

Sunset Forest Association
Architectural Review and Building Handbook

Section I - Victorian and Turn-of-the-Century Architecture

The architecture of Mackinac Island is as diverse as its' history. With several earlier periods represented in the "Town" and "Fort" areas, the one theme that has come to truly represent the romance of the Island is the Victorian and Turn-of-the-Century periods – the Victorian Era. With its earliest forms appearing on the Island from the late 1870's to the early 1900's - "East and West Bluffs", in "Town" and within "Hubbard's Annex", these treasures have come to represent a period of time and architecture that has endured, and still captures the imagination of many of us. In our modern hectic world, this architecture embodies all that seems lacking today – romance, grandness, freedom of expression, artistic detail, a slower, quieter and more rewarding pace of life, close knit neighborhoods, and beautiful summer evenings sitting on porch swings and wicker chairs with family and friends.

In today's world of often bland, mass-produced architecture – it is extraordinary beautiful and eye-appealing to see the rare restored "Victorian Lady" or a new construction – big or small - that has paid attention to the correct period detail and has captured the essence. This architecture is meant to be admired. Placing a few scallop shingles on a faux turret on the front façade of a modern style built house does not constitute "Victorian" nor "Turn-of-the-Century".

Nor does this period of architecture represent only one type of style or size. Not all Victorian period homes were grandiose mansions. Large, medium or small – true Victorian and Turn-of-the-Century homes are represented by many common exterior features: a passion for decorative architectural design and details, expressive exterior trim and fretwork, spindle work, gingerbread, scallops, shingles, brackets, carvings, multi-directional wood siding patterns, vaulted elevations, high ceilings, multiple large covered and enclosed porches, bead board / decorative porch ceilings, decorative porch skirting, consistent detail applied to all elevations, wide stairways to porches, stain and leaded glass treatment, ornate windows with variety of sizes and shapes, high multi-pitch roofs, dimensional roof shingling, various shaped turrets, upper level porches and walks, large overhangs and eaves, ornate entry ways and doors, finial roof ornaments, exposed and embellished trusses under the peaks of roof gables and beneath overhang eaves, etc.

Just as important as the architectural details applied to the various styles of period homes are the colors. Victorian homes are often referred to as "Painted Ladies". Unlike the monochromatic homes of today, where many houses may be painted the same, Victorian and Turn-of-the-Century homes were an expression of many colors. Painted Ladies had three, four, five, six or even more corresponding colors applied to their exteriors.

The terms Victorian and Turn-of-the-Century do not represent a single type of period style and design. Instead, it is the amalgamation of a variety of styles and periods created over a 70-plus year period in architectural history. The multiplicity of Victorian and Turn-of-the-Century style homes included:

Gothic Revival (1840-1880)	Italianate (1840-1885)
Second Empire (1855-1885)	Stick Style (1860-1890)
Queen Anne – Spindle Work (1880-1910)	Queen Anne – Free Classic (1880-1910)
Shingle (1890-1910)	Folk Victorian (1870-1910)
Victorian Cottage (1890-1910)	Tudor Revival (1890-1910)

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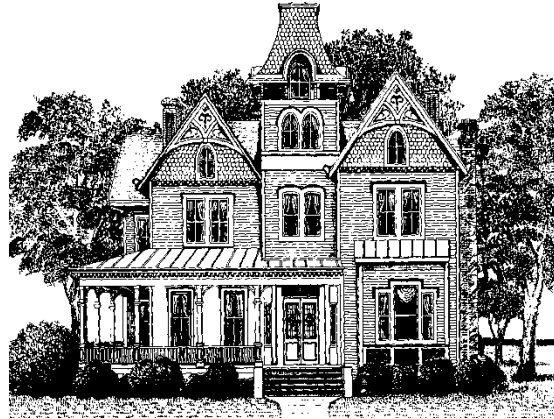
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Some Examples

Gothic Revival (1840-1880)



