

Louis XIV 1638 - 1715

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1615 – Marriage of Louis's parents Louis XIII of France, son of Henri IV and Marie de Medici, with Anne of Austria, Spanish princess daughter of Philip III of Spain and Margaret of Austria.

1638 - Louis XIV was born on 5 September 1638 in the Château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye. His birth came after 23 years of his estranged parents' childlessness, leading contemporaries to regard him as a divine gift, and his birth, a miracle. Thus, he was named "Louis-Dieudonné" (Louis-God-given).

1640 – Birth of Louis's younger brother, Philippe, Duke of Anjou, later Orléans, “Monsieur”.

1642 – Death of Louis XIII's powerful Prime Minister, Cardinal Richelieu.

1643 – Death of Louis XIII on 14 May. Anne had his will annulled by the Parlement de Paris abolished the regency council and became sole regent. She names Mazarin, a former assistant of Richelieu, Prime Minister.

1647 – Louis is seriously ill with smallpox. He recovers but remains permanently marked.

1648 - Mazarin successfully negotiates the Peace of Westphalia bringing to an end the Thirty Years War in Germany, although war continues between France and Spain till the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659. Its terms ensured Dutch independence from Spain. Austria ceded to France all Habsburg lands and claims in Alsace and acknowledged French de facto sovereignty over the Three Bishopsrics.

Outbreak of the Fronde, a rebellion of the Paris parlementaires (high court judges) over a taxation dispute, and later (1650) also many great nobles (Louis's uncle Gaston d'Orléans, his cousin the Grande Mademoiselle, and Princes of the Blood like Condé and Conti) against the foreign Queen regent and her Italian prime minister. Founding of the Académie des Beaux Arts.

1651 – Anne and Louis are prevented by the Parisians from escaping Paris and are virtual prisoners in their residence, the Palais-Royal. Louis is declared adult by a traditional Lit de Justice.

1653 – With Louis's coming-of-age and coronation the Fronde gradually loses steam and ends when Mazarin returns triumphant after having fled into exile on several occasions.

1654 – Sacre of Louis XIV in Reims.

1658 – Louis is ill with typhus. He loses his hair and begins wearing wigs imitated by his courtiers. Begins wearing a moustache.

1659 - Treaty of the Pyrenees puts an end to war with Spain.

1660 - Louis marries Maria Theresa eldest daughter of Philip IV of Spain.

1661 - At Mazarin's death in 1661, Louis declares he will govern alone without naming a Prime Minister. Orders the arrest of Nicolas Fouquet, the flamboyant and corrupt superintendant of finances. Birth of the Dauphin, Louis de France. Begins first enlargements of château de Versailles directed by Louis Le Vau (until 1668). The gardens are laid out by André le Nôtre.

1662 – Beginning of liaison with Louise de la Vallière.

1664 – First great celebration at Versailles - Les Plaisirs de l'Île Enchantée.

1665 – Names Jean-Baptiste Colbert his new superintendant of finances. The death of Philip IV of Spain in 1665 precipitated the War of Devolution on the excuse that the Spanish province of Brabant should have devolved to Louis's Spanish Queen Maria Theresa. Bernini arrives in Paris to design new addition to the palace of the Louvre. His plans will eventually be rejected.

1667 – Creation of the Code Louis to modernize and justice in the Kingdom. Colbert names La Reynie police lieutenant of Paris, bringing order into turbulent city.

1668 – At first in favor of the French, the Dutch take fright at French successes and form the triple alliance with Sweden and England against Louis. Beginning of liaison with Athénais de Montespan. Le Vau begins building of great apartments, the “first envelope” at Versailles (until 1670).

1669 - Conclusion of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle puts an end to the war.

1670 - Louis decides to demolish the northern walls of Paris in 1670 and replace them with wide tree-lined boulevards.

1671 – The young secretary of War Le Tellier, marquis de Louvois overtakes the 52-year old Colbert in his influence over the young King.

1672 – Beginning of Franco-Dutch War. The rapid invasion and occupation of most of the Netherlands precipitates a coup, toppling the stadtholder De Witt and bringing William III to power. Spain and the Emperor join the Dutch alliance though England withdraws.

