

## Window to East and West: Decoration and Furniture for Macao Residences

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**Abstract:** The Lingnan regional cultural character of “compatibility”, “open innovation”, “respect for reality”, and “practice for the world” has created a unique lifestyle and ideology for the Chinese in Macau. The interior decoration and furniture design of the Chinese Macao, which has always been based on Lingnan culture, can calmly cope with the impact of multiculturalism in different periods. Aesthetic concepts and functional needs in different times. The interior and furniture design of the native Portuguese in Macao is a “transplantation” of Western styles, and its evolution has basically coincided with that in Europe, reflecting the deep-rooted influence of Western religions and culture on the Portuguese in Macau. Under the influence of the local culture of Macao, this kind of “transplantation” also showed some passive “alienation” and gradually formed a unique “Macao style”. In addition, the Portuguese house will use Chinese-style utensils as furnishings and decoration. This active juxtaposition of utensils reflects the Portuguese's recognition of multiculturalism and achieves Macau's unique urban culture.

### 1. Introduction

Lingnan refers to “the area between Nanling and the South China Sea, backed by the Wuling Ridge, and the south by the vast South China Sea”. It is higher in the north and lower in the south. Ridge, the south of Wuling Ridge of Daling Ridge. Broadly speaking, Guangdong, Hainan, and southern Fujian, south of Guilin in eastern Guangxi, southern Taiwan, and Hong Kong and Macau are generally regarded as Lingnan areas. As a unique regional culture of Chinese civilization, the formation, reconstruction and improvement of Lingnan culture has gone through a long process.

The special geographical location and development history make Lingnan culture form a dynamic and balanced complex structure. It is composed of multiple cultural clusters and cultural factors. The various components collide with each other to influence, restrict opposition, supplement and promote, and eventually gradually merge to form a distinctive feature. Evolving regional cultural personality. Local traditional art or design is the external materialization of this regional characteristic. Through very distinctive language, drama, painting, potted plants and architecture, Lingnan cultural characteristics are presented in a variety of forms, not only expressed in art, but also integrated Life, condensed into academics, sublimated into thought. In foreign cultural exchanges since modern times, the Lingnan region has first become a transit point between overseas and the mainland in the collision between Chinese and Western cultures. Therefore, starting from modern times, the Lingnan area also bears the radiating effect of absorbing foreign cultures and advanced experience and spreading to the mainland inland. Radiation is the fifth characteristic of Lingnan culture. “Among these Lingnan cultural regional personalities,” compatibility “is an important reason why Macau can calmly face the impact of foreign multiculturalism.

Macao is not only classified as a genus of Lingnan geographically, but also always takes Lingnan culture as its source. Although Portuguese people entered Australia in the middle of the 16th century, they experienced the strong implantation of Latin culture, Western cultures such as Anglo-Saxon, but thousands of years of impregnation made Lingnan culture rooted in the local Chinese. On the one hand, because of its pluralistic characteristics in its composition, the experience of integrating foreign cultures many times in history makes it easy to face the challenges

of the West; Emphasizing the real nature of business enables local Chinese to take the initiative to transform Western culture. These five regional characteristics peculiar to Lingnan culture have created a unique living mode and ideology in Macao, which are reflected in the interior design of the residence, including space type, floor plan, interior decoration, furniture form and craft details.

## **2. The Spirit of the Times in the Interior Design of Macao Dwellings**

After opening the port, Macao has formed an urban pattern of “inside the city” and “outside the city”. From the “Early Macao Map” painted by Dutch painter Johann Theodor de Bry in 1607, it can be seen that in the early days of the port, Wangxia Village outside the city of Macao remained a traditional Chinese. The form of the village is dominated by traditional Chinese courtyard houses. At the time, some Chinese people who lived on fishing or trade lived on the west side of Macao City. They first lived in boathouses, and pieces of boathouses formed floating houses on the sea. The space in the floating house is extremely limited, and it is unlikely to have extra decorations. However, most fishermen will place the bow card, the god card, and the nine god cards on the bow and other important parts. These pragmatic tablets are enshrined and objectively also has a certain decorative. As the mud on the sea floor became thicker and thicker, these floating houses slowly approached the land, and gradually replaced by buildings on the land (the land-like buildings shaped by ships once appeared in the transition period). One is a courtyard house similar to the village outside the city, and the other is a “bamboo tube house” in Lingnan. The former gradually evolved into large courtyard-style houses with large families; “Bamboo houses” are often built on the street, with smaller openings and larger depths. The ground floor is generally used for shops or handicraft workshops, and the upper part is mainly used for living. Street and other port areas.

