

A style mixture house in Astoria. Note Queen Anne porch on a plain American Foursquare with round Colonial Revival columns.

Lisa DeCicco



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OLD HOUSE STYLES ON THE NORTH COAST

BY LAURI SERAFIN

Knowing the style of an old house is key to guide preservation, renovation and décor efforts. It is more pleasing to the eye to have consistent style elements.

This also preserves your investment.

For example, a 1920 Colonial Revival should not have a Victorian “gingerbread” front door from the salvage yard. This is an extreme example, but I have seen this and

other odd improvements.

Interior décor elements that are more permanent, such as woodwork, flooring and lighting are best kept in style. Furnishings, wallpapers and interior paint colors are a matter of personal taste.

I recommend the definitive book on the subject of house styles, “A Field Guide to American Houses,” by Virginia Savage McAlester. It’s a must have for the old house enthusiast.

Residential architecture is of two principle types, Folk and styled houses. Folk or vernacular structures are designed and built without regard to current housing trends. They provide shelter and are built to purpose. Styled houses were designed to be fashionable and reflect current trends. Most surviving old houses are styled houses, probably because they were designed by

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