

## *Castel del Monte*

### **Historical background - Engineering geological conditions and problems:**

Frederick II had *Castel del Monte* built around 1240: it is the most famous of the numerous Swabian castles in the Puglia region, both for the recurrent use of the number eight (external perimeter of the courtyard, shape and number of towers) which is full of symbolic meaning and because of its uncertain function.

The sixteen trapezoidal rooms are characterised by refined sculptural adornments in which ancient (motifs belonging to the classical repertoire) and modern (elements clearly inspired by gothic European) are blended along with elements from the Arab world.

From a geological point of view, the Puglia region is a calcareous tableland; the ground is only a few meters above the sea level.

For this reason, *Castel del Monte* does not show any geological problem, except for stone weathering.



*Castel de Monte, air view*  
([www.laterradipuglia.it](http://www.laterradipuglia.it))



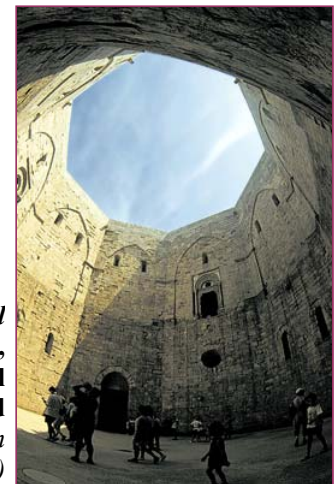
*Castel de Monte* ([www.laterradipuglia.it](http://www.laterradipuglia.it))

### **Investigations and protection measures already realized:**

In 1876 the castle was purchased by the Italian State in a very precarious condition but lengthy restoration work has enabled its recovery. The works lasted about a century.

### **Supplementary information:**

UNESCO included *Castel del Monte* in the World Heritage List in 1996 because of its uniqueness and considering that the site is of outstanding universal value in its formal perfection and its harmonious blending of cultural elements from northern Europe, the Muslim world, and classical antiquity. *Castel del Monte* is a unique masterpiece of medieval military architecture, reflecting the humanism of its founder.



*Castel del Monte, internal courtyard*  
([www.stupormundi.it](http://www.stupormundi.it))

### **References on studies already done:**

DE TOMMASI (1981) "I restauri tra leggenda e realtà". Castel del Monte, Adda Ed., Bari  
GRASSI D. (2000) "Sul ruolo delle scienze della terra nella risoluzione dei problemi di recupero e salvaguardia del patrimonio storico – artistico – monumentale" Convegno GEOPEN 2000. Torino 7-9 Giugno 2000, pag. 552