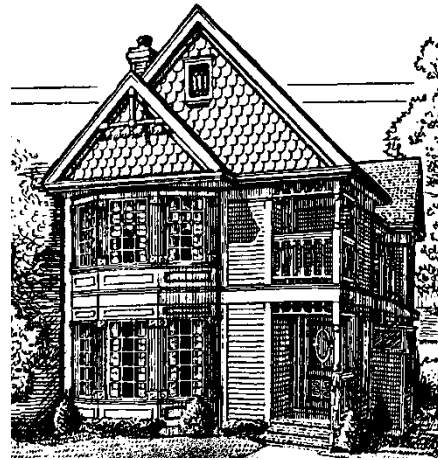
Italianate (1840-1885)



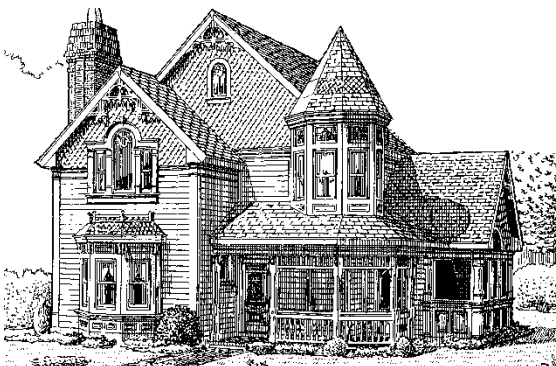
Second Empire (1855-1885)



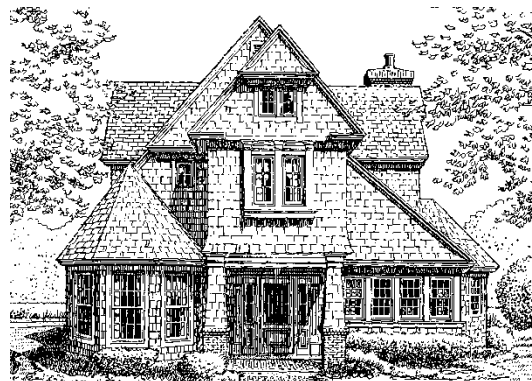
Stick Style (1860-1890)



Queen Anne – Spindle Work (1880-1910)
Queen Anne – Free Classic (1880-1910)



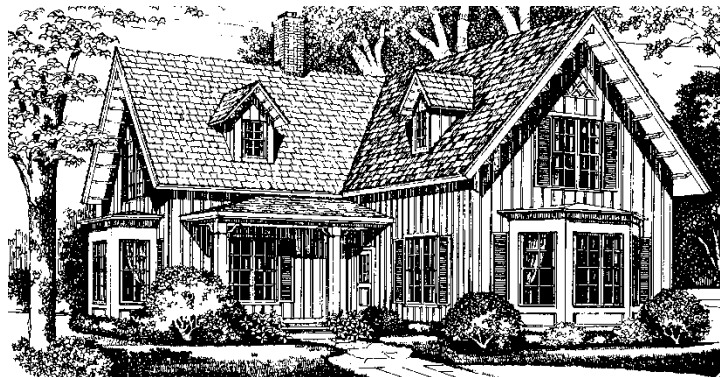
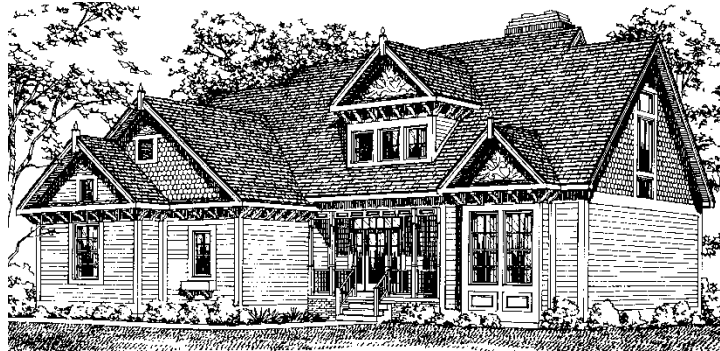
Shingle (1890-1910)



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Folk Victorian (1870-1910)



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Victorian Cottage (1890-1910)

