

## FLORAL PARK ARCHITECTURE

## SPANISH REVIVAL



*Vintage photo of the Spanish Colonial Revival-styled Emison-Georgieff House located at 2335 North Park Boulevard*

A century ago, the perfect weather of Southern California attracted a population from all over the world seeking the good life: an abundance of agricultural land, longer daylight hours, and mild climate and opportunities. Bright sunny days lured the motion picture industry away from the East Coast to Hollywood. Following the path of commerce came the finest pedigree of architects and developers to this promised land of new developments. Floral Park was among the finest of these developments.

Hollywood introduced an entertaining-at-home lifestyle that worked on the screen, but not necessarily in real life in real homes. Instead of being designed for hosting parties, they were designed to be pragmatic and practical. The houses were never intended

to connect to the beautiful outdoors and their floor plans limited outdoor enjoyment.

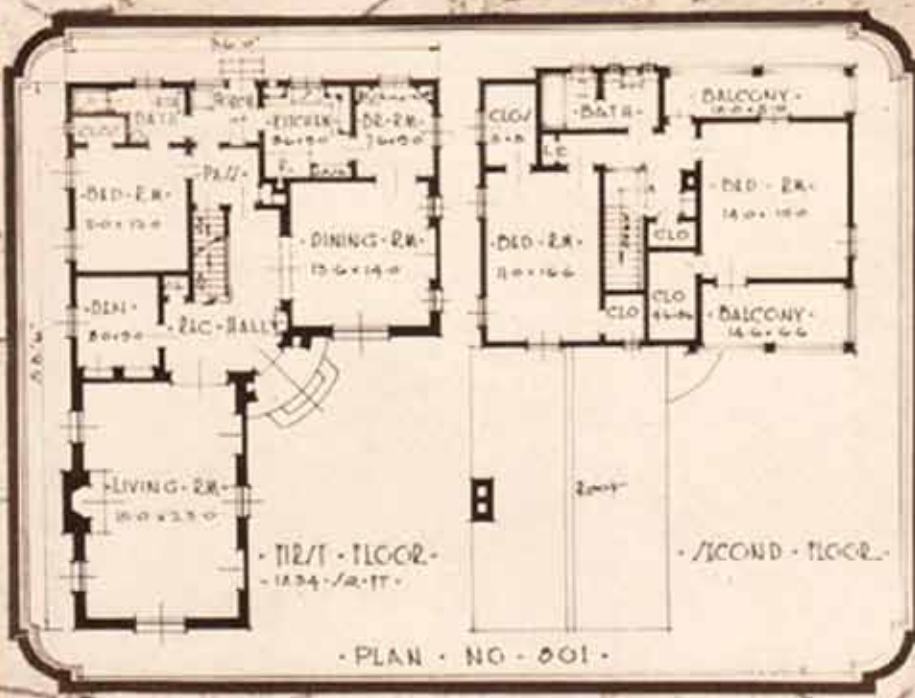
By the late '20s, tastes and lifestyles had changed. Homeowners were now seeking homes that opened to the outdoors and had a greater connection to the land. Many ready-made homes were flopped down onto a site without any consideration of the sun angle, prevailing breeze, view, indoor-outdoor relationship, sightline, furnishing layout or room privacy. Furthermore, the lack of bathrooms and inadequate closet space rendered these kit houses obsolete, signaling the end of Sears Roebuck kit house empire.

Beyond the beautiful and calm Southern California weather lurks the harsh, extreme temperatures that were highly destructive to buildings. Prolonged drought and scorching heat

deteriorates, shrinks, splits and twists wood siding, beams, rafters and finishes. Sudden and infrequent doses of torrential rain caused water intrusion into the woods' open pores and joineries, leaving dry rot and mold which also contributed to rapid deterioration. Weakened structures rarely sustain the jolting and movements of Southern California's infamous earthquakes. Ground movements caused buildings to settle or collapse, often making them inhabitable. Furthermore, above all, Santa Ana winds spread fire from house to house, destroys neighborhoods and cities.

At the turn of the 20th century, both the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and the Great Fire of Santa Barbara leveled both cities. Both calamities led to stricter building codes by requiring steel, shear walls, reinforced masonry (to resist seismic forces) and





### THE CASA LOMA

Here we have that illusive yet so desired quality in a home—an air of hospitality, that quality that invites the guest and welcomes the owner. This plan is a clever adaptation of early Spanish architecture. Rough mill lumber has been used throughout. A red tiled roof complements the white-washed rough plaster.

*Plans and specifications,  
\$21.00.*



Plans for the two-story Casa Loma Spanish Colonial Revival home could be purchased for \$21. This home (mirrored) appears at 1912 Greenleaf Street.





