T he Hudson River Valley is known not only for its natural beauty but its architectural heritage. It was here that architects developed early residential styles, created mountain resorts, and designed spectacular riverside estates. America's first travel guides touted these architectural wonders 150 years ago. The invitation still holds: visit the farmhouses of Dutch and French Huguenot settlers; tour the mansions and grounds along the river; and marvel at the creations of some of the country's greatest 19th-century architects.

Dutch, Huguenot Influences

The buildings developed by Dutch colonists during the 17th and early 18th centuries are the only examples of Dutch architecture in North America. Furnishings, such as Pieter Bronck's brick residence (1663) in Croton, feature distinctive pitched roofs with gable ends, prominent roof beams, and Dutch jambless fireplaces.

After the English took charge of the colony in 1664, Dutch building traditions continued and can still be seen at the Hudson River Homestead (1729) in Beacon and the Lydia Van Alen House (1737) in Kinderhook.

The French Huguenots who emigrated to the banks of the Walkill Creek and founded the settlement of New Paltz built stone houses that combined Northern European and mezzanine building traditions with those of their Dutch neighbors. Huguenot Street, arguably the oldest street in America with its original buildings, includes three within half a mile back to the 1690s. The River Farm, Jean Hasbrouck, and Westpoint Hasbrouck houses. The buildings are of local stone, with steeply pitched gable roofs and Dutch jambless fireplaces.

Today, the legacy of the Dutch colonial vernacular is large also in more contemporary building traditions, many of which were influenced by Franklin Roosevelt. In the 1930s, FDR was involved in the design of six regional post offices, three schools, his own presidential library, and the Cottage, his retreat at Hyde Park. Promoting native building traditions and using historical models for new design, FDR helped to preserve an important architectural tradition in the Hudson River Valley.

Residential Architecture: the Cottage and the Villa

During the latter half of the 19th century, American architects experimented with a variety of styles, and it was during this period of colonialism that the valley's most substantial and permanent houses were created. Samsonville, a "cottage" in Tarrytown, was the writer Washington Irving living in the 1830s, evokes this romantic spirit with its combination of Dutch, Scots, and Spanish architecture.

Foremost among professional architects was Alexander Jackson Davis, a New York Young New Yorker who was a partner in the country's first architecture firm, the Town and Davis. By 1850, Davis had completed the Custis House in New York City and the Great River Dutch Reformed Church in Southport. He also received a commission for a Hudson River estate, the Knoll in Tarrytown. Together, Davis and Downing were responsible for developing the two key building types that would define the nation's residential architecture: the cottage and the villa. The bracketed style was an answer to the quest for a native architectural style, particularly because it could be adapted to a range of incomes.

In 1856, Davis introduced this new, romantic style in his landmark book Rural Residences, which included the Blithewood gatehouse, the first published example of aboard-and-batten cottage with the most prominent of his ideas. Davis's picturesque ideas were interpreted for the public in Downing's widely distributed books, Cottage Residences and The Architecture of Country Houses. When Davis remodeled Montgomery Place, the Federal-style estate of Ammiadum-on Hudson, Downing served as an advisor on the gardens and grounds.

As tastes changed during the 1840s, the romantic ideals of Downing and Davis were common knowledge, and the Board and button church had become the natural style for American Church Style. By mid-century, the romantic ideals of the Bracketed and Gothic Revival had become the natural style for Gothic Revival church architecture in America. The light and vertical wooden buildings stood in sharp contrast to the heavy stone Gothic structures of England.

The architect Richard Upjohn earned a reputation as the most talented designer of Board and button churches. Upjohn was so busy with the churches that he published Upjohn's Rural Architecture, which included "do-it-yourself" church plans.

The next generation of prominent Hudson River families called on the New York architectural firm McKim, Mead and White to remodel outdated federal-style houses into more fashionable Italianate or Tuscan villas. Davis worked with Samuel F. B. Morse to create Locust Grove in Poughkeepsie, while Upjohn remodeled Lindenwold, a 17-room mansion in Kinderhook commissioned by President Martin Van Buren.

Carpenter Gothic: an American Church Style

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A Tradition of Rural Leisure

The 1850s were an exciting time in the valley. The renowned New York architect Richard Morris Hunt designed the Stick Style Howland Library in Beacon, and the next generation of prominent Hudson River families called on the New York architectural firm McKim, Mead and White to remodel outdated federal-style houses into more fashionable Italianate or Tuscan villas.

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The Hudson Valley is a region rich in cultural and natural resources. This brochure was produced by historian-writer Sally Cerf and Mapping Specialists. 2006 NHS = National Historic Site

**New York State Capitol**

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**Mid-Hudson**

- **St. Luke’s Chapel**, U. S. 9 (Old Post Rd.), Clermont—18th-century Greek Revival church designed by Richard Upjohn
- **Clmont**, One Clermont Ave., Germantown, 518-547-9266—18th-century home with, 1803 additions by Michael O’Connor, of seven successive generations of the Livingston family (NHL)
- **Tarrytown**, Blairsden Rd., Tarrytown, 914-358-8526—Edward R. Kimball designed the house as a halftimbered villa in the 1820s. The 1960s Ca. Project added two modern wings. (NHL)
- **Warwick**, 25 Main St., Warwick, 914-685-1818—Thomas Sayle built the building in 1807. The 1960s addition included a modern wing. (NHL)
- **Holloway’s Bar**, 40 Old Post Rd., New Castle, 914-631-3838—Dutch-style house built in 1680 and remodeled in 1710. The house exhibits the Brinks style in its symmetry, heavy cornice, and wooden shingles. Most of the original furnishings and design elements remain intact. (NHS)
- **Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt**
- **Springwood**, Albany Post Road (U. S. 9), north of Hyde Park. In 1806, a Federal-style house was built for Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In 1915 FDR renovated the house in which he had been born into a Georgian or Colonial Revival mansion designed by his presidential architect. The house was designed by the architect and the local Dutch colonial style through the 1880s. The Federal-style house was converted into a Federal-style house through the 1880s. The Federal-style house was converted into a Federal-style house through the 1880s. The Federal-style house was converted into a Federal-style house through the 1880s.