

Tudor Revival, a Popular Architectural Style in Montclair

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MONTCLAIR HAS A RICH and diverse inventory of residential architectural styles: structures dating to the 1700s, mill worker homes from the 1800s, farmhouses, estates of the gilded age, homes constructed during the boom years of the early 20th century, and more recent contemporary additions.

One of several styles that was popular from approximately 1890-1940, during a period of exponential development in Montclair, was Tudor Revival.

Although the style gets its name from the period of Tudor reign in England in the 16th century, it actually draws from a wide variety of English building styles, from late Medieval and early Renaissance styles, and it includes everything from thatched-roof cottages to grand manors.

Distinguishing features of typical Tudor Revival homes include a steeply pitched roof, prominent front facing gables, and decorative half-timbers set within stucco or brick walls. The homes often have massive chimneys (sometimes with multiple, decorative chimney pots rising from a single chimney), groupings of tall narrow windows (both casement and double-hung), often with diamond-shaped panes of leaded glass, and round arched front doors. The most high-style examples are made of solid masonry and include elaborate two-story bay windows, parapets and battlements.

A Field Guide to American Houses estimates that 25% of homes built during the 1920s were built in Tudor Revival style – second only to the popularity of Colonial Revival.

In Montclair, we have many grand examples of this style, but we



A larger Tudor Revival home, with two prominent, steep, front-facing gables, stucco and brick wall materials, and decorative half-timbering.



Tudor Cottage, with a prominent front facing gable that extends over arched doorway entrances on left and right.

also see plenty of the more simplified, modest Tudor Revival designs which became more popular after the Great Depression.

Some Tudor Revival homes also incorporate details that lean toward the American-born Craftsman style which was happening contemporaneously, accentuating the design with decorative brackets.

The decorative half-timbers – most often vertical stripes or diagonals -- mimic the wooden elements that were actually integral to the original Tudor structures built in England in the 16th century. At that time, the wooden elements were integral in that construction

method, were visible from the outside and inside of the structure (not just tacked on as decoration like today's half-timbers), and created the brown and white motif we associate most strongly with Tudor.

Early, elaborate examples of the style were called Stockbroker Tudor; it is said the extent of the decorative half-timbers was a reflection of the wealth of the person who built the home! ■



From left: Detail from a Tudor Revival home, including diamond-shaped window panes; decorative half timbering; four chimney pots; and some Craftsman-style brackets under the peak of the gable. Many Tudor Revival homes incorporate a mixture of interesting brick patterns. An elaborate bay window with leaded glass and stone window surrounds.