

# DISCOVERING SOPPE-LE-BAS...

*We invite you to discover the history of Soppe-le-Bas by taking a walk enlivened by illustrated information boards. They will take you through the history of some remarkable buildings and teach you about our ancestors' daily lives. Let's start by a brief presentation which will give you a glimpse of the village's rich past :*

The main street of the village used to be the **Royal road n°83** which connected Lyon to Strasbourg. Several inns lined the road. Soppe-le-Bas was an important relay station. Extra horses were available to help the heavy carts on the steep slopes.

The church was dedicated to Saint Vincent ; patron of the winemakers. Indeed, **the vineyard of Soppe-le-Bas**, the most southern of Alsace, was made up of 181 plots in 1830. In the 19th century, there was also a synagogue and a Rabbi. A large Jewish community used to live in the village.

The first mention of the village dates back to 1259, in a document signed by Otto von Sulzbach, but it is a document from 1585 that talks of a small **castle** in the village of Niedersulzbach belonging to the nobles of Sulzbach. A lease contract of 1781 teaches us about the presence of a **motte-and-bailey castle**, ancestor to the castles of the plains.

The village has known several destructions over the course of the centuries. In 1684, the Habsbourgs of Austria ceded to France all of their possessions in Alsace, of which the fiefdom of Thann which was linked to the county of Ferrette. At that time, **Soppe-le-Bas was the seat of a town hall** which gathered the villages of Mortzwiller, Soppe-le-Haut and Diefmatten, as confirmed in a report conserved in the archives of the Palace of Monaco (The county of Ferrette was passed to the Grimaldis through marriage in 1777).

During the annexation of Alsace by Germany in 1870, Soppe-le-Bas retook the name of **Niedersulzbach**. An imposing customs building marked the border between France and Germany in the direction of Lachapelle-sous-Rougemont. It was destroyed in the war of 1914-1918. French troops retook the village at the start of the Great War, the 7th of August 1914. Soppe-le-Bas was nominated at the order of the army and **decorated with la Croix de Guerre (War Cross)**.

During the Second World War, German customs setup another office in Soppe-le-Bas as well as an office for the sinister Gestapo.

Counting 272 inhabitants in 1962, the village really started to develop from 1993 with the opening of the **bypass of the national road n°83**.

To learn more, consult the page « Histoire et patrimoine » of Soppe-le-Bas at **www.soppe-le-bas.fr** or scan the QR code below.

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