

# ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE DENVER

571 Galapago Street, Denver, Colorado 80204



**Architects:** Unknown

**Year Built:** 1887 - ?

Alliance Française was founded in 1883 in Paris as a cultural and educational center devoted to the French-speaking community. The Denver branch was founded in 1897 making it one of the oldest nonprofits in Denver. The building they occupy sits facing west towards Galapago Street at 6th Avenue.

This building actually began as three separate houses, built over the course of decades, before eventually being combined into the single large structure that appears today. Early records of Denver buildings often have gaps and the information about these three nondescript, constituent houses is no different. Maps show that by 1887, before the street of Galapago even had its current name, the first of the three houses had been built. It was an L-shaped brick structure on what was then called South Water Street, and it now makes up the southernmost portion of the Alliance Française building. The second house, again brick but this time shaped as a T, had been constructed by 1905 and makes up the north portion. The final piece, the central portion, was built sometime before 1919.

Over time, the three were combined and the two lots north were converted into parking. The brick exterior was covered with stucco finish at the front facade and the roofs were combined into a series of gables. The building adopted the appearance of what is perhaps the most common residential architectural style in the U.S., that of American Craftsman. Although it lacks the deep eaves and exposed rafters often associated with this movement, the simplistic façade design, symmetry, double hung windows and gabled dormers all indicate Bungalow or Craftsman stylings.

Alliance Française purchased and renovated the building before occupying it in 2003 from previous owner Mi Casa, another nonprofit. Alliance Française is now the world's largest cultural network with over 800 chapters in 132 countries.

## References

Denver Property Taxation and Assessment System. Retrieved from

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