

Architectural Styles



Federal Style 1790-1820

The Federal Style became popular in the U.S. in the early years following independence. It has little ornament and is strictly symmetrical.

Examples: 26 N. First Street; 102, 207-209 Main Street

Greek Revival 1820-1860

Patterned after Greek temples. A bolder and more vigorous style than Federal. It had a cubical mass, a low pitched roof, dentil decoration on the eaves, and often an attic half-story.

Examples: 111, 114 N. Second Street; 505, 521 Main Street



Italianate Commercial 1850-1890

Inspired by Italian villas this style was characterized by overhanging eaves, supported by decorative brackets. This style from the Victorian era, emphasized picturesque massing and exuberant designs. This was aided by the use of cast iron, which allowed intricate designs to be produced cheaply and quickly. *Examples: 122, 221, 227-229, 320, 323, 410, 414 Main Street*



Romanesque Revival 1880-1900

This style is part of the Victorian era, which began in the last half of the 1800's and lasted through the turn of the century. This style is inspired by medieval Romanesque architecture and was very popular in Germany and among German immigrants. This style has heavy, rough masonry, bold appearance with big round arches. It often has a stair-step gable.

Examples: 16 N. First Street; 106, 201 – 203 Main Street; 111 N. Seventh Street



Neoclassical 1893-1930

Following the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, people began to favor more controlled, classically inspired designs.

These buildings have more refined ornament, which typically includes columns, cornices and decorative swags. Tall buildings are typically separated into three parts: the street level, middle stories and the upper zone, which is supported by a cornice skyline. Simplified classical motifs enliven the building surface.

Examples: 2 N. Second Street; 214, 217, 302, 506 Main Street



Period Revival Styles 1895-1930



The revival styles were a mix of historically inspired styles, characterized by using carefully studied historical details in a free, eclectic manner.

Examples: 428 Main Street (Renaissance Revival); 513 Main Street (Mission Revival); 19 N. First Street (Queen Anne Revival)

Art Deco 1925-1940

Art deco was born in Europe at an International Expo in Paris. Forms are simple and cubic, with a mechanized feel, very streamlined and smooth. This style abandoned Neoclassicism, and was popular not only in architecture, but in designs for cars, jewelry, appliances and other items

Examples: 529, 711 Main Street



Greater DOWNTOWN VINCENNES Architecture Tour





The Magnificent Architecture of Downtown Vincennes

1) 114 N. Second Street 1838 Greek Revival Style

Vincennes branch of the State Bank of Indiana. A free rendering of the Greek Temple Style, with massive Doric columns and triangular pediment. Note: cupola on roof.

2) 16 N. First Street 1902 Romanesque Revival

The Terre Haute Brewing Company, designed by architect Thomas Campbell. Prior to Prohibition, Vincennes was home to 73 taverns. Burkhart Insurance recently renovated the building.

3) 19 N. First Street 1899 Queen Anne Revival

Murphy's Tavern was built and operated by the son of a former mayor of Vincennes, Jack Murphy and his wife, Ella McCarthy Murphy, who in the same year became the first woman lawyer ever admitted to the Knox County Bar Association. The building served as a tavern for many years until Prohibition, then went on to house restaurants, a harness making shop and is now the home of Sweet Treats Bakery & Confectionery Shop.

4) 102 Main Street 1828 Federal Style

Originally the Wm. Burtch & Wm. Heberd Dry Goods Store and the oldest building standing on Main.

5) 104 Main Street 1890 Italianate Commercial

Originally the Frank Fay Building, designed by architect John W. Gaddis.

6) 122 Main Street 1868 Italianate Commercial

Originally the William Heberd Store.

7) 2 N. Second Street 1912 Neoclassical

Originally the Second National Bank Building, designed by architects Thomas Campbell and Louis Osterhage. Their office was on the 3rd floor. Campbell and Osterhage incorporated 10 different window styles into the façade as examples for their clients.

8) 201 Main Street 1905 Romanesque Revival

Originally the German National Bank. Many of the people who migrated to this area were of German descent. The German National Bank started here. This style is characterized by a "heavy" look, and was popular in Germany. Notice the large masonry arches on the second level.

9) 214 Main Street 1916 Neoclassical

The J.T. Oliphant Building. Known as Vincennes first "skyscraper," it was the tallest building in town until American National Bank. The façade is broken into three bands, with classical details and the use of shields.

10) 217 Main Street 1913 Neoclassical

Originally the First National Bank Building, now Jewel Craft Jewelers. Designed by architect J.B. Bayard, it is a meticulous rendering of a Corinthian temple front.

11) 218 Main Street 1937 Colonial Revival

Montgomery Ward broke ground in this year competing against local department stores, J. C. Penney and Gimbel-Bond with three floors of merchandise ranging from hardware to fashionable clothing and operated in this location until 1980. It now houses Thursday Church.

12) 227 Main Street 1878 Italianate Commercial

The Joseph L. Bayard building, designed by architect J.H. Stem. This facade is a wonderful example of Victorian era exuberance. Notice the faces and gargoyles embedded in the building ornament.

13) 302 Main Street 1917 Neoclassical

Designed by architect John W. Gaddis for the American National Bank. Although it has experienced numerous mergers, the building has always been a bank, now Regions Bank. This building is comprised of three areas: a ground floor with simplified classical columns, middle stories emphasized by vertical piers, and the upper zone with a simple cornice.

14) 428 Main Street 1921 Renaissance Revival

The fabulous Pantheon Theatre designed by architect John B. Bayard. In its day, acts included Duke Ellington, our own Red Skelton and more. The building is currently undergoing restoration.

15) 505 Main Street 1842 Greek Revival Style

The Bonner-Allen House, now the Goodwin Crematory Gardner-Brockman Chapel was built by David Bonner, Virginia financier. The second owner was Cyrus Allen, a good friend of Abraham Lincoln's. Lincoln slept in a specially made bed when he stayed here with the Allen family. Andrew Gardner started a cabinet shop in 1816 which later became a coffin and funeral business. His descendant George Gardner moved the business to this location where it operated as Gardner-Brockman Funeral Home. The Goodwin family purchased the Bonner-Allen House in 2011 and it continues to operate as a funeral home business.

16) 513 Main Street 1920 Mission Revival

Constructed in 1883, is an Italianate duplex, it was renovated in 1920 by architect John B. Bayard, in the Spanish Mission Style. It was home to the Knights of Columbus. Note: the shield above the second arch.

17) 529 Main Street 1939 Art Deco

Originally the New Moon Theater, it and the old Fort Sackville Theater at 711 Main are the only examples of Art Deco Style on Main Street.

18) 111 N. Seventh Street 1873 Romanesque Revival

The Knox County Courthouse was built in 1873-1874 on the southeast corner of Seventh and Busseron. It is made of Bedford limestone (Ellettsville, Indiana) and is 3 1/2 stories tall. It is 147 feet at its highest point. This Romanesque Revival structure has a dormered hipped roof and a simple cross axis floor plan with towers at four corners which give it a Norman influence. Edwin May was the architect. The building was renovated in 1928.