



Mediterranean Revival Style Guide

MEDITERRANEAN REVIVAL



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Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Mediterranean Revival | 1 |
| Additional Examples of the Style | 2 |
| Building Form and Massing | 3 |
| Roof Shape and Materials | 3 |
| Cladding | 4 |
| Foundation | 4 |
| Chimneys | 4 |
| Porches and Entryways | 5 |
| Railings and Balustrades | 5 |
| Windows | 6 |
| Awnings | 7 |
| Doors | 7 |
| Garage Doors | 8 |
| Porte-Cochères | 8 |
| Decorative Features | 9 |
| Lighting | 10 |
| Fencing | 11 |
| Paint Colors | 12 |
| Notes | 13 |



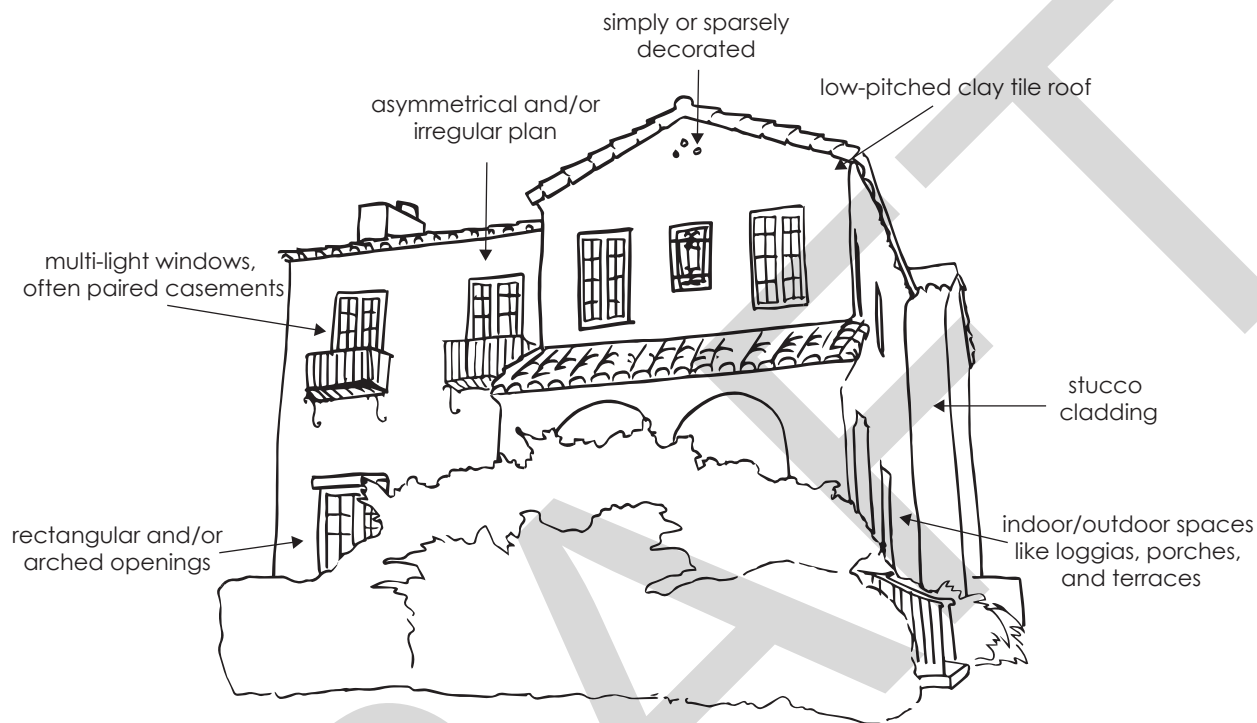
This section of the Long Beach Historic District Design Guidelines is part of a larger document created as a planning tool for the City's **historic districts**. The guidelines are intended to provide recommendations, inspiration, and advice as part of an instructive framework that will help guide sensitive changes to historic properties and encourage rehabilitation. By their nature, design guidelines are flexible. As such, outcomes may depend on the resource, the surrounding district, and the goals of the proposed project.

Any changes to the exterior of the property must be given prior approval by Historic Preservation staff through a **Certificate of Appropriateness**, and all projects may be subject to other City requirements not listed within these guidelines.

The first instance of certain terms throughout the Guidelines are highlighted in **bold** text. These terms are defined in a glossary in *Chapter 5: Additional Resources*.

