

# Ximenez-Fatio House Museum School Tour

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## SEA CAPTAIN'S ROOM

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A ship's Captain would have been a frequent guest of the Boarding House, since many of the supplies for the townspeople would have been delivered to the harbor. A map on the wall shows how little of Florida's interior was known at this time. On the mantel are twisted pieces of paper (spills) used to transfer fire.

On the writing table are his nautical instruments, along with his inkwell and quill. Mosquito netting covers the bed because during this time period, they were not able to make screens large enough to cover the windows. The armoire was for clothes - there were no built-in closets in those days.

A wash-basin and pitcher were filled with well water to wash his face, brush his teeth or shave because there was no indoor plumbing at all. Under the bed is the chamber pot, which was the toilet.

## Lobby

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After traveling to St. Augustine upriver by steamboat or by ocean schooner, guests would arrive at the Inn by stage coach and enter through the door off Aviles Street. Here the visitors' trunks would be kept while waiting to be taken to their rooms. Trunks hold all their clothes and personal items for a two-week stay or even longer. On the floor is a spittoon surrounded by oilcloth in case anyone had a bad aim. You will see spittoons in several rooms, as many visitors had coughing diseases (tuberculosis) and it was common for the men to chew and spit tobacco.

## Dining Room

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This is where the adult guests would eat; children would have been fed in the kitchen. They would have breakfast, the main meal at midday and a light supper of leftovers in the evening since there was no refrigeration. The midday meal was 3 courses of 9 dishes each and could consist of wild game like bear, turkey and deer, fresh seafood, oysters, sea turtles, beef & other domestic meats. They had plenty of local fruits and vegetables. The cellaret holds the wine that they drank during dinner. Over the table is a punkah. A servant would have pulled the ropes to make the fan move, mainly to keep the flies away from the food. After the guests left, the servants would wash the dishes in the dry sink and then place them back on the table, ready for the next meal.

## Stairwell

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This is the original cedar and pine stairwell built in 1798. Be sure to notice the whale-oil lamps, which they would use at night.

## Upstairs Porch

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Porches, or galleries, were an inviting place to sit in good weather and enjoy the gardens. The porch slopes downward to allow the rain to run off into the garden and not back into the rooms.

## Owner's Parlor

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This is where the owner of the boarding house lives. The furniture is covered with fabric woven from horsehair and is very scratchy and coarse. The astral lamp has a round wick and casts no shadow. It was considered very modern at the time. By the bed is a Step Commode. (Your guide will lift lid and explain this was the owner's toilet).

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## **Family Bedroom**

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A family has come to stay and you can see they have several small children. Near the fire is a hip tub. It is very light, made of tin and would be brought to your room on request. Water would be heated in a large kettle. Several persons might bathe in this tub. Please notice the sunglasses on the dresser and the clothes press.

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## **Frail Lady Bedroom (View from doorway)**

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Often visitors came here from up North because they were ill and were seeking warmer weather. Quite often they had consumption (tuberculosis) . Notice the foot warmer and bed warmer, by the fireplace.

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## **Room Being Made Up**

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On a nice day they would air the feather bed on the banister in the fresh air and sunshine. It could be stuffed with feathers, Spanish Moss, hay or even straw.

Here is the bedstead. After a while, the ropes stretch and become so loose it makes the bed uncomfortable. Since the room is being cleaned for the new guests, a servant would tighten the ropes with the bed wrench. The expression "Sleep tight, don't let the bed bugs bite!" started as a result of this.

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## **Back Stairs (Warn students of low overhead, and to be careful)**

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Notice the servant quarters over the kitchen. St. Augustine had many free blacks as well as indentured servants and African slaves.

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## **Kitchen**

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This coquina kitchen is built away from the house to prevent fires and is the only one left standing in St. Augustine from the eighteenth century. The floor is made of tabby. The beehive oven was used to bake mulberry pies, cakes and bread that were sometimes made from flour from the Coontie palm root. Logs were burned in the oven to make it very hot. The ashes and coals were raked out and then the food was put right on the bricks to bake.

The dry sink had no running water connection. When the plug was removed, the water simply ran out into the yard.

Over the table is a flytrap. The sugar water inside attracts flies and once they climb inside they cannot fly out again and are trapped. This is a sugar cone on the table.

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## **Wash House (View from door and windows)**

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Clothes, towels, and sheets, were washed outdoors in a huge iron wash pot over a log fire that heated the water. Laundry was probably done once a week. Notice the hat tub, another type of bathtub shaped like a wide brim hat.

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## **Visitors Center**

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Allow the students to browse the visitor's center