

FEATURE
TRAVEL

ARCHITECTURE WORTH THE TRIP

From an awe-inspiring structure in Manhattan to a game-changing museum in the Middle East, six new design wonders are giving travelers plenty of reasons to explore and discover.

By Laura Begley Bloom





IWAN BAAN/COURTESY NATIONAL MUSEUM OF QATAR

“Architecture

is not based on concrete and steel and the elements of the soil,” the legendary architect Daniel Libeskind once said. “It’s based on wonder.” And indeed, a great piece of architecture is about more than just a space. It inspires us. It draws us in.

The idea of voyaging to the ends of the earth to witness an architectural wonder is nothing new: Travelers have been making pilgrimages to places like the Taj Mahal, the Alhambra, and the Pyramids of Giza since time immemorial. But these days, a host of new landmarks are pushing the boundaries of the imagination and compelling travelers to seek out destinations near and far.

At the end of the journey, the reward for the trip isn’t just witnessing a design spectacle, it’s being able to engage with it in a uniquely personal way—whether that means dining beneath the waves in Europe’s first underwater restaurant, scaling a dazzling structure set in the most expensive real estate development in U.S. history, or spying on rare pandas in a space that makes these magnificent animals feel like they’re within arm’s reach.

Behold six noteworthy buildings around the globe that will make you want to stop what you’re doing and book a plane ticket right now. They will be well worth the trip.

OLD MEETS NEW

In the desert capital of Doha, the Jean Nouvel-designed National Museum of Qatar showcases the transformation of this ancient country in a wildly futuristic setting. Turn the page to learn more.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF QATAR DOHA, QATAR

In more ways than one, the National Museum of Qatar is redefining the narrative of an Arabian nation by evoking its rich heritage within a modern masterpiece. Starchitect Jean Nouvel created a building full of interlocking discs that he based on the form of the desert rose. With inclined floors and very few vertical lines, the space is organized into three chapters, from the time before humans inhabited the peninsula to the fast-growing economic power of today. Contained within are multimedia displays, exhibits of archaeological treasures, major artist commissions, and even a restored sheikh's palace from the 1900s. It is as dramatic and complex as Qatar itself. qm.org.qa/en



▲ Where to Stay

KATARA TOWERS

Inspired by the seal of Qatar, this mind-boggling structure in Lusail—a planned city on the outskirts of Doha—is designed to look like two crossed swords. When it opens in 2021, the swooping waterfront property in the Marina District will house a luxury hotel, apartments, offices, shops, restaurants, a water park, you name it. katarahospitality.com

VESSEL NEW YORK CITY

When British designer Thomas Heatherwick's 150-foot-tall Vessel opened this past spring, Instagram feeds were flooded with images of people engaging with the shiny honeycomb-shaped installation. In addition to creating the ultimate 21st-century selfie backdrop, with the Vessel, Heatherwick is rethinking the idea of a public space in Hudson Yards, the ambitious \$25 billion project that is the most expensive real estate development ever built in the United States. Set on the West Side of Manhattan, Hudson Yards is at once a luxury mall and an office complex and a residential development, with the Vessel as its focal point. Heatherwick claims that his creation isn't a sculpture or a piece of art or even a building: Whatever you call it, Vessel is offering an entirely unique perspective on New York City. hudsonyardsnewyork.com/discover/vessel



ANDREW BEZEK/COURTESY MOMOFUKU

▲ Where to Eat

KAWI

The Momofuku empire has a new jewel in its crown: Kawi, located within the Shops & Restaurants at Hudson Yards. Momofuku founder David Chang has teamed up with chef Eunjo Park to create a genre-defying menu that takes inspiration from Korea and turns it on its head. And don't miss Peach Mart next door, a tiny stall with Asian-inspired snacks. kawi.momofuku.com



DITTE ISAGER/COURTESY NOMA

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Where to Eat

NOMA

The highly influential restaurant Noma, which made “foraging” a household word, has a new home befitting chef René Redzepi’s culinary innovation. Architecture firm BIG (Panda House) has transformed the site of a former military warehouse set between two lakes into an open and airy culinary village. noma.dk