During this period, the emergence and evolution of two types of Macao architecture show the design response of Macao dwelling houses under the influence of Lingnan culture. On the one hand, the courtyard-style dwelling houses have continued the inherent development trajectory under the influence of local culture. After the stage of mixed stone structures, the era of Macao's architectural masonry structure officially began. On the other hand, the emergence of the “bamboo tube house” reflects the extremely strong compatibility and pragmatism of Lingnan culture: in the then-dominated Macao city with Westerners, it strived for more living and living space within a limited scope. It is worth noting that there is still a God Tower in the middle, so even in the urban layout surrounded by Western-style churches, the Chinese tradition is still deeply rooted. During this period, the local Chinese were more alert to Western civilization and did not actively draw on the nutrients of Western design. They still followed the developmental context of the architectural space inherent in the Lingnan region, and the decoration of residential houses still mainly depended on regional materials. At the same time, Lingnan culture itself the openness and pragmatism made it impossible for the local Chinese to remain indifferent to new things. This curiosity and temptation made the Chinese buildings at that time flexible and adaptable according to the urban construction plan, and the internal space was also made due to emerging functional requirements. Appropriate change.

After the Opium War in the 19th century, officials and wealthy businessmen moved to Macao with capital, quickly mastered most of Macao's industrial production and internal and external trade, and even to some extent grasped the lifeblood of Macao's economic development. During this period, luxury mansion and villa buildings became the fastest-growing construction type among Chinese residential buildings in Macao. This large-scale building complex reflects the strong economic strength of the Chinese people and the increasing social status from the side. Lu Muzhen's apartment at No. 1 Wendi Street and the “Happy Palace” villa on Baitou Road belong to the type of western garden villas; other Chinese with a good family have chosen Lingnan-style courtyard-type buildings as the residential style. It is the representative of this; of course, there is also a garden-style house representing the comprehensive integration of Chinese and Western cultures, with the entertainment park (Lu Lianruo Park) being the most typical. The space and decoration of these three types of Chinese mansion villas show the regional personality of Lingnan culture that is “compatible and inclusive” and “useful for the world” to varying degrees.

### **3. Technical Characteristics of Interior Decoration and Furniture of Chinese Residences in Macau**

In the 300 years since the port was opened, the interior decoration and furniture of Chinese houses in Macao have been continuously affected by multiple cultures. Chinese and Western styles have developed in parallel in two veins, occasionally intertwined, and are relatively independent and subtly affect each other. The standardization and formation of traditional Chinese construction technology, and the method of imparting master and disciple, have made Chinese artisans maintain the technical stability when constructing Macao dwellings. The interior construction of Macao Chinese dwellings and the tenon-and-mortise structure of furniture are essentially free. Too much has changed, and the exchange of Chinese and Western cultures is technically equitable and symbiotic. Until the beginning of the 20th century, the main material of the interior space was always brick and wood. Whether it is Chinese or Western dwellings, Macao's local artisans (mainly carpenters and stonemasons) will be used in large quantities, even in the building's skin, space layout and decoration. Blend, and always maintain consistency in the construction technology. Under the "pragmatic" influence of Lingnan culture, the internal space structure of the Chinese people's residence in Macao has changed. Lifting beams and tunnels were the main form of the wooden roof truss structure, but most of the western-style buildings developed in the following years used triangles. Roof trusses, this kind of roof truss structure is better than traditional structures in terms of stress level, and requires less material, so it is widely used in western-style roof trusses. The masonry system of the interior space gradually improved from the second half of the 19th century and developed into a major construction technique. By the middle of the 20th century, multi-story and high-rise modern buildings appeared in Macau, and reinforced concrete structures basically became the most important form of building structure.