2435 Riverside Drive



2226 Victoria Drive



2020 Victoria Drive



2453 Riverside Drive

fire-rated construction (to retard the spread of fire). Architectural styles such as Victorian, Craftsman and Storybooks with their combustible wood shingle roofs became a paramount concern for both building officials and homeowners.

City planning endorsed the use of lath and plaster, a lightweight concrete, material. It made a non-combustible skin that when used with clay tile roofs helped protect buildings from fire. Plaster, highly malleable, easily applied, and attached over wood stud wall, steel framing, or masonry walls. Its wide adaptability made it an ideal choice for buildings of any scale,

The most significant attribute was that it was patchable, making it ideal for construction revisions and repairs. Its pliability also dissipated seismic energy. A team of artisans can work on plastering walls simultaneously and blend joints flawlessly, thus shortening construction time. Paint adheres to plaster exceptionally well and resists moisture that lifts the paint from the underside. A plaster wall, a blank canvas, made to receive an assortment of architectural applied details of all budgets or, in most cases, just as strikingly beautiful, no details at all and just climbing flowering vines against

the plaster wall. Most importantly, plaster is readily available and easy to create from the abundance of an earthy mixture of sand and aggregate plentiful in nature.

Plaster was not a new invention. Spaniard missionaries built twenty-one California missions that stood the test of time and weathered well in California's climate. However, taller sanctuaries and bell towers, unreinforced brick or stone, built without steel today remain ruins, damaged by earthquakes centuries ago. Adjacent single-story Adobes stood and remained unaffected for over 300 years.

It is these magnificent Spanish antiquities that inspired the creations of the Spanish Colonial Revival movement. It is a style that easily range from small, modest houses to highly decorative stately mansions. It became the style of choice for stars of Hollywood's golden age. It could be seen in commercial, manufacturing, retail, offices, civic buildings, schools, post offices, universities, museums, train stations, and even places of worship. This style works beautifully with any floor plan configuration, a box, L shape, U shape, H shape, Crescent shape, round shape, and even an O shape. Another signifi-

cant attribute is a composition of two stories with one-story wings and even a circular or rectangular tower. Here at Floral Park, there are many Spanish Colonial Revival houses, yet all homes are incredibly different and iconic.

Homeowners could finally create a floor plan to enhance their lifestyle where form follows function. In the past, floor plans were limited and dictated by the style of the home. Spanish Colonial Revival became the ideal Southern California vernacular, seamlessly blending the indoors with the outdoors, with outdoor courtyards and gardens, French doors that opened to the outside, pools and fountains (that provide coolness during the day), outdoor fireplaces and covered loggia.

"To me, Spanish Colonial homes are the type where you can't help but feel comfortable—the kind where you kick off your shoes at the door and pad around in bare feet," said architect Lisa Stacholy. "With plenty of alfresco gathering spaces, these rambling homes express a sense of relaxation and foster a connection to nature and the surrounding environment."

Spanish Colonial homes have several distinct characteristics. The structures are built with very thick walls, recessed windows, typically white



2030 Ross Street



2011 Ross Street



2415 Heliotrope Drive



2412 Heliotrope Drive



*2224 Greenleaf Street*



*2046 Flower Street*



*2460 Heliotrope Drive*



*2127 Ross Street*

stucco over adobe brick or stone or double framed walls (which helped keep the houses cool), clay tile roofs (which prevent heat transfer to the roof attic keeping the house cool), and a limited number of small window openings. Having only a few small windows allows a cool breeze into the house, but doesn't allow direct sunlight, which can make the space warmer.

These homes were often L-shaped, with a central or side courtyard (a key feature of Spanish-style homes). Historically, the yard let families move the cooking, and its accompanying heat and steam, outside. Today, these patios, porches, and courtyards act as informal gathering spots for family, an outdoor room for extended family and friends. Many Floral Park homes have this distinction. One of the most recognizable features is the red barrel tile roof, which was low-pitched. Owners could look out the window and see their own house.

In some cases, homes have entirely flat roofs with castle-like parapets lining the perimeter. Wooden doors accent the light stucco exterior walls and are sometimes arched, mimicked by arched doorways inside the homes. Interiors of Spanish Colonial Revival

homes innately have a casual, warm feel to them since the wood ceiling may not be covered with plaster or accented with trim, and wooden beams often serve as structural support.

