



## Home of the Week - Showcase Chateau

[Lacey Rose](#), 07.31.06, 12:30 AM ET

It was built for the Count of Auffy, visited by Thomas Jefferson and considered for purchase by Michael Jackson.

And if Château Villette seems familiar, that's probably because you've seen it before.

The 17th-century residence played a role in both the book and film version of **Dan Brown's** best selling novel, *The Da Vinci Code*, as the home of English historian Sir Leigh Teabing. The estate has appeared in other feature films, including *Le Libertin* and *Le Conte de Monte Cristo*, as well as numerous commercial, print and television shoots.

[Click here for a look inside the Château Villette.](#)

The property, which is currently on the market for \$29.5 million (including furnishings), has also become a fashionable venue for weddings, seminars and other such occasions. Much of that popularity can be attributed to the Chateau's beauty, serenity and location. Indeed, the château is situated in the small village of Villette, near the Parisian suburb of Versailles, best known as home to Louis XIV's palace, the grandest château in Europe.

Château Villette is located some 30 miles northwest of Paris and under an hour from many of France's famed cultural haunts, including the Louvre, the Eiffel tower and Monet's Giverny.

The château was built for the Count of Auffy, **Jean Dyell II**, who served as the ambassador to Italy under **Louis XIV**. It was completed around 1695. The home was originally designed by the famed architect **Francois Mansart**, but the construction of the château was carried out by his nephew, **Jules Hardouin-Mansart**, a leading architect of the king.

Villette features 18 recently renovated bedrooms, each with views of the estate's lake or garden--and in some cases, both. There are also 20 newly redone bathrooms, which feature limestone floors and counter tops, chandeliers, and antique mirrors and furniture. One of the Chateau's two master baths includes a fireplace.

The home features not one, or even two, but three kitchens. The main kitchen, which comes complete with high-end commercial appliances, consists of four rooms totaling some 1,500 square feet. The dining room includes a 17th-century carved stone buffet as well as decadent boiseries and double beverage-cooling fountains.

In addition to a grand stone staircase and entry foyer, highlights are a gilded music salon, banquet room, billiard room and gym. Other buildings include a sizable chapel with two adjacent reception rooms as well as a stable and greenhouse.

The château rests on 185-plus acres of garden, designed by **André Le Notre**, best known for the garden designs at Versailles. In fact, since Le Notre and Hardouin-Mansart designed both properties around the same time, Villette was dubbed, "Le Petit Versailles" (or little Versailles).

Swans, ducks and fish frequent the property's two rectangular lakes. Visitors have the option to swim, play tennis or horseback ride on the grounds. The estate also includes a cascade and fountain, adorned with a bronze sculpture of Neptune from Saint Ouen.

**Forbes Fact** - Jaws dropped when the Château de Versailles's Hall of Mirrors, a space complete with 350-plus mirrors, first opened in the 17th century. Both the lavishness of the design and the idea that one could see oneself completely were true

novelties at the time. Of course, the goal had been precisely that--to convey to all visiting ambassadors the power and majesty of the French King. Mission accomplished.

For more information, please contact Olivia Hsu Decker, co-founder of Decker Bullock Real Estate Services and the château's current owner:

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The decadent château offers 18 bedrooms, 20 baths and some 185 acres of garden



© Olivia Decker

The home's 20 newly renovated bedrooms offer pristine views of the estates lake or garden.



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Ideal for a wedding, the property's chapel can seat 100 guests. The reception can be held in one of the two adjacent reception rooms.



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The Château features upward of 185 acres of garden space, immaculately designed by Andre Le Norte, who is best known for his work at the Versailles gardens.



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A detailed statue of Neptune is the focal point of the property's magnificent fountain.