PANDA HOUSE
COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

A pair of panda bears from China has inspired a groundbreaking concept at the Copenhagen Zoo from Danish architecture firm Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG). Using a circular design that references the yin-yang symbol, the architects enclosed the habitat in glass and installed walkways that wrap around the pandas’ habitat. The resulting space provides a sensitive and sustainable home for the animals while at the same time giving humans an opportunity to get up close and personal. In addition, BIG created a panda-themed restaurant so that diners can watch these magical creatures as they snack on bamboo—the ultimate expression of meal sharing.

zoo.dk/en/286-panda

TOP: FRANK RONSHOLT/COURTESY COPENHAGEN ZOO

Europe's first underwater restaurant is turning a remote town on the southern coast of Norway into an unexpected design destination. Norwegian architecture firm Snøhetta, known for its work on the National September 11 Memorial Museum Pavilion in New York City, created this jaw-dropping concrete structure, which juts from a rocky outcropping battered by waves and wind. In the dining room set 18 feet below sea level, a massive window provides a stunning view of the local marine life. Danish chef Nicolai Ellitsgaard's dishes, made with locally foraged ingredients, are just as compelling as the space itself. It's no surprise that the word "under" means "wonder" in Norwegian. under.no

UNDER BÅLY, NORWAY



▼ Where to Stay

TREHYTTENE

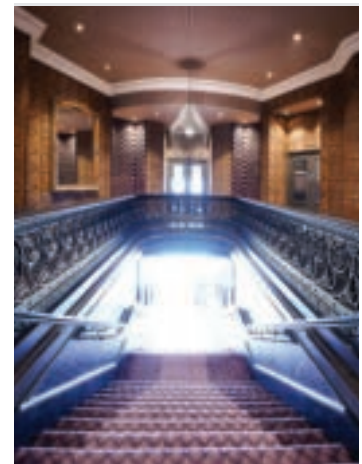
After you've dined under the water, why not stay up in the trees? Trehyttene is a sleek treehouse-style hotel with angular wood-and-glass cabins built on stilts in a canopy of pine trees. Set in the middle of a lush forest in Gjerstad, about a two-and-a-half-hour drive away from Under, this hotel is a detour worth taking. trehyttene.no/treehouse-norway-treehut/





V&A DUNDEE
DUNDEE, SCOTLAND

Scottish design is so much more than tartans and kilts, as the trailblazing new V&A Dundee proves. Located on the River Tay, the waterfront museum—sister to London’s historic Victoria and Albert Museum—showcases everything from 15th-century illuminated manuscripts to a costume from *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* created by a Glasgow designer. Inspired by the cliffs of Scotland as well as this up-and-coming town’s shipbuilding heritage, the museum’s structure itself is a feat of architecture worth seeking out. It’s the work of visionary Japanese architect Kengo Kuma, who has been making headlines around the globe as the designer of Tokyo’s stadium for the 2020 Olympics. vam.ac.uk/dundee



▲ **Where to Stay**

MALMAISON HOTEL

Just steps away from the V&A Dundee, the Malmaison is part of a hip chain of British boutique hotels. Set in a historic Dundee building with a wrought-iron staircase and an impressive domed ceiling, the property respects tradition but presents it in a thoroughly modern way. malmaison.com/locations/dundee

BEIJING DAXING INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEIJING, CHINA

Though she passed away in 2016, Pritzker Prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid's vision lives on in the epic Beijing Daxing International Airport, which is expected to be one of the world's largest single-terminal airports when it opens this fall. Hadid's design for the sprawling terminal building illustrates the barrier-breaking architect's trademark style, combining free-flowing curves and organic forms. It also attempts to improve the passenger experience by reducing the time it takes to walk from the security checkpoint to any of the gates. The 7.5-million-square-foot terminal—nicknamed “the starfish”—will eventually welcome 72 million passengers a year, who will have the pleasure of passing through Hadid's adaptive, light-filled space.



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Where to Stay

PUXUAN HOTEL

Located near the Forbidden City, one of Beijing's most important landmarks, is the PuXuan, a pared-down luxury hotel styled by MQ Studio that pays homage to both ancient and modern China. It's cleverly enclosed in a glass box atop Beijing's Guardian Art Center, which has become a destination in its own right, thanks to its design by German architect Ole Scheeren.

thepuxuan.com/en

