

Local buildings



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Land of earth water and forests, a crossroads of architectural influences, the architectural heritage preserves all the aspects of the genius of the men in constructing their dwellings, housing their activities... On the frontier between the Champagne drylands and the Champagne wetlands , with architecture in hard and soft chalk, brick,earth,terracotta,half timbering... It is still possible to distinguish three important types of constructions that are spread out in time:

- Community: it is that of a peasant who worked for himself - or for his neighbours a well built work, designed to last made of materials found locally of which he mastered their use, made for utility rather than its look.
- Traditional: it was the period of specialization, the peasant started to be paid even for part-time work, tile works brickyards developed , diversified, exchanged, it was the birth of a specific type of working class society that changed centuries old ideas.
- Industrial products: with the impulse of the important economic decision-makers (abbeys, royal power), incentives and bans (replacement of thatch by tiles) the places of production increased and specialized, leading to the creation of industrial monopolies that condemned until the present day all small and medium sized firms. There has now developed products manufactured in great numbers by large firms with new techniques and materials that mix well with the traditional processes of production.

The different types of houses you can see in the Regional Nature Park are representative of the evolution of architectural forms and the use of materials.

Roofs...

- Terracotta : For financial and practical reasons, bricks were used mostly for the door frames, raised stone foundations, bands, cornices, chimneys and sometimes in association with other materials, brick and wood, brick and chalk...
- Cover : different shaped tiles were used according to the angle of the roof slope :
 - The flat, rectangular or rounded tile called " fish scales " were widely used after thatch was forbidden on roofs with steep slopes, they were even fixed, for protection on walls. They have real technical and aesthetic qualities and their production still continues.
 - The barrel tile was used on roofs with slight slopes, as joint covers on an upturned tile or on unfixed tegulae, easy to repair this type of roof covering is disappearing, a few rare small tile works continue to manufacture them
 - Some curiosities appear punctually that testify the influence of the environment, other regions, and economic circuits : glazed tiles say " the Comte Henri ", tiles with a covering, " violin " tiles bringing the technical, aesthetic qualities and the

many elements that assure the water tightness and the finish of the roofs,; hip rafters, " pigs' ears ", walls, ridge tiles, finials...

Churches, farms, dovecotes, masters' houses , gate houses, craftsmens' shops, modest village house, you will discover an aesthetic consistency, an architecture that participates in a concrete culture that still marks our time .