

ARCHITECTURE

What is the most common building material?

In the high country above the Karilus Wall: wood and stone. In the low country: sod and wood. In the mountains: wood and stone. All are chosen for availability for the most part, although in the high country, only the very rich have stone houses, due to the expense of labor and the incumbent heating costs.

How are buildings normally ornamented?

In the high country, elegance is the order of the day: smooth, flowing lines, reflecting the water all around. Sculptures are tall and elegant, svelte. High countrymen prefer simplicity in their designs, choosing to use a set pattern and a single color in most of their decorating. Wood houses are painted a single muted color, sometimes alternating with another compatible color down the street. Cities generally have official colors (Glen Arden's is green and silver after the royal crest), and residents are encouraged to follow suit. Most buildings in town follow the upside-down ziggurat pattern, to maximize space. Stone houses maintain straight, simple lines, but avoid austerity by preserving a roundness in their perimeter.

Low countrymen are much simpler, heartier folk. They rarely paint their rustic houses. They decorate with furs, mounted game animals, bright swatches of color. Bright-colored curtains are a large part of their decorating scheme—and also handy for keeping bugs out of the windows. The low country cities are much more slipshod than those of the high country. Often, they have the appearance of having been thrown together haphazardly, with the streets corkscrewing

off in all directions and no main street. The buildings are square and squat and small, often three rooms at most.

The mountains are rife with austere stone dwellings, even among the poor. Mostly hunters live in the mountains, and miners working the gold and silver veins. There are few cities in the rough-and-wild mountains, save a few industrial complexes situated around the mines. These complexes are rigidly orderly, the streets in perfect lines, every house in perfect order. Some mountaineers paint the stones of their dwellings bright colors, some paint them to blend into the dark forests. Animal furs are generally to be found on household floors, bright uni-colored tapestries draped against the stone walls to help hold in the heat. The houses are square and stalwart, imposing like the people who live in them.

How are houses heated/cooled?

Most families can afford a central heating system, in which a large fire is lit beneath the house and the warmth fed to the rooms through hollow walls and floors. Fireplaces are common among all classes.

In the summer, those in the lake country are able to partially cool their homes by opening dams and allowing water into the same subterranean caverns used for heat during the winter. Mountaineers rarely suffer from the heat, and those in the low country are pretty much at the sun's mercy.