

Cabbagetown Architecture

Scavenger Hunt



Note:
Keep in mind
that homes
and frontwards
are private
properties.
Please remain
on the
sidewalk.

We invite you to walk around the streets of Cabbagetown and discover its beautiful architecture.

Some say that it offers “the largest continuous area of preserved Victorian housing in all of North America.” And since most of Cabbagetown is in a Heritage Conservation District, it is hoped that these beautiful buildings will be preserved for generations to come.

But “Victorian architecture” is not a style. Victorian architects loved to play “architectural dress-up,” using designs from other times, seeking inspiration from styles going sometimes as far back as the Middle Ages. Some styles were popular, some others were connected to the reality of the time.

Try to find the various styles of Victorian architecture. Walk around the neighbourhood using the information below. Find at least one (preferably more) example of that style and write the address.



The Workers Cottage

This design was created in the middle of the 19th century as an answer to the need to house the “working poor” in newly industrialized England.

It’s a simple design, symmetrical, pleasing, small and quick to build.

Clue: Most workers cottages are in the northern part of Cabbagetown (e.g. Amelia Street and north of Wellesley Street).

Addresses:



Gothic Revival

The Gothic style dates from the Middle Ages (think Notre-Dame-de-Paris).

From this style, basically only the pointed arch of the windows is used.

A couple of chapels in Cabbagetown are great examples of Gothic Revival style.

Clue: There are only a few Gothic Revival homes in Cabbagetown. There are a couple on Carlton Street east of Metcalfe. If you find homes with pointy windows, that will do... Where are the chapels mentioned above?

Addresses:



Romanesque Revival

The Romanesque style was also developed in the Middle Ages.

Its main characteristic is the rounded windows.

The exteriors of those homes is often made of red brick or red sandstone (from the Credit Valley area).

Clue: A few homes of this style are concentrated around Sackville and Winchester. A few “institutional” buildings also are of this style: a church that is now a dance theatre and a condo building that used to be a medical school for women.

Addresses:



Georgian Revival

This is one of the earlier styles of architecture in Cabbagetown.

The Georgian style is sparsely ornamented and has a very symmetrical facade.

Clue: There are only a handful of Georgian Revival buildings in the neighbourhood. There is one on Spruce and one on Winchester. Can you find them?

Addresses:



Second Empire

Been to Paris? This style might look familiar then (Second Empire: Napoléon III in France).

The main characteristic of this French-inspired style is its roof.

The Mansard roof is actually a top floor with dormer windows. Its sides slope inwards and it's usually clad in tiles (originally slate).

Clue: You can find a few of these beautiful homes on Carlton Street and a beautiful one on Sackville. A smaller version of this style can be see just off the top of Sackville Street or on the street named for a large city in Switzerland.

Addresses:



Bay & Gable

Probably the most prevalent style in Cabbagetown.

Often narrow with strong vertical emphasis, it has a bay window going up to a pointed gable with decorative bargeboard, often in typical red brick with yellow brick decorations.

Clue: Most Cabbagetown streets have Bay & Gable homes. Those in the lower part of Metcalfe are likely the most photographed.

Addresses:



Queen Anne

The most elaborate and eccentric of all Victorian styles.

This style is asymmetrical, usually very decorated and often has terracotta ornamentation.

Compare to Georgian...

Clue: There are only a handful of Queen Anne homes in Cabbagetown. One (illustration at left) is across from Riverdale Park. Another is on Carlton. Another is on Wellesley near Parliament.

Addresses:



Arts & Crafts

This style was inspired by the Arts & Crafts movement of the late 19th-early 20th century.

These houses were later additions to the Cabbagetown streetscape (mostly in the 1920s and later).

Most prevalent in Cabbagetown is the largely unornamented “Tuscan” style (fronted by porches supported on Tuscan columns or half columns).

Clue: You will find Arts & Crafts homes here and there in Cabbagetown. There are a few big ones on Winchester and Carlton but if you find where the Toronto General Hospital used to be in Cabbagetown, you will discover that it has been replaced by two streets full of Arts & Crafts-inspired homes in the 1920s.

Addresses:

Learn more about Cabbagetown architecture by visiting cabbagetownpa.ca, click on Heritage and then on Architectural Styles. You can also visit cabbagetownhcd.ca and click on Cabbagetown Architecture.

For general information on Cabbagetown, visit cabbagetownpa.ca. To read biographies about remarkable people who once called Cabbagetown home, visit cabbagetownpeople.ca.



illustrations: steveyeates.ca

Some Answers

Workers Cottage — Check out the Wellesley Cottages north of Wellesley, just west of Sackville (there's a laneway named after them). There's a long row of Workers Cottages on Amelia Street.

Gothic Revival — 255 Carlton Street, several on Rose Avenue. The chapels of the Toronto Necropolis (Winchester Street) and the St. James Cemetery (Parliament Street) are striking examples of Gothic Revival style.

Romanesque Revival — 93-99 Winchester Street. Check out also the Toronto Dance Theatre at Winchester and Metcalfe and the former Ontario Medical College for Women at 289 Sumach.

Georgian Revival — 35 Spruce and 85 Winchester. Also 185 Carlton.

Second Empire — Check out 314 Carlton, 288 Carlton and 309-311 Carlton. Also check Alpha and Geneva streets.

Bay & Gable — All over. Check Metcalfe Street and Winchester Street east of Sackville, north side.

Queen Anne — 297 Carlton and 314 Wellesley.

Arts & Craft — Check out Winchester Street between Metcalfe and Sackville on the north side. Check also Nasmith Avenue and Gifford Street that replaced the Toronto General Hospital that used to stand on Gerrard Street between Sackville and Sumach (1855-1922).