

HOUSES OF AMSTERDAM

WOODLANE[®]

TAPAZZ

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Woodlane loves Amsterdam! The architecture, the people, the food. We love our city so much that we milled these snackplates into the shapes of our typical canalhouse gables. Just apply some edible oil (like olive or sunflower oil) to give our high quality bamboo a darker finish and prevent it from drying out. Cheese and bitterballs never tasted so good!



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More about the fantastic gables of Amsterdam

Over the last four centuries the design of Amsterdam's gables has evolved in keeping up with local architectural trends. Initially, simple triangular gables were used. In 1600 'Step and spout' gables were introduced. This was followed by the 'Neck gable', with the baroque style of Louis XIV. And the 'Bell gable' after this came with an asymmetrical Louis XV style.



Pointed Gables (Puntgevel) 1400 - Present

This is one of the oldest gables still being used in modern architecture. In the early 1400's these houses were mostly build from wood. After the big fire in 1452 which destroyed much of the city centre, the vulnerability of wooden buildings led to new construction laws. Brick and sandstone then became the standard materials in the construction, walls and tiles were used in place of thatched roofs. A couple of examples of these first pointed gables can still be found in Amsterdam. We see this in both the wooden houses at Begijnhof and Zeedijk.



Step-gables (Trapgevels) 1600-1665

In the 17th century step gables were very common in the old centre of Amsterdam. This style is characterised by a series of steps, each side rising to meet in the centre. These steps were often covered with white sandstone blocks at the tips.

Most step gables are kept simple, but some examples of the step gable have been seen to be elaborately ornamented. In the 18th century, many houses were adapted to a more fashionable architectural style. This led to the replacement of the step gable facade. Around 100 examples of step gable houses alone can remain to be found in Amsterdam today.



Spout Gables (Tuitgevels) 1620-1720

The spout gable looks like an inverted funnel. The rectangular block on top resembles the funnel's spout, hence the name. This gable design was used by merchants to signify warehousing and trade, rather than a residential property. On some houses in Amsterdam, you will see two gables: a spout gable placed at the rear of the house and then a more ornate gable at the front.

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Spout gables increased in number following the decline of Dutch international trade. Many owners replaced their elaborately decorated gables with simpler, more functional gables.



Neck-gables (Halsgevels) 1638-1780

The neck gable has a facade with both sides forming at an angle of 90 degrees. The external corners of these gables are filled with decorative sandstone jaw pieces. The neckgable often features a shell motif with a decorative cartouche. Most neck gable facades are constructed entirely from brick although some were made entirely from sandstone. The architect Philip Vingboons was the man responsible for introducing the neck gable to Amsterdam. The first real example was constructed in 1636 at the Herengracht 168. There are two types of neck gables; elevated, or non-elevated. Elevated or raised neck gables feature an extra step incorporating an element of the step gable architecture. Non-elevated neck gables tended to have taller necks and are more richly ornamented. They were most common in the first half of the 18th century.



Bell-gables (Klokgevels) 1690-1790

The top of a bell gable has the shape of a church bell and is also referred to as a clock-gable. They are made of brick and have sandstone scroll-like decorations on the edges. The decorative sandstone is often compared with thick dabs of cream or the white wigs which were fashionable in this era. Bell gables are regarded as an evolution of the neck-gable and have a similar silhouette. The main difference is that the brickwork extends into a bell-like shape. Prior to 1700, the bell gables were lower and simpler. They had a pediment with fruit and flower garlands. In later years they were characterised by exuberant attachments and asymmetric crests in the style of Louis XV.



Listgable (Lijstgevel) 1660 - 1900

The Listgable was already used in the 17th century for mostly big city mansions combined with pilasters, but became far more popular in the 19th century. Due to the bad economic situation the decorated neck and the bell-gables fell in popularity and the listgable replaced most of the list, bell, and neckgables.