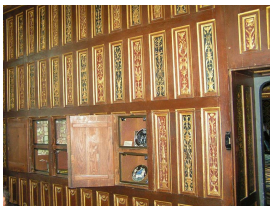
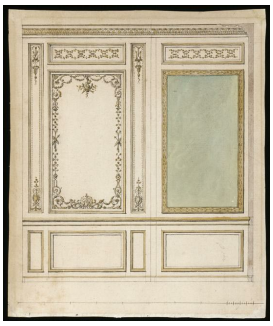
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Catherine of Medici's Cabinet, built before 1520, Chateau of Blois.



Paneling of the Verdun Cathedral, exhibited at the Petit Palais in 1916, photograph by Rol.



Jules-Hugues and Jean-Siméon Rousseau, Project of panels for Marie-Antoinette's Cabinet of the Meridian, 1781, Palace of Versailles.



Paneling of the King's Cabinet, by Jacques Verbeckt, 1753, Palace of Versailles.



Paneling of the Petite Singerie, by Christophe Huet, c. 1730, Chateau of Chantilly.

True elements for **interior architecture**, paneled rooms spread in Renaissance for cabinets of studies or curiosities. The **castle of Blois** is known indeed for its paneling hiding secret **niches**. A common habit, since in 1792, a "secret letter" from **Marie-Antoinette** was found in the paneling of her Apartments of the Tuileries…

In the end of the Middle Ages and during Renaissance it is usually not set on the entire walls, but only from the ground to **mid height**, just like in certain churches. It can be set as well on the full height of the walls, which will be become a favored decoration in 17th and 18th centuries.

Insulating and soundproof just like parquetry, the paneling provides moreover a major esthetic asset: **renowned designers** will rapidly give priority to this matter. Wood, which naturally provides a warm atmosphere, has a variety of colors that can be joined; it may be **sculpted**, **painted**, **gilded** or even decorated with stucco. For all these reasons, the most sumptuous Royal Palaces have adopted it, such as Versailles Palace , the **St-Petersburgh Hermitage**, or even **Buckingham Palace.**

The paneling in the Versailles Palace and in Trianon establishes itself as a model of **elegance**, with a thin molding emphasizing the room's height. Such paneling are still used in 19th century to decorate **Princess Mathilde**'s Salon, or the Hotel Lauzun where the bohemia of Theophile Gauthier and **Charles Baudelaire** used to gather.

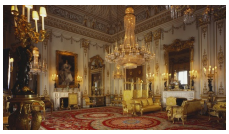
In addition to its **harmonization** of the decoration, paneling pieces can modify the structure of spaces, provide rhythm, arrange a space for **libraries**, console tables, mirrors and niches. The Art Nouveau understands this potential, and utmost exploits the astonishing potentials of paneling. The ensemble designed by **Alexandre Charpentier** is conceived to bring arches and curved forms to straight walls.

The paneling elements form all together a diversified heritage to which the Museum of Decorative Arts in Paris have payed a tribute in its **Paneling Room**, a reception room where are exhibited these panels, columns and other elements just like paintings or sculptures would be.

See also

Renaissance style — Régence style — Louis XV style — Louis XVI style — Napoleon III style — Art Nouveau — The Versailles parquet floor

See our antique furniture



Buckingham Palace, decoration from 1762-1776, London.



Paneling attributed to Barthelemy Cabirol, from a private mansion on Cours d'Albert in Bordeaux, c. 1785, Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York.



Sébastien Charles Giraud, Princess Mathilde's Salon, rue de Courcelles, 1859, Compiègne Museum.



Paneling of Hôtel Lauzun, c. 1770, on the spot until early 20th century, Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York.



Alexandre Charpentier, Dining Room Paneling, 1900-1901, Orsay Museum.



The Paneling Salon, museum of Decorative Arts, Paris.