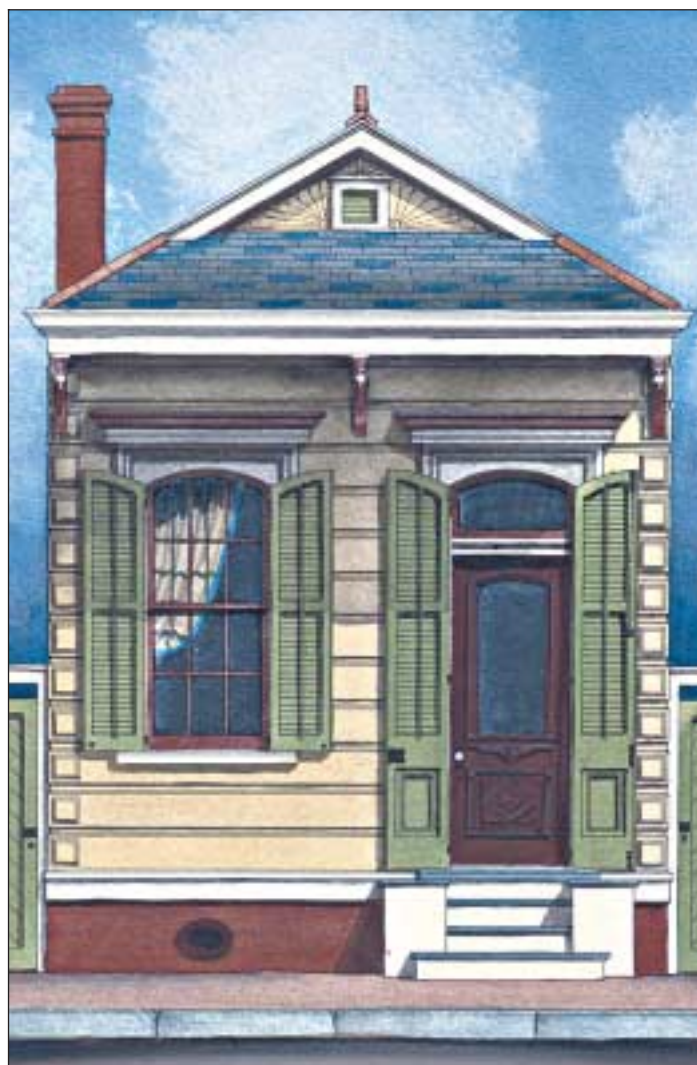


At home

New Orleans: A stew of architectural styles

New Orleans' architectural heritage is as famous — and nationally unique — as its music and food. Its strongest and oldest component is Creole. But because the Crescent City is old (founded 1718) and was populated by a stew of people and cultures — French, Spanish, African, Caribbean, French Acadian and eventually Anglo-American — the built landscape evolved to include a variety of forms and styles. ■ But New Orleans doesn't just have architectural gems, says Susan Sully, author of *New Orleans Style: Past & Present* — the whole city is an architectural gem. "It's *le tout ensemble*," she says. ■ USA TODAY's **Maria Puente** examines a few pieces of the package:

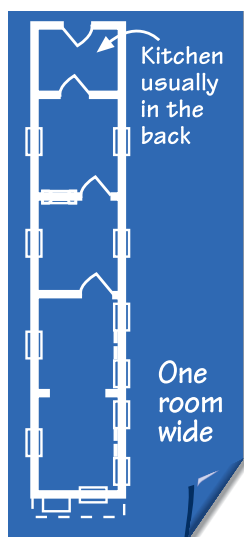
Who decides what can be saved? 7D



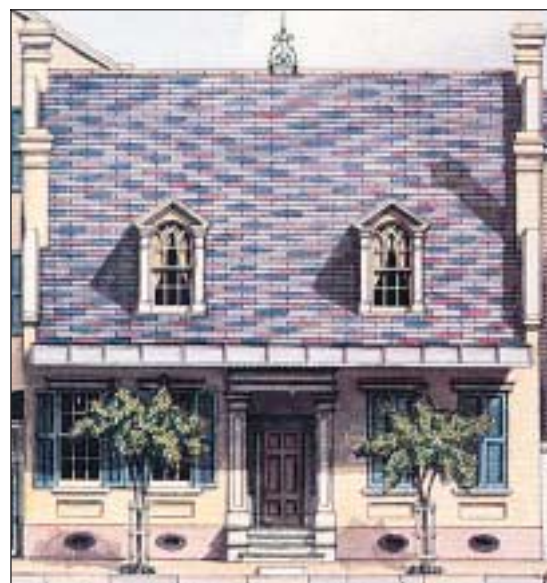
Watercolors by Jim Blanchard, www.jimblanchardgallery.com

Shotgun

The so-called vernacular houses of New Orleans, which appeared around the 1830s and may have evolved out of the Creole cottages. (The traditional definition of the name: You can fire a shotgun from front to back and never hit a wall.) The single shotgun is one room wide, with no interior hallway; residents move through room to room. The two-bay side hall has a front hallway that turns into a side porch. The double-shotgun has hallways that run straight through or terminate in side porches. The camel-back shotgun has a partial second floor over the back, giving the appearance of a hump.

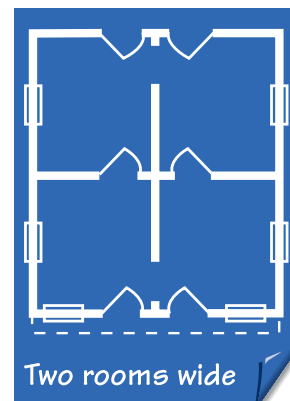


Sources: Susan Sully, *New Orleans Style: Past & Present*; William Mitchell, *Classic New Orleans*



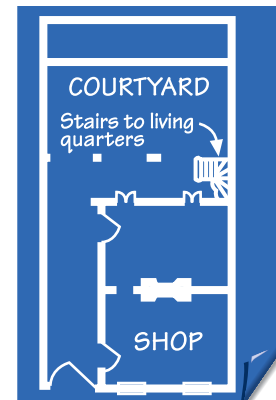
Creole cottage

Typically a square, 1½-story house with four interconnecting rooms and no hallway, usually with a gabled roof facing front and sloping down to shield the sidewalk from rain. The front façade has ground-floor doors and windows with louvered shutters. Built from the late 18th century to the late 19th century, these are similar to the housing style of the Caribbean but may also have derived from urban cottages of France or Spain. They were first built in the French Quarter, then spread out to Creole neighborhoods, such as the Faubourg Marigny and the Bywater District, up and down river from the French Quarter.



Creole town house

As the city became more affluent (and after a series of fires in the late 18th century), people began building narrow two- or three-story brick town houses, typically L-shaped, with multiple bays covered by doors on the front. They have no interior staircases; instead, stairs are outside at the end of a gallery, reached via a *porte-cochere*, or carriage way, which connects the front to a rear courtyard. Rooms flow one into the next, without hallways. Many have businesses on the ground floor.



Floorplans by Adrienne Lewis, USA TODAY



By James R. Lockhart, Martin-St. Martin Publishing Co.

Italianate style: The Blaffer-Coleman house was built in New Orleans in 1869. Architect was Lewis Hilger.

Not all styles are indigenous to the city

Many of the large houses on large lots in the Garden District, the Lower Garden District, Uptown and similar neighborhoods, built pre- and post-Civil War, feature a variety of design styles on the outside, such as Greek Revival, Colonial Revival, Neoclassical, Italianate, Beaux Art, Romanesque Revival, Second Empire and Victorian. But these homes are not defined by their floor plans, and their interior décor may differ from their exteriors.