

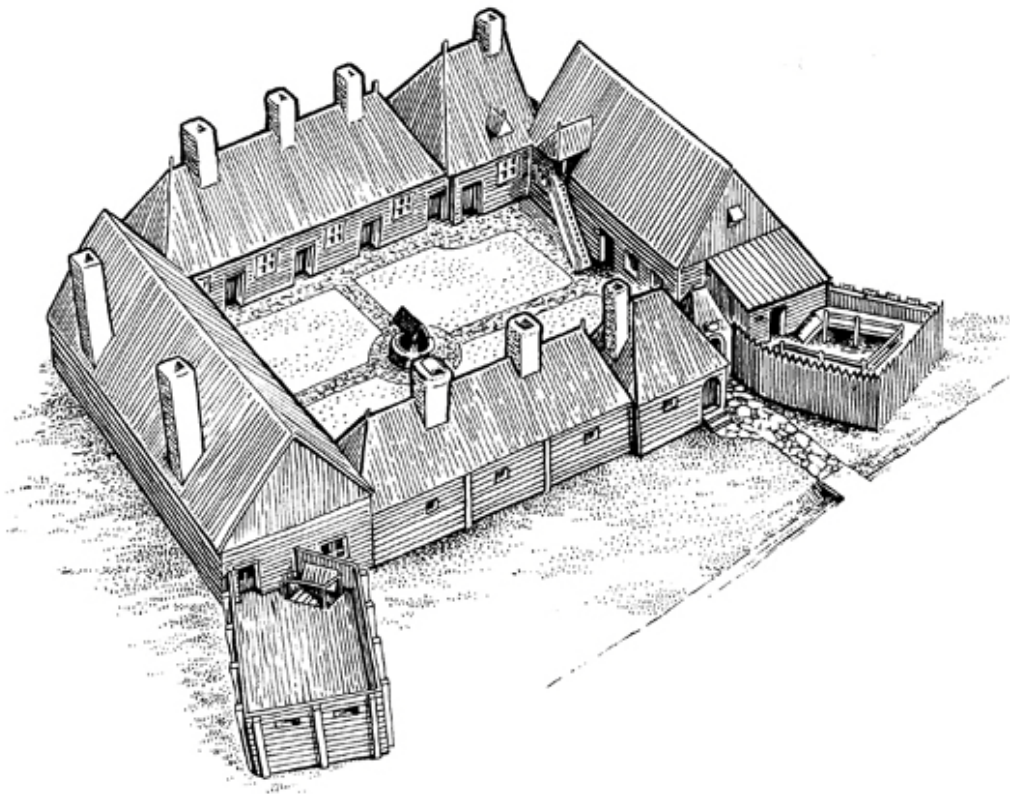


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FACTSHEET - THE BUILDINGS AT PORT-ROYAL

Samuel de Champlain was the man who designed and oversaw the construction of the original Habitation. The structure is a series of buildings arranged in the shape of a square which encloses a central courtyard.



The majority of the Habitation is constructed out of wood. The entire frame and all of the support beams are squared timber joined together with wooden pegs. The roofs and the outside walls are hand-sawn boards. A couple of the roofs have hand-split



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shingles. The blacksmith would hand forge all of the iron hardware (hinges, latches

and locks) needed for the doors and windows as well as the square-headed nails used to attach the boards in place. Fieldstones were used to construct the chimneys and a mortar made from clay, sand and crushed shells (clams and mussels) was used to hold the stones in place. Bricks for the hearth of the fireplaces and the bake ovens were baked from the clay found along the shore of the river. Glass for the residences was brought by ship from France and oiled animal skins were placed in the windows of the workshops.

By having all the buildings joined together in a square, protection was offered against the winds and cold of winter. There were also minimal defences facing the river. A platform with cannons mounted on it offered protection from the westward approach of the river and a palisade, where guards could be stationed, protected the gateway and the eastern approach of the river.

Among the buildings located inside the Habitation was a series of workshops. The kitchen and bakeshop were important in the daily food preparation at Port-Royal. All the meals for the community were prepared in the kitchen and the bread that the men ate would be baked in the bakeshop. The bread that was traded with the Mi'kmaq would also be made here. The blacksmith shop was a very busy area. All of the hardware (hinges, locks, latches, square nails, etc.) was manufactured here by the blacksmith. He repaired any iron objects inside the Habitation and he could also make extra items (knives, axe heads, arrow heads) to trade with the Mi'kmaq if the French were running low on trade goods. The artisans' workshop was an area where carpenters and joiners could build a variety of products for the community. Most of the woodworking needs of the Habitation were produced out of this shop.

Accommodations were arranged according to the class of people present. The governor had the finest home; a two-story building with upper sleeping quarters and a lower living area. Upper class gentlemen shared a series of homes on the north side of the compound. Among the gentlemen would be people such as the apothecary, the surgeon, sea captains, the clergy, a lawyer and any other upper class profession. These accommodations offered comfort and some privacy. The working class or artisans shared a communal sleeping quarters on the second floor of the Habitation. It was an open style dormitory with bunk-beds and mattresses. The comfort level was not as



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high as the gentlemen's dwellings and privacy was at a minimum because of the open style of the room.

All the men gathered in a large common room to have their meals. The upper class gentlemen had a finer table in the center of the room while the artisans ate at tables on the side. Only the gentlemen took part in the "Order of Good Cheer." At the request of the Jesuit priests, a small chapel was constructed to address the religious needs of the community. Prior to having a chapel, religious services would be held in the common room or outside.

There were also several storage areas inside the Habitation. Under the cannon platform, there was a gunpowder magazine where barrels of gunpowder for the cannons and the muskets were stored. Grains were stored on the second floor on the north side of the compound (above the gentlemen's quarters). The majority of the storage area was in a large building on the east side of the Habitation. The lower storage room was used to store all of the furs that were acquired from the Mi'kmaq during the season. There was also a small underground wine cellar where the wine and cider was stored. The upper level was used for storage of ship supplies such as sails, rope, masts and netting. Grain could be stored there as well.

One of the most important buildings was the trading room. This was the area where commercial activity took place. The Mi'kmaq brought their furs and traded them for European goods such as iron pots, knives, axes, blankets and bread. The furs were shipped to France and the money from the sale of the furs was used to pay for the salary of the men and to buy the supplies that the colony needed.

By taking a close look at the purpose and design of the buildings, one can see that all of the basic needs of the community were addressed within the comfort and safety of the Habitation designed by Champlain.



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