MARC MAISON

120, rue des rosiers
93400 Saint Ouen
(France)
tel: +33.(0)6.60.62.61.90
contact@marcmaison.com



Old photo of the Beauharnais hotel.



Egyptian porch of Beauharnais hotel.



The Four Seasons Room, at Beauharnais hotel.

Current residence of the German ambassador in France, **Beauharnais hotel**, on rue de Lille, is a Parisian *"hotel particulier"*, and has been a German property for two centuries. Architect **Boffrand** (Nantes, 1667- Paris, 1754) bought grounds situated between the quay and the rue de Bourbon on the 14th August 1713, in the faubourg Saint-Germain area, and in no time built two "hotels particuliers" there, the **hotel de Seignelay** and the **hotel de Torcy**, currently known as the **Beauharnais hotel**. From 1715, the hotel de Torcy was bought by **Jean-Baptiste Colbert**, marquis of Torcy, state minister and secretary, nephew and godson of the big Colbert. Respecting the traditional typology of Parisian hotels, he made it into a rectangular building with two floors and a mansard roof, raised between the courtyard and the garden and protected from the street by a large simple wall with a carriage entrance in the centre. This hotel was owned by several landlords, in 1804, it was owned by **Eugène-Rose de Beauharnais**, the future Prince Eugène, vice-king of Italy and Napoléon's stepson. The hotel was partially run-down and restoration work and changes were undertaken by his mother, **Empress Joséphine**, and the architect Nicolas Bataille, as soon as the last occupants left. The Egyptian porch on the courtyard side, and the Empire style interior decoration was added under his ownership. However faced with expenses, **Emperor Napoléon** was allowed to freely make use of the hotel from 1806, and thus Prince Eugène never actually lived in his hotel.

During the fall of the Empire, in 1818, the hotel was acquired by the Prussian king. It was lived in for some time by **Bismarck** in 1862 then it became the German embassy in 1871. In 1944, during the liberation, the hotel was taken from Germany and was returned to the Germans in 1961 by General De Gaulle. Its interior decoration is one of the most beautiful examples of the Empire style, and its history hails a milestone in Franco-German relations.