

Adobe Style



Adobe style homes can be found throughout the Southwest. [Adobe](#) has been used for thousands of years as a building material. In fact, it was the first building material used by man. Adobe is a Spanish word that comes from the Arabic word atob, which means sun-dried brick. Dirt and clay are mixed with straw, water is added to make mud, and the resulting mixture is placed in a mold and laid in the sun to dry. The best soil for adobe is 15-30% clay, with the rest being sand or other aggregate.

Adobe walls will absorb heat and radiate it into the house at night. Because the creation of adobe style homes is so labor-intensive, it's considered to be one of the more costly forms of architecture. However, by making use of free labor provided by family and friends, the expense can be reduced dramatically.

Spanish Mission



The original Mission style homes were built in California, and the style has been incorporated in homes throughout the Southwestern U.S. and even as far east as Florida.

The style originated somewhere around the latter part of the 19th century and many were built in the early 1900s.

Mission style homes are similar in design to old Spanish mission churches. The simple Spanish-inspired structures are embellished with curved rooflines, bell towers and patterned tiles.

The homes are usually flanked by shaded porches and the interiors are dark and cool, which is a definite advantage in the desert Southwest. The arid and dry climate makes this style a wise choice.

By the 1920s, architects were combining Mission styling with features from craftsman and prairie style homes. Mission style homes were heavily influenced by the Spanish colonization of Mexico. States in the United States with Hispanic pasts, such as California, New Mexico, southern Arizona, and Florida have numerous examples of this type of architecture.

Mediterranean and Spanish Colonial style homes all incorporate some characteristics of the Mission style.

Here's a listing of features that can be found in Mission Style homes:

- Somewhat plain architecture with stucco siding, or occasionally brick
- Parapet walls - a low wall outlining an otherwise flat or slightly pitched roof
- Espadaña - An espadaña is a curvilinear gable that projects above the roofline.
- Spanish tile roofing material
- Square tower with a bell
- Mission style homes normally have a stucco chimney, some of which have a gable-roofed chimney top.
- The front door is often of heavy wood with wrought iron hardware. Doors often have a rounded design.
- Windows are round or quatrefoil (clover-shaped)
- Arched dormers and elaborate arches. Covered archway leading to the front door. You find elaborate arches above windows and porch openings as well.
- Twisted columns supported by large square pillars
- Decorative work such as patterned tilework around windows and on the walls, stone carvings, or elaborate grillwork.

Pueblo or Santa Fe



The style is characterized by:

- Flat Roofs
- Vigas and Latillas
- Rounded Corners on Walls and Window Ledges
- Earth-colored stucco or Adobe-brick walls
- Portals
- Interior Courtyards
- Kivas
- Bancos and Nichos
- Tile or Brick Floors
- Common Santa Fe features may include:
 - **Flat Roofs**
 - Adobe homes are distinguished by their flat roofs and soft, rounded contours.
 - **Vigas and Latillas**
 - The roofs are supported by a network of vigas, long beams whose ends protrude through the outer facades, and latillas, small stripped branches layered between the vigas.
 - **Rounded corners on Walls and Window Ledges**
 - Exterior Walls Extend above Roof Line. Arched and curved entryways, doorways and walls are common in Santa Fe style homes. This contributes to the total curviness of these homes.
 - **Earth-colored stucco or Adobe-brick walls**
 - Traditionally, Southwestern homes are built of adobe -- sun dried clay bricks mixed with grasses for strength, mortared with simple mud, and then covered with additional protective layers of mud. The majority are imitation adobe made of stuccoed concrete.
 - In the days when adobe homes were prevalent, it was a cheaper form to build with, but now the craftsmanship and tradition are harder to find and as a result more costly.
 - **Portals**
 - Portals are patios that allow the home owners to extend their home out into the yard facing a beautiful vista of some sort. May thru October is portal weather. Dining and relaxing occur out of doors during this time of year.
 - These portals are usually framed by large local wood corbels (decorated part of columns) and the same heavy wood beams inside the house (vigas)
 - **Interior Courtyards**
 - Later on in the Spanish era in Santa Fe, homes incorporated the plaza of the Anasazi community into a courtyard in individual homes.

