

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLES FOR POSTWAR  
SINGLE FAMILY ATTACHED HOUSING IN SCOTTSDALE, 1960-1974**

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**Summary of Process:** Photos were taken of the architecture elements used in the facades for each development. Three broad categories of styles were identified and defined. After reviewing the photos it was determined that only some of the draft sub-style descriptions from prior housing surveys in Arizona were applicable to this land use and survey period in Scottsdale. Several sub-style descriptions in the three broad style categories were deleted from the initial list as not applicable locally. Some sub-style descriptions were rewritten or combined with others due to overlaps on the characteristics of each draft style description. The list of sub-styles may be pared down further after the most appropriate categories for the developments being reviewed are subjected to additional analysis and discussion. Staff classified the styles of townhouses and attached homes into three broad categories due to overlaps between the sub-styles.

**General Observations on the Characteristics of Attached Housing Styles:** Overall, townhouse styles were market driven for these for sale housing developments and used a variety of elements borrowed from diverse sources. Townhouses and other attached houses were typically priced between single family detached and multi-family apartments. Therefore, the developments under review do not include the accurately executed high styles used for the custom designed more expensive single family homes of the period, nor do they utilize the least expensive construction techniques found in the less expensive apartment complexes of the period. In general, the architecture for these townhouse developments is not of the quality that would be featured in an architectural magazine or that would get design awards from the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

The common practice appears to be for the builders to borrow design elements of past or current housing styles they liked or that they felt would be the most marketable for their location and target buyers – bland ordinary looking townhouses would probably not sell. These design elements, like attached red tile shed roofs, were applied to the buildings in an effort to decorate a simple box shape with historic references to a more homey residential setting; resulting in what Don Ryden, architect calls a ‘decorated box’.

Most of the 51 developments being reviewed in Scottsdale were built by large scale homebuilders of the period. These builders and developers did not usually employ prominent architects of the time to design their developments, although some projects appear to have more sophisticated or quality designs than average and they probably sold the homes for higher prices. The designs are typically a step up from what is seen on the typical apartment complex of the period, but certainly do not compete in quality or price with a custom designed single family detached home.

Staff’s decision to just sort the architectural styles into the three broad categories was based in part on the observation above. Due to the somewhat eclectic nature of the styles observed, it is quite difficult to place each development into a specific sub-style since the builders often borrowed elements from more than one of the sub-styles described. Overlaps between sub-styles are fairly common, particularly between the broad categories of popular revival and modern architecture. Staff has judged which category best describes the overall visual impact of the façade.

**Three Broad Categories Identified:** All of the styles found in townhouse/twin developments in Scottsdale appeared to fit into three broad categories with each having several sub-styles of their façade characteristics. As noted above, overlaps between categories were also observed. The three broad style categories identified are: **1. Ranch House Related Styles, 2. Postwar Popular Revival Styles, and 3. Modern Styles.** Further consideration of some developments led staff to conclude that the term ‘vernacular’ applies to some Scottsdale townhouse developments that lack specific elements for them to fit into one of the three main style categories because they essentially lack the characteristics of the broad style categories or their defined sub-styles.

**Partial List of Sources:** Historic Homes of Phoenix; Tucson Post World War II Residential Subdivision Development; Introduction to Postwar Modern Housing Architectural Styles (Scottsdale); Mesa Postwar Modern Single Family Subdivision Development; Wikipedia; A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture; Styles and Types of North American Architecture; Identifying American Architecture; and Twentieth-Century Architecture - The Middle years 1940-1965. I also talked to Don Ryden, architect, who wrote a typology for mid-century commercial architectural styles in Phoenix.

## **1. RANCH HOUSE RELATED STYLES**

These sub-style descriptions are summaries of the styles identified by Debbie Abele et al in previous Arizona surveys and studies of single family detached subdivisions in Scottsdale, Phoenix, Mesa and Tucson.

**California Ranch** – Combination of wall materials on front façade such as brick, block, board-and-batten, weeping mortar; horizontal form emphasized; possible shutters; shingle covered gable or shed roofs; rectangular windows with rectangular or diamond shaped multi-panes; garage or carport.