A decade before the widespread of this style, Monolith Portland Cement Company led the research and development of the plaster product and the aesthetic design application. They sponsored a team of architects to visit the Mediterranean region of Europe, with its climate strikingly similar to California, to search and document exotic architectural design ideas and outdoor courtyards and gardens. They made note of the many distinctive characteristics that defined Mediterranean design: round arches at entryway, porch and windows, columned arcades, low-relief carving at doorways, windows and cornices, stucco exterior walls, elaborately carved doors, decorative window grills, spiral columns, multi-paned windows, balconies and terraces, curvilinear gable details, circular turrets, tiled roofs, round arches, wrought iron, deeply recessed windows and doors, thick walls, cantilevered second floors, wood balconies, outdoor staircases, stone-carved door frames, beamed ceilings, and decorative, colorful tile.

Portland Cement Company printed thousand of heavy leather-bound portfolio sized books and gifted complimentary copies to California libraries, universities, architectural firms, builders, and motion picture studios. The books were the design Bible for students, teachers, movie set designers, and architects. Many of Floral Park's Spanish Revival homes have architectural details that resemble images from these two books.

The Panama-California Exposition of 1915 in San Diego was perhaps the most significant force in popularizing Spanish Colonial Revival architecture in America. The Spanish style of the exposition's architecture was deliberately selected to be in contrast to previous expositions in the Eastern United States and in Europe. The exposition attracted twenty-two million visitors, seven times the size of the state's population. The display was so successful that Spanish Colonial Revival architecture became perhaps the dominant architectural style of Southern California in the 1920s.

The world's fair inspired architects, planners, builders, building officials, developers, civic leaders, and all attendees that Spanish Colonial Revival should be the unified theme to build

*2410 North Park Boulevard*



*2218 Greenleaf Street*



*1904 Greenleaf Street*



*2102 Ross Street*







seamlessly to the outdoors, gracefully ages in Southern California's extreme weather conditions, resists earthquakes, is fire retardant, features adaptable floor plans, and requires less maintenance) made it the architectural style of former US presidents (Hoover, Nixon, Ford, and Reagan), who maintained Spanish Colonial Revival estates in Southern California—houses that embody the California dream.

*PHOTOS: Above, the Panama-California Exposition of 1915 in San Diego, currently the site of Balboa Park, is credited as popularizing Spanish Revival architecture in America. Below, Spanish Revival home built on the corner of 19th Street and Flower in 1932 in Ball & Honer's Floral Park development.*

new cities and neighborhoods in California. Palos Verdes Estates, Santa Barbara, Ojai, Montecito, Rancho Santa Fe, and San Clemente created CC&Rs that stated only Spanish Colonial Revival was allowed and governed by an art jury to meticulously review developments. To this day, these mature communities retain the highest property values. This methodology inspired The Irvine Company to reach an epitome of success.

The many unique qualities of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, (blends



Spanish Revival architecture borrows from Moorish, Gothic and Byzantine influences. The Panama-California Exposition held in 1915 at Balboa Park in San Diego popularized the style which was favored in Southern California through the 1930s.



#### **TILE ROOF**

Red, fired clay tile roofs are character-defining and include Spanish and Mission styles.



#### **STUCCO WALLS**

Wall surfaces are coated with stucco painted in white or tan and are undecorated.



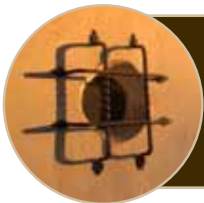
#### **MULTI-PANE WINDOWS**

Multi-pane casement windows are typical. Focal windows with elaboration are also common.



#### **TOWERS**

Round, square or polygonal towers often mark an entrance or stairwell.



#### **DECORATIVE DETAILS**

Iron and wood brackets and railings, hand-painted tile and elaborate chimneys lend character.



#### **OUTDOOR SPACES**

Outdoor courtyards, covered archades and balconies are an important element of the style.



# FURNISHING THE SPANISH COLONIAL REVIVAL HOME

**T**he craze for Spanish-inspired architecture arrived in California in 1915 when Bertram Goodhue designed structures for the Panama-California International Exposition in Spanish Colonial architecture. That, in turn, inspired other architects to study the architecture of Spain and Mexico. By the mid-1920s, the public had whole heartedly embraced the style and Spanish Colonial Revival homes started popping up in Hollywood, Montecito, Pasadena and North Broadway Park. A new style of furniture quickly followed.

In 1929, smart executives at Barker Brothers, the world's largest home furnishing store in Los Angeles, approached Frank Mason and his son George of Mason Manufacturing with a promotional poster from the Fox Film Corporation talkie, "In Old Arizona." They asked the Masons to design a line of furniture inspired by the film for the new Spanish Revival homes that were appearing throughout Southern California. Within a year they had produced a 24-piece furniture line that they called Monterey.



