

[ANGLES ON ARCHITECTURE]

Bungalow Style



By Karen Numme
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One of our goals is to provide *Los Feliz Ledger* readers with an understanding of various American architectural styles and help to answer the question: "What style is my home?"

The most misunderstood, and one of the most prolific of California styles, is the Bungalow style. It reflects many Architectural



West Coast Bungalows of the 20's
Photo: www.DavePalmer.com

styles, which explains the confusion over its definition. As authors Robert Winter and Alexander Vertikoff have noted in their book *American Bungalow Style* there are dozens of variations on the bungalow form including,

Craftsman Bungalow, California Bungalow and Chicago Bungalow.

The word "bungalow" comes from the Indian word "bangla" which in the 19th century referred to houses, built in the Bengal style. British colonial officers adopted this style to build their summer retreats. These houses were one story with tile or thatched roofs and wide, covered verandas. The association was created early on that these were small houses for a temporary retreat.

The main idea of the bungalow was to cluster the kitchen, dining area, bedrooms and bathroom around a central living area. The style is also distinguished with some combination of the following: low-pitched roofs, gabled or hipped, deep eaves with exposed rafters, decorative knee braces, an open floor plan, 1 or 1 1/2 stories—occasionally two—built-in cabinetry, beamed ceilings, simple wainscoting, large fireplaces (often with built-in cabinetry, shelves, or benches on either side) and large and covered front porches.

One reason for the success of the Bungalow style was a backlash of the Industrial Age. The desire among many Americans was to own their own home and have a

small garden. The Bungalow provided the solution. Most of all, the Bungalow style had populist appeal was affordable and promoted easy livability and charm.

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