**Post Ranch** – Low-pitched gable roof or flat roof, shed roofs, shingles or tile, block or stucco walls, rectangular windows, horizontal sliders, screen walls, simple details.

**Los Ranchos** – Stucco or slump blocks walls; low pitched gable roof, with or without tile; arched windows, porches or entry common; applied Spanish ornament (vigas, canales, iron gates, railings, wall decorations).

**Character Ranch** – Detailing on front façade conveys the character of Cowboy Ranch, Swiss Chalet, Polynesian or English Tudor.

**Combination of Ranch Styles (Eclectic Ranch Style)** – All of the materials and elements used on the facades are seen in different Ranch styles but the townhouse facades change from one unit to the next using a combination of sub-styles.



**Combination of Ranch Styles – Park  
Scottsdale**



**Character Ranch Style – Polynesian Paradise**



**Post Ranch Style – Scottsdale 2000**



**Post Ranch Style - Scottsdale House 1 & 2**

## **2. POSTWAR POPULAR REVIVAL STYLES**

These sub-styles each borrow elements from historic traditions but they are not generally intended to be complete or authentic replications of the original styles, or composed of all the characteristic elements. The elements included in these 'popular revival' styles are more like visual references to earlier historical styles without fully embracing all of the characteristics of the styles. It is common to find some, but not all, features described in each townhouse. Some authors call revivals in the Post WWII time frame re-revivals since there was an earlier revival period around the turn of the century. Popular revival post WW II townhouse styles therefore differ from the revival styles found in neighborhoods decades earlier.

**Popular Spanish Colonial** - Stucco or painted block/brick walls; combination of red tiled gable, shed and flat roofs; asymmetrical façade; exposed rafter tails; smooth finished chimney; Spanish Colonial architectural features including vigas, canales, iron grates, balconets, grillwork, railings, and niches; tile or cast concrete Spanish or Mexican wall decorations; Roman or semi-circular openings.

**Popular Mission** – Usually symmetrical façade with large horizontal massing; flat roof with parapet walls and/or hip roof with red tile and broad eaves with exposed rafters; ornamentally cut rafter tails; curvilinear parapet motifs in the center of major walls; Roman or flat-arched window and door openings; plastered exterior walls; tall one-over-one windows; sidelights around entry.

**Popular Pueblo** – Flat roof with parapet walls; vigas and canales; low asymmetrical facade with horizontal emphasis; multiple flat forms and roofs hidden behind level or irregularly rounded parapets; rounded walls and roof corners; stucco walls; flat-topped openings with possible heavy timber lintels; modest sized rectangular window openings; peeled wooden posts and hewn timber beams.

**Popular Territorial** – Flat roof with parapet with possible varied parapet level, brick or slump block walls, flat or shed roof over entry or over window openings, front façade may have more than one wall plane, rectilinear or arched window openings, possible brick coping along top of parapet and occasionally corbelling.

**Popular Monterey or Mediterranean** – Draws elements from a number of Mediterranean references including Italian Renaissance, Classical, Spanish, or Beau-Arts details; typically two-stories with cantilevered second story balconies with square wooden posts and heavy timber beams; may combine one and two story elements but emphasizes horizontal; low-pitched red tile roofs, with or without stuccoed chimney; plastered or stuccoed walls; both flat and low-pitched hip roofs, towers and projecting bays; balconets; elaborate formal door openings; round or square-arched window openings and small-paned windows; ornamental surrounds, wrought iron balustrades and trim.

**Popular Second Empire** – Incorporates elements from the Second French Empire; prominent mansard roof with a very steep slope from the roof line down that may project out from the face of the building at the bottom; mansard roof is often one story tall covering the second story punctuated by window openings; shingles or tile may cover the mansard roofs; corners and columns by entrances may have quoining of block; windows surrounds or vertical pilasters in the wall next to windows.

**Popular Classical** – Greek or Roman architecture elements added to the exterior; smooth stuccoed walls; flat roofs with possible caps or corbels on the parapet; columns for porches, around entrances or in public areas; arches incorporated with columns for arcades; may include ornamental surrounds, capitals on columns, plaques, urns, finials, tile, and pilasters; wrought iron balustrades and trim; tall windows; prominent entries.