For additional information, please refer to the other chapters of this document:

- Chapter 1: Purpose, Procedures & Overview
- Chapter 2: Guidelines for Maintenance and Repair
- Chapter 3: Design Guidelines by Historic District
- Chapter 4: Architectural Style Guides
- Chapter 5: Additional Resources



MEDITERRANEAN REVIVAL (1919-1950)

Mediterranean Revival is a broad term that refers to architecture influenced by that of countries in the Mediterranean region, such as Spain, Italy, Greece, and southern France. In the late 1800s, Southern California was becoming an increasingly popular tourist destination as places like Santa Barbara emerged as resort centers. These resorts attracted affluent, well-traveled visitors—including architects—who were familiar with the Mediterranean region and found Southern California's climate and landscape to be quite similar. A number of these visitors, inspired by their travels to the Mediterranean, decided to build winter homes in cities like Pasadena and Palos Verdes. Many later opted to stay year-round, decorating their lavish new homes with items like tiles, light fixtures, and textiles collected from vacation destinations.¹

These homes began to inspire local manufacturers and designers, and would go on to be published in architectural photography books, particularly during the 1920s. The style continued to be interpreted and became more eclectic as it grew in popularity. Along with one of its architectural counterparts, the Spanish Colonial Revival style, Mediterranean Revival became one of the expected "norms" for Southern California architecture prior to World War II.²

In Long Beach, Mediterranean Revival was part of the larger Period Revival trend in the 1920s until the onset of World War II.³ It was applied to a wide variety of buildings, including single-family homes, multi-family residential buildings, and institutional buildings such as churches and schools.⁴



Additional Examples of the Style

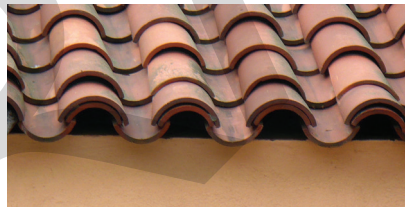
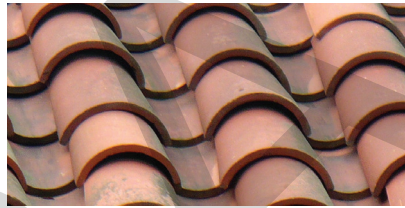
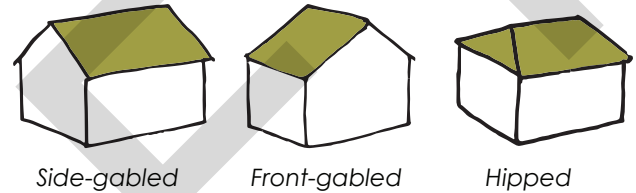


Building Form and Massing

Mediterranean Revival buildings are often asymmetrical, with an irregular, rambling plan; however, there are some examples that are more rectangular, symmetrical, and boxy.

Roof Shape and Materials

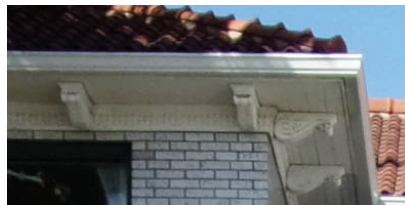
Roofs are low-pitched **gabled** or hipped, or a combination thereof, and are clad in clay tiles. **Eaves** are generally shallow, and they may be open with exposed rafter tails, or boxed with decorative brackets.



Clay tile roofs with flush or shallow eaves



Clay tile roofs with open eaves and exposed rafter tails



Clay tile roofs with boxed eaves and decorative brackets

Cladding

A typical Mediterranean Revival building is clad entirely in stucco. This stucco may have a float or dash finish, and light trowel marks may be left on the surface for decorative effect. Higher style examples may be clad in stone, but this type is unlikely to be found in Long Beach.



Float or dash finish stucco



Stucco with trowel marks

Foundation

The foundation on a Mediterranean Revival building is most likely to clad in stucco.

Chimneys



A chimney is generally not a prominent feature for the Mediterranean Revival style. Where they exist, chimneys will likely be clad in stucco, and may be embellished with a decorative chimney cap.

Porches and Entryways

Entrances are typically flush with or slightly recessed into the primary elevation, and may be emphasized by the door surround. The primary door may be sheltered by a shallow, projecting porch or **portico**.

A Mediterranean Revival building will often include an exterior balcony, **loggia**, or patio, as indoor/outdoor spaces are a hallmark of the style. These spaces may be enclosed by a wall with a series of arched openings or supported by columns.



loggia

Railings and Balustrades

A typical Mediterranean Revival building may have wrought iron railings around second story balconies, **balconettes**, or loggias. Higher style examples may have **cast stone** or turned wood **balustrades** in place of wrought iron.



Wrought iron railings similar to the above examples would be compatible with a typical Mediterranean Revival style building.



Cast stone or turned wood balustrades like the above examples are more likely to be found on a larger, high style Mediterranean Revival style building.

Windows

Mediterranean Revival windows are often multi-light **casement** windows arranged in pairs. The windows may have arched or rectangular openings. Window surrounds are typically absent or consist of simple wood surrounds.



