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**Isometric of a *bastide* near Aix-en-Provence. Left: Estate owner's building; right: sharecropper's dwelling and sheds.**

**See also**  
1.IX.2.q Silkworm house  
1.IX.3.s Sheepfold

**References**  
Bertrand, R., Bromberger, C., et al., 1989  
Bromberger, C., Lacroix, J., and Raulin, H., 1980  
Livet, R., 1962  
Massot, J. L., 1975

Peasants' houses, generally built on a parallelepipedic pattern, present some typological variety. In the plains they are spread close to the ground and are very seldom more than one storey high: on the ground floor, the kitchen is next to the sheds for animals and farming implements; on the first floor lie the bedrooms and the barn. In Upper Provence, the house is often three-storeyed, the animal sheds and the common room are on top of each other, the bedrooms and the barn being on the third floor. The shape of the roof often differentiates these two patterns: two slopes in the plains and only one in the mountains. Special mention should be made of two types of house: those, narrow and thin in height, of the poor peasants who dwelt in the villages – they often had a rustic cabin (*cabanon*), on the edge of their fields to keep their implements in; and those, low and

bulky, of Alpine hamlets, that look very much like the farms of the neighbouring Dauphiné: steep sloping roofs ending on two hips or two half-hips.

The estate owners' farms, numerous near the towns, well symbolize the mutual dependency of the town dwellers and the countrymen. The country houses in Basse Provence (*bastides*), showing a sophisticated architecture, with the much more simple dwellings of the produce-sharing farmers close by, were used as seasonal dwellings by the well off classes. In Camargue, the *mas*, belonging to the aristocracy of Arles, were divided by a corridor into two lodgings, a sumptuous one, inhabited by the owners, and a simple one where the bailiffs, at the head of a large agricultural and pastoral domestic staff, lived.

Among the outbuildings, special mention can be made of pigeon-houses, either crowning or flanking the house, or making a separate tower; they were not, as in other French provinces, a feudal privilege, thus revealing a lesser influence of the noblemen over the region.

The traditional usage of occupying space shares trends common in Mediterranean societies: a strict separation of domains, one private (and feminine), the other public (and masculine); the refusal of seasonal cohabitation with animals even in the cold of Alpine Provence, where people used to gather in animal sheds in the evening but stopped short of sleeping in them; and the projection of the stem-family pattern on the use of domestic space – the parents would sleep in a recess of the kitchen, the designated heir and his wife using the upper floor.

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