**Combination of Popular Revival Styles (Eclectic Revival Style)** – Some developments change façades and sub-styles from one home to the next so that more than one sub-style applies to the development because elements are combined. Also, developments may combine elements from more than one popular revival style into the façade of the buildings, with or without changing sub-styles from one unit to the next in a row.



**Popular Spanish Colonial Revival – Casa Amigos**



**Popular Monterey or Mediterranean Revival – Sarkis Manor**



**Popular Second Empire Revival – Chateau de Vie I and II**



**Popular Spanish Colonial Revival – Casa Granada East**



**Popular Classical – Villa Adrian**



**Combination of Popular Revival – Villa Monterey**

### 3. MODERN STYLES

According to some architectural writers and critics, Modern styles differ from other architectural styles in at least three characteristic ways: 1. ornament is typically avoided because it is considered artificial, 2. twentieth-century materials and structural techniques are utilized in contrast to those used historically, and 3. the structure of the building is visible or the way it is put together is displayed, not disguised. These three characteristics are very evident when looking at a steel and glass curtain-walled modern office building from past decades. However, the characteristics of the bare bones modern style used in residences, devoid of any ornament, is less in evidence when looking at regional examples of owner occupied dwellings of the period.

There are no steel and glass or bare concrete and glass townhouse developments in Scottsdale from this period. Purists in architectural criticism may not agree with our categorizing some of our local townhouse variations as modern style or modern architecture. However, some modern style townhouse developments in Scottsdale seem to fit within the modern label but they are not totally devoid of all ornament or historic references – plus their walls are typically stucco, not steel or concrete. Regardless of debates in the field over what constitutes modern architecture or its sub-styles, there are developments in Scottsdale that clearly contain characteristics of modern styles and these home styles are distinct from the Ranch House and Popular Revival developments described above. Some flexibility in defining styles is useful for categorizing the more popular building styles.

**International** – Smooth stucco, block or brick walls, no applied ornament, flat roof with broad eaves or cantilevered, large picture windows, window walls or bands of windows, corner windows, and simple wood or metal posts.

**Contemporary** – Horizontal emphasis with possible horizontal bands of block or brick, very low or flat roof, possible gable end towards street or on entry façade, window walls and clerestories, wall materials vary, screen walls of lattice block, metal or wood.

**Southwest Modern** – Smooth stucco walls, limited ornament on walls or around doors and windows, tall window openings, flat roofs, both vertical and horizontal lines may be emphasized with raised or indented materials, custom metal may be in gates, railings, window screens, large rectangular freestanding forms with a stucco finish may emphasize entries or carports. The style borrows elements from Spanish Colonial - frequently stucco walls, red tile roofs and arches – but the overall appearance is more modern than popular revival style.



**International – Royale Gardens**



**Southwest Modern – Chateau de Vie III and IV**



**Contemporary – Sands East**



**Contemporary – Scottsdale Park Villas**



**Southwest Modern – Continental Villas I and II**



**Southwest Modern – Villa Solano**

**LIST OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES\* FOR POSTWAR  
SINGLE FAMILY ATTACHED HOUSING IN SCOTTSDALE, 1960-1974**

**1. RANCH HOUSE RELATED STYLES**

- California Ranch**
- Post Ranch**
- Los Ranchos**
- Character Ranch**
- Combination of Ranch Styles**

**2. POSTWAR POPULAR REVIVAL STYLES**

- Popular Spanish Colonial**
- Popular Mission**
- Popular Pueblo**
- Popular Territorial**
- Popular Monterey or Mediterranean**
- Popular Second Empire**
- Popular Classical**
- Combination of Popular Revival Styles**

**3. MODERN STYLES**

- International**
- Contemporary**
- Southwest Modern**

\*Note: Some developments are classified as 'Vernacular' buildings due to their general lack of or total lack of any features associated with the three broad architectural style categories. Vernacular projects were probably built by developers without any architect being involved in the design.