Multi-light paired casement



Multi-light paired casement



Single-light casement



Tripartite arched window, fixed center, side casements



Multi-light paired casement, arched opening



Single-light double-hung (one-over-one)



Fixed window with geometric **muntins**



Multi-light fixed

Awnings

Property owners are encouraged to consider other methods of increasing shade, such as interior shutters or window treatments before installing awnings. A compatible awning for a Mediterranean Revival building would be a cloth awning with open sides, such as a spearhead or spear style awning. The fabric may be solid or striped in dark or bright colors. The bottom edge of the fabric awning—the valance—may be scalloped or straight, like the examples below.



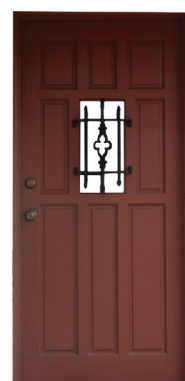
Doors

Doors may be wood paneled or **battened** doors. The doors are typically rectangular in shape, but may also be arched. Secondary doors, often opening onto indoor/outdoor spaces such as balconies, courtyards, and loggias, may consist of fully-**glazed** multi-light French doors or partially-glazed doors, sometimes with transoms.

Battened

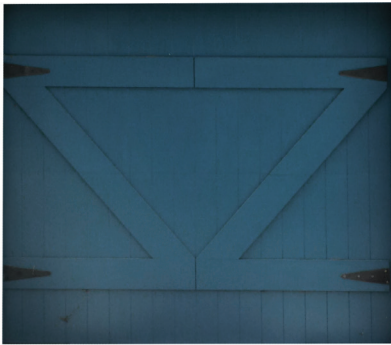


Paneled



Garage Doors

Compatible garage doors should be paneled or battened. **Carriage style** doors are encouraged. Contemporary garage doors are available through various retailers that both mimic the attractive appearance of a carriage style door and operate using convenient electric openers. The use of real wood garage doors is encouraged, but not required.



Wood carriage style garage doors



Compatible contemporary garage doors

Porte-Cochères

A porte-cochère would likely only be found on a higher style example of a Mediterranean Revival residence, but may consist of a rectangular or arched opening extending from the side elevation.



Mediterranean Revival homes in Long Beach with porte-cochères.

Decorative Features

The Mediterranean Revival style is not characterized by extensive ornamentation, but features such as carved roof brackets, concrete screens, window shutters, cast stone window and door surrounds, and tile work may be present, especially on higher style examples. The glazed ceramic tiles may be very colorful and ornate.



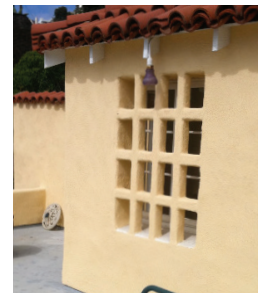
Wood window shutters



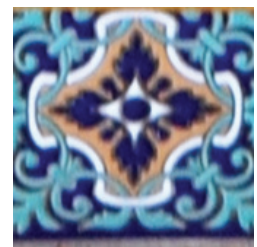
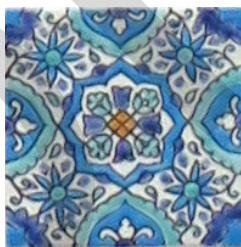
Roof brackets



Cast stone



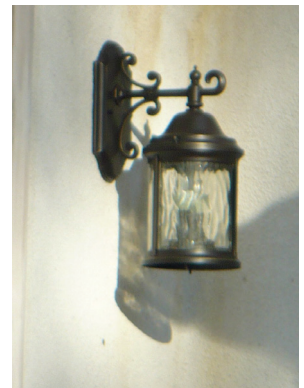
Concrete screen



Decorative tile

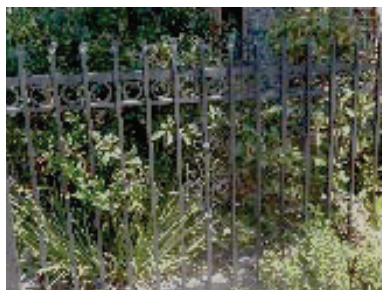
Lighting

When choosing a light fixture for a Mediterranean Revival building, consider a dark metal or wrought iron fixture. The fixtures can be fairly elaborate, with filigree, curving brackets, and chains.



Fencing

Compatible fencing for a Mediterranean Revival property would be metal or a low stucco wall; however, stucco walls are unlikely to be permitted in most historic districts. A wrought iron fence with vertically oriented pickets with voids, like those pictured below, would be acceptable.



Paint Colors

The exterior of a Mediterranean Revival building may be light and neutral in color, or may lean towards a livelier, sun-drenched palette. When selecting a color for a Mediterranean Revival building, property owners are encouraged to consider a light, natural, neutral color for the exterior stucco, such as white, cream, beige, or light tan. Muted shades of peach, salmon, and yellow may also be appropriate. Wood elements such as windows, rafter tails or roof brackets should be painted a contrasting, neutral color. Dark browns or whites are the most common and are strongly encouraged; however, a brighter color that is complementary to the exterior stucco such as muted teal, orange, or blue may be appropriate for some wood elements such as windows and window shutters.

