

MELBOURNE: DESIGN

December 2018

Melbourne, the design capital of Australia, is highly regarded for its grand, elegant heritage architecture complemented by its bold, striking contemporary neighbours.

The city, inside and out, has been shaped by some of the world's leading creative minds. It's easy to see why Melbourne has become Australia's centre of design as the city blends its mix of old-world heritage buildings with bold and striking contemporary architecture.

More recently, the city's love for design has influenced the look and feel of Melbourne's cafes, restaurants, bars, hotels and retail shops. Design will continue to play a key role in Melbourne with a host of new products opening in 2019 as the city manages a visitation and population boom.

FAST FACTS

- The remains of Melbourne's rich past from the goldrush era is evident with a European influence in many historic buildings and monuments across the city.
- Victoria has produced internationally renowned modernist architects such as Robin Boyd (1919–1971) and Sir Roy Grounds (1905–1981), and many innovative and iconic buildings such as the Sidney Myer Music Bowl 1958 (Barry Patten), former ICI House 1958 (Bates Smart McCutcheon), Heide II 1963 (McGlashan Everist) and Building 8 RMIT 1993 (Edmond & Corrigan).
- Discover the Italianate architecture of Government House and the lavish French Renaissance-inspired Como House, or wander through lush colonial gardens at Rippon Lea Estate.
- Melbourne has seen a growing number of historic pubs and hotels undergo a serious facelift, including Hotel Esplanade, Village Belle Hotel, The Albion, Park Hotel, East Brunswick Hotel, Prince Alfred Hotel and Green Man's Arms.
- At the national 2018 [Eat Drink Design Awards](#), Victoria's hospitality design led the way in nominations and winners compared to other states. Winners include [Cookie](#) (Eat Drink Design Awards' Hall of Fame winner), [Brae Restaurant Accommodation](#) (Best Hotel Design), [Ishizuka](#) (Best Restaurant Design), [Bentwood Café](#) (Best Cafe Design), [Chandon Australia](#) (Best Retail Design).
- At the global [Restaurant and Bar Design Awards](#) in London, Victorian restaurants and bars took the top prizes home for:
 - International winner for Best Ceiling - [Doot Doot Doot](#) in the [Mornington Peninsula](#)
 - Australia & Pacific Bar - [Chandon](#) in the [Yarra Valley](#)

- Australia & Pacific Restaurant [Ishizuka](#) in [Melbourne](#)
- Others Melbourne venues shortlisted for the awards include: city bar and restaurant [Longsong](#), Abbotsford café [Au79](#), nightclub [Baroq House](#) and Guy Grossi's [Pezzo](#).

MELBOURNE'S MUST-VISIT ARCHITECTURE LANDMARKS

Notable Landmarks

The much-admired twentieth century [Manchester Unity Building](#) on Swanston Street is a striking example of the commercial gothic style of the era. Built in 1932 during the great depression by progressive local Marcus Barlow. The architect thought Melbourne needed to emulate the great skyscrapers in America and was inspired by the Chicago Tribune building. It was Melbourne's tallest building when it was completed. Visitors can walk through and admire the detail and elegance of the interiors and grab a coffee at Switchboard, one of the smallest cafes in the city.

[Regent Theatre](#) was designed by Cedric Ballantyne and built by James Porter & Sons, completed in 1929 to be part of a franchise of some of the most lavish and largest theatre cinemas in Australia, demonstrating the city's early adoption of arts, popular culture and entertainment. The style is a combination of Spanish Gothic and French Renaissance. The Spanish Baroque and mediaeval style of the plaza ballroom was originally meant as a cabaret but ended up being another cinema. The venue has had a colourful history and now the best way to appreciate its awesomeness is to see one of the many blockbuster theatre performances held there thanks to David Marriner who ensured the venue's continued legacy in Melbourne's cultural story.

The twenty first century welcomed Melbourne's piazza for the public, [Federation Square](#). Designed by London-based Lab Architects after a global competition and built alongside Bates Smart, Melbourne Architects, it was officially opened in 2002. The space has been purpose built for arts, events, culture and tourism with an open amphitheatre to hold up to 15,000 people.

Home to arts institutions, [ACMI](#) and the [Ian Potter Gallery Centre, NGV Australia](#), Fed Square has become the beating cultural heart of the city. A \$5.4 million project will see the current outdoor big screen replaced by a "sculptural wall of interactive LED panels" high-definition screens that can function as one large screen, or display separate images, set to open April 2018.

After 'Fed Square' [Eureka Tower](#) is the next major icon to change the face of Melbourne forever. Its 297.3-metres makes it the second tallest building in Australia. The reflective golden panels with a red stripe is symbolic of blood spilt during the Eureka Stockade during the gold rush and can be seen from north to south of the city changing colours with the position of the sun. The project was designed by prolific modern day Melbourne architectural firm Fender Katsalidis Architects and officially opened on 11 October 2006. It's now home to Melbourne's highest observation deck complete with the world first, The Edge, attraction.

As a city on the move, and one that is set to become the most populated in Australia by 2030 - Melbourne continues to evolve. New hotels will include the Mandarin Oriental, the last building

designed by the late and great Zaha Hadid. More cultural, residential and commercial buildings planned in the coming years will all contribute to improving the city and provide the needed upgrades for the ease, comforts and entertainments of residents and visitors alike.

Architecture tours

[The State Library](#) Victoria offers free tours to guests and a program of talks, lectures, exhibitions and events on all and every subject matter. The much-revered Dome, or La Trobe Reading Room, was added by designer Norman Peebles in 1913. The library is opening further renovated spaces as part of its 2020 vision.

Melbourne's historic [Town Hall](#) offers visitors the chance to learn about the architectural, social and political significance of this impressive 19th century building. The free tour gives an opportunity to experience firsthand the grandeur of the wood-panelled Council Chamber, stand on the portico where the Beatles waved, sit in the Lord Mayor's chair and view the richly carved Melbourne Town Hall Grand Organ, the largest grand romantic organ in the southern hemisphere.

Melbourne architecture tours are available from [Meltours](#) and [Melbourne Walks](#) who offer insights of city's built environment since European settlement 180 years ago to discover some amazing architectural styles from the 1850s to the present day.

Events

Melbourne is Australia's cultural capital, with one of the highest densities of commercial art galleries in the world hosting thriving and innovative exhibitions. At a global level, the city is Australasia's official host to many of the world's great exhibitions, and many exclusive to Melbourne collaborations such as [National Gallery of Victoria](#)'s world-premiere exhibition ***Escher x nendo | Between Two Worlds*** presents **more than 160 of Dutch artist M.C. Escher's works** – from his iconic endless staircases to works of infinite, tessellating patterns – in an exhibition especially designed for the NGV by Japanese design studio, nendo.

In addition, [Melbourne Design Week](#) and [Open House Melbourne](#) will be back again in 2019 with design-packed activities to satisfy any creative soul.