1678 - The Treaty of Nijmegen brings war to an end. Louis returns all captured Dutch territory, but gains more territory in the Spanish Netherlands and the province of Franche-Comté. Jules Hardouin-Mansart begins Hall of Mirrors and the new south (midi) and north wings of Versailles, extends the courtyard and builds the new stables (until 1686).

1679 – Disgrace of Mme de Montespan.

1680 – Creation of the Comédie-Française.

1682 - Louis officially moves the royal court to Versailles. Cavalier de La Salle claims the vast Mississippi basin in America for Louis, naming it "Louisiane".

1683 – Death of the Queen Maria Theresa. Louis secretly marries his mistress, Madame de Maintenon on 10 October 1683 at Versailles. Death of Colbert.

1684 – With the Truce of Ratisbon Spain, cedes most of the conquered territories to France for a duration of 20 years.

1685 - Louis revokes the Edict of Nantes tolerating Protestants in the kingdom of France. They now have to convert voluntarily or forcibly. Painful removal of Louis’ teeth removed along with part of his upper jaw.

1686 - On the advice of his secret wife, Madame de Maintenon, Louis signed letters patent creating the “Institut de Saint-Louis” at Saint-Cyr for “filles pauvres de la noblesse”. Painful removal of anal fistula. Begins suffering from gout. He shaves his moustache.

1688 - War of the League of Augsburg (1688–1697) against Spain, Sweden, Saxony and Bavaria and later William III’s England, is caused by dynastic hereditary quarrels and the Emperor’s continued resentment of the spread of French territories and power.

1693 – The King stops leading his armies at the front.

1697 - The Treaty of Ryswick ends the War of the League of Augsburg. Louis secures permanent French sovereignty over all of Alsace, including Strasbourg, thus guaranteeing the Rhine as the Franco-German border.

1699 – Founding of the Académie des Sciences (first gathered by Colbert in 1666).

1701 – Death of Charles II last Hapsburg King of Spain who leaves his domains in his will to Louis’ grandson the Duke of Anjou, who becomes the new King with the title of Philip V. The rest of Europe turns against Spain and France launching the War of the Spanish Succession (1701 – 1714). Death of Philippe, “Monsieur”, Louis’ brother.

1711 - Death of the Dauphin (“Monseigneur”).

1712 – Death of Monseigneur’s son, the Duke of Burgundy soon followed by his elder son, Louis, Duke of Brittany.

1715 - Louis receives a Persian embassy in Versailles. After a reign of 72 years, Louis dies of gangrene at Versailles on 1 September, 1715, four days before his 77th birthday. He is buried in the royal basilica of St Denis. He is succeeded by his

last remaining great grandson, last son of Burgundy, a five-year old boy, the duke of Anjou, now Louis XV. Philippe d'Orléans, the late King's nephew has Louis's will annulled in the Parlement de Paris after his death and makes himself sole Regent of the kingdom.

Principal artistic and cultural figures of the Reign:

Gian Lorenzo Bernini (Le Bernin) (1598 – 1680) – Sculptor, architect

André Charles Boulle (1642 – 1732) - Ebéniste

Philippe de Champaigne (1602 – 1674) - Painter

Antoine Coyppel (1661 – 1722) - Painter

Antoine Coysevox (1640 – 1720) – Sculptor

François Desportes (1661 – 1743) – Animalpainter

François Girardon (1628 – 1715) - Sculptor

Jules Hardouin-Mansart (1646 – 1708) -Architect

Pierre Denis Martin (1663 – 1742) – Architecturepainter

Molière(Jean-Baptiste Poquelin) (baptized 1622-1673) – Playwright, actor

Charles de La Fosse (1636 - 1716) - Painter

Nicolas de Largillière (1656 – 1746) – Portraitpainter

Charles Le Brun (1619 - 1690) - Painter, Directorof Academy of Fine Arts

Adam Franz van der Meulen (1632-1690) – Battlepainter

André Le Nôtre (1613 – 1700) - Gardener

Louis Le Vau (1612 – 1670) – Architect

Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632 – 1687) – Composer, musician

Pierre Mignard (1612 - 1695) – Painter and 2nd Premier Peintre du Roi after Le Brun

Alexandre Jean Oppenordt (1639 – 1715) - Ebéniste

Joseph Parrocel (1646 – 1704) – Battle painter

Nicolas Poussin (1594 – 1665) - Painter

Hyacinthe Rigaud (1659 – 1743) – Portrait painter