The furniture reflected the influence of old California with its ranchos and haciendas with pieces that were both elegant and whimsical. They were an instant success and became the design of choice for many Hollywood stars for their fashionable Spanish Colonial estates including Will Rogers, Bela Lugosi, Gene Autry, Walt Disney, Norma Talmedge, Clark Gable and Edward G. Robinson.

It wasn't long before other manufacturers also began designing and selling furnishings for Spanish Colonial homes including the Imperial Company, Angeles Furniture Company (with its Monterey-style Coronado line and Granada line of more traditional, carved Spanish furniture) and Stickley (known for their mission-style furniture). Even Sears hopped onto the band wagon with its La Fiesta line. All were popular with Spanish Revival homeowners in the 1930s.

Wood furniture was often given a dark walnut oil stain and fabricated to have the illusion of age. Others were painted with a lively Mexican palette toned down with an asphaltum glaze that created a vintage look. The Mexican cartoonist Juan Intenoché headed the Mason's paint department, and the most valuable pieces of Monterey contain his whimsical designs of donkeys, caballeros, cactus and men sleeping under wide sombreros. He apparently moonlighted at the Angeles Furniture's factory as his designs are also found on their Coronado pieces.



ABOVE: Items from The Angeles Furniture Company's 1930 Granada line furnish the Hillis House on Heliotrope Drive. LEFT: Monterey Furniture brochure, circa 1930.





*Monterey's prohibition bar features copper-lined shelves, Catalina tile and artwork by Juan Intenoeche. Below: Dorrie Hall's Pasadena store, Monterey Garage, specializes in Spanish Revival furnishings.*

One unique feature of early Monterey furniture was the use of rope for seat bottoms of chairs, sofas, and footstools. It disappeared from the line in 1932, however, after women complained that the roughness of the rope caused their stockings to run when they rubbed against it.

One of the most sought-after pieces of Monterey furniture is the prohibition bar. Disguised as a gentlemen's dresser, it swings open to unveil a bar with whimsical Mexican scenes and bright Catalina tile and conceals built-in storage for glasses and bottles. A handle on the lower cabinet features a trick latch that slides to unlock hidden liquor storage. Once again, copies were quickly produced by other manufacturers. Even Bullocks Wilshire sold a version.

Decorative artisan metal workshops opened up throughout California to produce pieces for the proliferation of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. Lamps, chandeliers, candlesticks, fireplace tools, andirons and tables featured wrought iron in what was referred to as Spanish California style. Monterey style furniture often featured wrought iron embellishments.

To compliment its Monterey line of furniture, Mason Manufacturing began selling china, pottery, bed spreads, floor coverings, draperies and lamps. Additionally, the style incorporated California pottery (Bauer, Pacific,

Gladding-McBean) and tile (Catalina, Malibu), plain air paintings, and rich embroidered fabrics. The style lasted until the mid-1930s when the more modern California Ranch style emerged and Spanish Revival fell out of fashion.

Today, Spanish Revival's rustic charm still conjures up the excitement and glamour of early Hollywood. The old world beauty and whimsy that compelled stars of the 1930s to adorn their homes with California Rancho furniture still maintains its allure today with collectors like Diane Keaton, Ryan Murphy and Diane English.

North Santa Ana native ("there was no Floral Park back then, it was just North Santa Ana") and SAHS gradu-

ate Dorrie Hall is an avid collector and authority on California Rancho design. "My sister would drag me along on trips to swap meets to keep her company," said Hall. "I just tagged along for the longest time, but eventually I succumbed and bought my first piece of Monterey furniture, and that's how it all started." Today, Hall is the owner of Monterey Garage, a Pasadena antique store that specializes in early California design. Her finds have been seen in Architectural Digest, celebrity estates, coffee table books, films, TV and homes here in Floral Park.

"Monterey furniture provokes nostalgia for the baby boomers as a link to the early western film and TV shows we grew up on," said Hall. "Still, it's uncanny original and unique designs cannot be denied and crosses barriers with the most unsuspecting admirers. It's art!"

Looking to furnish your Spanish Revival home with early California antiques? Here's where to start:

The Bungalow Store

[TheBungalowStore.com](http://TheBungalowStore.com)

Early California Antiques

[EarlyCal.com](http://EarlyCal.com)

Golden Hour California

[etsy.com/shop/goldenhourcalifornia](http://etsy.com/shop/goldenhourcalifornia)

Monterey Garage

[MontereyGarage.com](http://MontereyGarage.com)

Revival Antiques

[RevivalAntiques.com](http://RevivalAntiques.com)

Wells Tile & Antiques

[WellsTile.com](http://WellsTile.com)