The changes in furniture tenon-and-mortise structure and manufacturing technology almost coincided with the evolution of the building, beginning in the 19th century. With the gradual prosperity and development of the furniture trade in the Qing Dynasty, the scope of circulation gradually expanded, and more and more export furniture began to be sold across the sea to Western Europe and the Americas. In order to achieve the maximum utilization of the cabin space, it is required to disassemble the furniture according to the tenon-and-mortise structure during transportation, so as to facilitate shipment in boxes, and to install and sell it after reaching the destination. The widespread circulation of furniture has prompted people to make many changes to Ming-style furniture. For example, the diaphragm in Ming-style furniture is relatively strong in structure, but it is not easy to disassemble, so wide-style furniture is rarely used. In addition, Cantonese-style furniture no longer adopts the tenon-and-tenon structure completely. Instead, it borrows western furniture stitching and gluing methods to make multifunctional cabinets. For example, the French closet with mirrors that appeared in the late Qing Dynasty tended to modern plate-shaped structures. The production directly adopted the western-style glue splicing technology. On the other hand, the process of etched glass for furniture decoration has also changed, which is very different from the early export glass paintings. Using chemical reagents, the corrosion of the glass paintings to be inlaid by the use of chemical reactions through complex chemical reactions. It had a profound impact on the glass mosaic technology of Guangdong in the Qing Dynasty.

### **4. The Evolution of Peranakan Residential Space**

The term "Portuguese" refers to the Macao term. The term "Portuguese" refers to: Portuguese-born Portuguese residents born in Macao. A collective term for the Portuguese and their descendants who live in Macau. As a very special ethnic group among Macao residents, although the proportion of native Portuguese is small, its status in Macau's social life and political economy cannot be underestimated, and it has also played an important role in the development of Macao's design culture. By understanding its cultural changes, it is possible to tease out the development context and reasons for the evolution of Portuguese-style residences in Macau.

At the beginning of the port, Peranakans and Chinese lived together on the Macao peninsula, and

they depended on each other in social life, each with its own place. The most important stage of its formation was from the middle of the 17th century to the middle of the 19th century. In the past two hundred years, China has entered the late feudal society and has concealed itself. The West has begun to enter the industrial revolution, capitalism has flourished, and the international structure has undergone major changes. Ethnic groups have been affected by a variety of factors. During the great changes, the basic form of Macao's indigenous peoples was formed in this context. In the early days of the opening of the port, Portuguese-Asian residents have multiplied and prospered in Macau for many generations, not only adapted to the living and cultural environment of southern China, but also realized integration with the Chinese. Since the 17th century, the phenomenon of intermarriage between native Portuguese and Chinese in Macau has become more and more common. It should be noted that intermarriage Chinese have a certain identity with western culture (must believe in religion), and the Central Plains and Lingnan culture infiltrated into Macau as a formal marriage. Native group. Portuguese people abroad have used religion to acclimate their ethnic groups through religious domestication, trying to lay the foundation and prosper in this strange land in Macau. Since the Qing Dynasty, the rise of Chinese businessmen, and the native Portuguese have fallen into a trough due to the difficulties of maritime trade. Therefore, the phenomenon of wealthy Chinese families joining the Portuguese population has appeared. Although the absolute number of Chinese people is still a minority, but because these families are in Macau, Political and economic status, these “alternative native Portuguese” have become a link between China and the West. At the same time, they are of great significance to the development of indigenous Portuguese culture and are also one of the characteristics of Macau's cultural development.

The indigenous people's cultural heritage is different from that of missionaries who come directly from Europe. After several generations, they will have their own understanding and precipitation of the western native culture and introduce it to the Chinese society. The Western cultural attributes of the native ethnic group have been unconsciously. There are regional attributes of Macau. In the 19th century, due to the emergence of modern transportation and the increase in Portuguese control of Macau after the Opium War, Portugal would regularly send its nationals to Macau and intermarry with the native Portuguese, realizing the “blood of the latter ethnic group” Dialysis. “ Although the ancestors came from the mainland, the native Portuguese people who have proliferated after three centuries have experienced a great fault with the European original culture. They have experienced another collision with the culture of the suzerain state, and a cultural “trend to return to the West” has appeared. In modern times, the indigenous people of Macao have more Western characteristics than their ancestors. Therefore, the home of the native Portuguese, Longhua Portuguese, which appeared in the 20th century, shows a style of combining Chinese and Western cultures, but its western colonial color is more intense.