- The courtyard can be found in the front of a house as a space you walk thru before entering the home, or in the backyard as a place to relax or both. It is usually a sensual experience of flowering plants and fountains.
- **Kivas**
- Today's Santa Fe Style Homes must have a fireplace or more than one. The style of the curved corner fireplace is called a Kiva fireplace.
- **Bancos and Nichos**
- The details of Santa Fe Style homes include nichos which are small carved out spaces in hallways and on walls to display Santos (Carvings of Saints) or pieces of art. Bancos are the curved shelf like area around the fireplace or in the wall in an adobe homes to display items of value or importance.
- **Tile or Brick Floors**
- Most floors in the Santa Fe style homes are of tile or brick. Carpets can be found, but that is not the true Santa Fe style.

Spanish Colonial



Most Spanish Colonial Style homes are described by the term Spanish Colonial, or Spanish Colonial Revival Style.

The Spanish Revival Style, or sometimes called Mediterranean architecture incorporates features from Mediterranean countries like Spain, Portugal or Italy. The influences of northern Africa and Mexico are also apparent.

Some of the features of this type of home also incorporates features of Hopi and Pueblo Indian dwellings into their design.

Whatever you want to call this style, the tiled courtyards and stucco archways combine into a charming style of home that is popular with many Southwestern US residents. Perhaps the simplest way to describe these homes is the term Spanish Eclectic.

Spanish inspired houses usually have these features:

- Flat or low-pitched roof (typically with red clay tile) and little overhang
- Red roof tiles
- Little or no overhanging eaves
- Stucco siding
- Arches, especially above doors, porch entries and main windows
- White stucco walls over brick
- Asymmetrical front with small, irregularly placed windows
- Doors often heavy with decorative carving common on heavy wooden doors and windows.
- Wrought-iron fixtures, and balcony railings
- Arched entryways; low round or square towers.
- Rectangular or L-plan
- Predominantly one-story

Some Spanish inspired homes have:

- Asymmetrical shape with cross-gables and side wings
- Spiral columns and pilasters
- Carved stonework or cast ornaments
- Patterned tile floors and wall surfaces
- Interior or exterior courtyards
- Asymmetrical shape with cross-gables and side wings

Mediterranean



The Mediterranean, or what is sometimes called Spanish/Mediterranean, is a design marked by flowing design and predominately open floor plans. This creates a feeling of openness and is excellent for entertaining.

Many of the design elements of the Mediterranean style is reminiscent of Italian villas, Spanish Revival or Mission style architecture. Normally characterized by a stucco exterior and tile roofs, these homes are popular in the Southwest due to the cooling effect of the tile roofs.

A close cousin to the Mission and Pueblo style architecture, Mediterranean style homes are characterized by arched window and door openings, inset deeply into the walls. The climate is a major factor in building this type of home. The large number of sunny days and the cooling effect of the elements of this design make it a sure winner for the desert Southwest.

Mediterranean houses usually have these features:

- Doors & windows are frequently arched
- Low-Pitched roofing with red-tiles (Spanish Tile)
- Exterior stucco walls (often in pastel hues)
- Window deeply recessed giving an appearance of thick walls
- Asymmetrical layout and open, airy living spaces
- Archways and exposed wooden beams frame the rooms

Some Mediterranean homes have:

- Rectangular or L-plan
- Asymmetrical with front porch
- Arcades with arched openings
- Occasional use of colored ceramic tiles for ornamentation
- Can be one or two stories
- Recessed entry
- Balconies and window grilles, made of wrought iron or wood.
- scrolled or tile-capped parapet walls
- Articulated door surrounds.
- Feature detailing is sometimes done in keystone.
- Tile is used to accent the walls, roofs, floors, countertops, showers and walkways.
- Tile along with limestone, granite, brick and concrete and pebbles are also used in floors.

Hacienda



Hacienda style homes, sometimes called the "Spanish Charmer" transports the visitor to old Mexico.

The style shows influence of the Spanish in its tendency to sport low, red-tiled roofs and Spanish tile on the interior.

It is normally a structure built of natural adobe or stucco. Vigas protrude through the exterior walls and grace the interior ceilings. The stucco, or adobe outer walls might protrude above the roof in a Native American style similar to the Santa Fe or Pueblo style home.

A front porch creates a quiet place to relax and enjoy coffee and a relaxing morning retreat. Often, the porch is surrounded by a protective courtyard. A cool and refreshing garden provides protection from a more harsh desert landscape outside.

