project, some economic evaluation tools were used to analyse within what limits and in what terms an intervention of this magnitude can be even economically sustainable, both from the point of view of ownership who should promote the initiative and from that one of a potential future manager of the new spaces.

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For info:

[miriam.ravaioli.96@gmail.com](mailto:miriam.ravaioli.96@gmail.com)