## **5. “Transplant” Western Vintage Style**

The Portuguese brought Western architectural style to Macau, changing the long-standing local architectural tradition, and the new buildings all showed a relationship with Portuguese architectural style. From the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, neoclassicism prevailed in Portugal, and Macau also built many neoclassical houses in the early 19th century. At the same time, local Portuguese houses began to subtly integrate the design vocabulary of the Lingnan area, forming a unique Residential architectural style. Portugal's native residential buildings are culturally “transplantable”. For example, Manuel-style buildings often incorporate Islamic decoration, Gothic delicate colonnades, Renaissance cornice details, and so on. Window frames and organic forms of natural plants. This western style introduced alienation when it was introduced into Macau. The original delicate and complicated Islamic decoration was simplified into line-shaped eaves and mountain flowers. The original simple architectural colors were also replaced by bright tropical style. In the process of “transplantation”, the European-style residential style in Portugal has different meanings due to regional changes. During the local construction in Macau, most of the local materials and artisans were used, and they were continuously affected by the Central Plains

culture and Lingnan culture. The unique “Macao style” of various miscellaneous things has created Macao's unique architecture and urban culture.

In the middle of the 16th century, the Portuguese moved to Macau and built thousands of buildings on the Macau peninsula in just ten years. There are few detailed written records of the forms of houses built in early Macau in Portugal. After the 18th century, there were more records of the Portuguese people’s residence in Macau, and the indoor text descriptions began to appear. From this, we can infer the general interior style of Portuguese houses: the ground floor is the main living space, with a porch, courtyard and main hall, Courtyard, kitchen and servants' house. From the 18th to the 19th century, foreigners who came to Macau described the Portuguese residences in Macao consistently showing that Portuguese residences in Macao are basically similar to Spain and Portugal, maintaining the style of residential houses in the southern Mediterranean region. Most of the houses are only two floors, the houses are relatively spacious, and the houses have beautiful gardens; the facades and internal walls are made of masonry, the stairs and roof are made of wood; the exterior is mostly granite and painted white. The interior is rarely decorated, usually with large windows for ventilation, and long blinds to block the sun. In addition, by observing the oil paintings painted in the 19th century, you can see the interior conditions of some highly characteristic Portuguese houses in Macau. Most of these houses and gardens are located in the South Bay area and belong to the more luxurious Portuguese houses.

## **6. “Coexistence of Utensils” under Cultural Identity**

Portugal is located at the southern tip of the Ilya Peninsula, at the junction of the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. At the same time, it is influenced by Christianity and Islam. Its culture has a maritime and pluralistic character. From the site selection and construction of the church, it is not difficult to see the sense of belonging and identity of the Portuguese people of Macao to their religion and culture, and the construction of the city walls of Macau also reflects their wariness against strange land. It seems that it is difficult to achieve deep integration on the spiritual level of heterogeneous culture, but it is relatively easy to achieve cultural compatibility and integration as a tool for folk exchange and trade. According to the trade between Macau and Portugal at that time, the interior decoration style of this period in Europe and the change in the style of Macao's export goods may give a glimpse of the unique scene of “coexistence of utensils” in Western residential houses in Macau at that time.

When the Portuguese first arrived in Macau, Chinese ceramics, lacquerware, and other utensils were symbols of status and status for Westerners at the time. Due to their scarce quantity and high price, they could not become daily necessities, but they were just regarded as treasures for collection Or as a decent gift in society. With the opening of the large maritime trade route with Macau as a node, Chinese calligraphy, paintings, porcelain, lacquers and sculptures have been shipped to Europe on a large scale by the Portuguese, and the price has also become cheaper. Chinese utensils are used as indoors. Furnishings are in full swing. The use of porcelain has spanned history and has become a representative of global culture. The influence of “Chinese style” in western interior furnishings has lasted for almost two hundred years. Portugal is more typical, and it is still visible in places such as the Pena Palace Large blue and white tile mural decoration. The Portuguese also pioneered the use of heraldry on ceramics as a decoration, custom-made heraldic porcelain to symbolize status and wealth, a Chinese design alienated by Europeans. Chinese artifacts transmitted by Macao merged and merged with Western cultures in Europe, and “fed back” Macao, which was used in architecture and interior furnishings. At the beginning of the 20th century, Macao’s indigenous Portuguese “identified the ethnic culture has broken with the culture owned by their suzerain state and no longer depends on the established Portuguese culture”, but is in a specific cross-cultural state, which is manifested as: Portuguese culture and A new cultural system formed by the intermingling and infiltration of multiple cultures with Chinese culture as the main body. This diversity of cultural identity can be reflected in its residential buildings, interior spaces and furniture arrangements.

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