Porches and courtyards are popular in the rear of a Hacienda style home as well. Places to relax and reflect on the day's events make such a retreat an ideal extension of the indoor space into the outdoors.

Windows are few and small and interiors of a Hacienda style home is dark and cool. Many rooms have doors that open onto porches, inviting residents to partake in the outdoors.

Spanish Eclectic



Spanish eclectic is a term used to describe the modern tendency to mix styles and create a home based on the homeowners' own desires and needs. Designers borrow from a number of Southwestern styles to create something unique from a hodge-podge of architectural features. Instead of a simple Mission-style home, you might find a flat-roofed home with the characteristic parapets mixed with sections of Spanish-tiled, pitched roof. A hacienda-style courtyard might be mixed with Moorish details around windows and doors.

So this charming mixture of styles and design features may be called Santa Barbara, Santa Fe, or simply Southwestern.

This type of homes may contain some or all of these features:

- Flat or low roofs
- Red clay roofing tiles
- Parapets
- Stucco siding
- Adobe walls
- Arched entryways
- Heavy carved wooden doors
- Decorative wrought iron
- Decorative floor and wall tiles
- Portales with ornately carved support posts
- Vigas and latillas
- Ceiling beams
- Walled courtyards

Monterey Style



The origin of the Monterey Style Homes comes, not surprisingly from Monterey, California.

During the early colonization of the Southwest, the Spaniards built simple homes with low roofs, thick walls and small windows. Later, in the mid 19th century, homes took on more of the characteristics of the English Colonials' homes. Their houses became more complex, two-storied structures with narrow second floor balconies. The Spanish heritage was jealously preserved in many Southwestern communities.

Santa Barbara, California is one example that can be observed of this effect. After an earthquake destroyed a large number of the structures in the city in 1925, the city planning commission that was subsequently appointed required that all new structures be Spanish in design. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, a city ordinance mandated that all new buildings in the historic area of town be constructed in the Pueblo Style. In each of the above mentioned circumstances, a unique style developed that took on the names of their respective cities. Therefore, today you will find homes called Santa Barbara style, or Santa Fe style respectively.

Monterey Style homes built in California in the 1920s are another example of unique styles that evolved from previous examples. Monterey, California made this style famous, with their two-story Spanish homes that featured a porch tacked on the front. One could also find porches on the main floor tucked under the roof, reminiscent of the French Creole style homes. The stucco siding and low, Spanish-tiled roofs gave them that Spanish flair.

The style is characterized by:

- Red tiled or wooden shake roofs
- Porches on the second floor spanning the entire width of the house
- Walls painted light colors with trim of another color
- Stained wooden doors
- Single-hung windows with wooden frames
- Symmetrical design
- Shutters on the windows
- First floor porches tucked under the main roof
- Thick walls of stucco or plaster

Territorial Style



Southwest Territorial Style is another popular home style in the Southwestern United States. The style is reminiscent of the Native American styles, showing many similarities to the Pueblo and Santa Fe styles. Territorial, however, is a more straight-lined style influenced by the Anglos in the 1800s. The Southwestern Territorial Style features:

- Flat roofs with parapets extending above the walls.
- Smooth plaster or stucco walls (similar to many Southwestern styles)
- Sturdy vigas supporting the ceiling structures.
- Brick coping at the tops of the walls.
- Milled woodwork, such as pedimented lintels above window frames.
- Painted wood trim at the doors and windows.
- Turned wood posts to support the porches (portales)

Due to the blending of styles that is common in the Southwest today, true Territorial-style architecture may be difficult to find. However, the features found in a this style home are often found blended with other types of architecture.

Take for example the vigas. This is a popular and common architectural feature of many Southwestern home styles. Portales in the Southwestern home are often found with turned wood posts common in the territorial homestyle.

In Pueblo style homes, you find the flat-roofed structures similar to territorial homes. However, the brick coping at the top of the parapets, common in the territorial style, is normally missing in the simpler Pueblo style structures.

Other features more commonly found in territorial homes are the milled woodwork details, such as pedimented lintels on the window frames.

Whatever Southwestern details your Southwestern Dream Home contains, it's sure to be a hit with true lovers of the Southwest.