



BELGIUM: CHATEAU ITALIA

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In the 19th century, the 'castle' once occupied by the noblest families in Belgium found itself gradually surrounded by steelworks. In 1947, workers were brought in from Italy. The castle was divided up into apartments for the migrant workers - no running water and shared amenities. In sum, council housing with medieval turrets. Pensioner Jacques Tosolini, son of Italian immigrants grew up there and now lives in a small house just 50 yards away. At the daily sight of its derelict mossy walls and flaking paint, he set up the «Friends of the castle», bringing together 50 other former inhabitants and 200 of their descendants. Suddenly, the local authorities took an interest when the Italians set about re-appropriating «their» castle.

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