

The buildings, as in the nuclei of present day cities in Italy, fall in to several distinct periods. Their internal decoration is similarly of different styles, but naturally is in most cases more modern than the buildings it adorns.

The following table summarises the principal periods of construction and decoration at Pompeii:

Period	Date	Type of Construction	Decoration
A. Pre-Sannite	VI - V BC	Squared lime-stone blocks	—
B. Sannite (1)	IV - III BC	Limestone and volcanic blocks and rough stone	—
C. Sannite (2)	200 - 80 BC	Volcanic tufa	Style 1
D. Early Roman	80 BC - 14 AD	Trellis and part trellis work same materials	Style 2
E. Roman and Imperial	14 AD - 79 AD	Mixed styles with brick work	Style 3 Style 4 (after 63 AD)

Decorative styles referred to above are easy to recognise and for convenience houses showing them to advantage have been selected to fit in with the itinerary described later.

Style	Description	Villas
1. (Incrustation) 200 - 80 BC	Wall stucco and plaster are veined and coloured to imitate marble and stone.	Casa di Sallustus
2. (Architectural) 80 BC - 14 AD	Walls are decorated to create an illusion in perspective of several architectural levels. Large square areas are filled with paintings of mythological subjects.	The Villa dei Mysterei
3. (Egyptian) 14 AD - 63 AD	The actual functional parts of the building are used and enhanced by architectural paintings (e.g., a pillaster is richly decorated) and the intervening spaces covered with finely executed motifs in brilliant colouring, the figures often being very small.	Casa di Cecilio Giocondo
4. (Ornamental) 63 AD - 79 AD	The whole surface is treated as a background for decoration and no clear-cut distinction is preserved between architectural elements, friezes and pictures. It typifies commercial wealth and luxurious taste of the period.	Casa dei Vettii