

## How Spain Made an Impact on the Architecture of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana

Spanish influence on architecture runs deep in New Orleans and Louisiana. The most popular Spanish architecture examples are in the French Quarter of New Orleans. The Spanish period in Louisiana was from 1763-1803. During this time, the French Quarter burned down and was rebuilt by the Spanish in traditional Spanish style. Some of the hallmarks of the Spanish style in the French Quarter are intricate wrought iron balconies and galleries, stucco walls, buildings built close to each other, and close to the street with lush central courtyards. The Cabildo, Presbytere, and St. Louis Cathedral are all examples of these elements. Having walked the French Quarter with my abuela and abuelo many times, I remember them saying how much the French Quarter reminded them of Spain. After visiting Barcelona and Madrid myself, I can see such a huge resemblance in the architecture.

Some of these elements are found outside New Orleans in cities like New Iberia, which was founded by the Spanish in 1779. The Spanish-style galleries with intricate wrought iron balconies can be seen in the historic section of New Iberia, most notably on the RenouDET Building.

Other Spanish architectural styles in Louisiana arrived from the west, especially the California region. The buildings in the central portion of the Louisiana State University campus feature a style known as Mission Revival or Spanish Mission. This style features Spanish tile roofs with warm-colored stucco walls, galleries, and openings containing simple thick columns supporting large, rounded arches.

Spanish Town Historic District is one of the oldest surviving neighborhoods of the Baton Rouge area and contains some of the oldest architectural history with styles dating back to 1823. Some structures remain, including the Spanish/Mission revival structures such as the Frank Apartments, Dupree Apartments, and Theilman Apartments. Because of their importance, the Spanish Town Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

It is very important that we New Orleanians educate ourselves on how the Spanish left their mark on our wonderful city and continue to do so today. Spanish architecture demonstrates great historical and geographical diversity. I was lucky enough to know Mrs. Maria Garcia Daly as her next-door neighbor. Let us continue to treasure and promote the Spanish culture in New Orleans that represents me and many others in her honor.