

TRAVEL

The 24 Best New York City Landmarks to Visit

From the well-traveled Brooklyn Bridge to the lesser-known Ansonia Hotel, these are the best architectural landmarks to visit in the Big Apple

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“Skyscraper National Park.” That is what Kurt Vonnegut famously labeled New York City in his 1976 novel *Slapstick*. It’s true, the city is filled with tall buildings, and many of them stunningly beautiful. Yet, New York City also has other, lesser-known landmarks that don’t necessarily touch the clouds. And these locations—such as Warren Place Mews in Brooklyn or the Cloisters on Manhattan’s northern tip—are just as worthy of a trip to the Big Apple as any of its iconic buildings. Whether you’re a New Yorker or planning your maiden trip to the city, *AD* rounded up 24 of the best architectural landmarks to visit while walking the streets of the city. Some you will recognize instantly, but there are sure to be a few that will leave you impressed by the New York you never knew existed.



Photo: Getty Images/Pawel Gaul

Originally built in 1922 and located on the banks of the East River, Brooklyn's **Jane's Carousel** has become a popular destination to visit. After extensive renovations, the carousel reopened in 2011 and featured, among other additions, a jewel-like glass exterior that was designed by architect Jean Nouvel.



Photo: Getty Images/narvikk



Built in 1900 by architects Edward Lippincott Tilton and William A. Boring, **Ellis Island** was once the gateway for over 12 million immigrants hoping to find a new home in the United States. Today, it is part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument.



Photo: Getty Images/Dennis K. Johnson



The Santiago Calatrava-design **World Trade Center Transportation Hub** opened in the spring of 2016. From its initial design through to its final completion, the project proved to be arduous for its symbolism, its physical complexity, as well as for the number of commuters it would need to accommodate. This past summer, the interior of the Oculus (as it's commonly known) opened the Westfield World Trade Center mall. The 365,000 square feet of retail space will accommodate some 113 tenants.



Photo: Getty Images/Urs Gubser



Opened in 1909, the **Queensboro Bridge** is often overlooked due to the legendary Brooklyn Bridge located a few miles south on the East River. Yet, the 3,724-foot-long bridge that connect Manhattan to Queens should not be overlooked. Designed by the American architect Henry Hornbostel, the Queensboro Bridge was recently featured in such blockbuster movies such as *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012) and *The Great Gatsby* (2013)



Photo: Getty Images/Tony Shi Photography



When it was completed in 1909, the **Metropolitan Life Tower** (pictured on the left) was the world's tallest building (a title it held until 1913). Designed by Napoleon LeBrun & Sons, the building is located on the corner of East 23rd Street and Madison Avenue (it's actually the most southern landmark on Madison Avenue).



Photo: Getty Images



Among those in attendance at the 1959 groundbreaking ceremony for the **Lincoln Center for Performing Arts** was President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The performing arts center, located on Manhattan's Upper West Side, was opened in 1962, and began a decade-long renovation in 1999. The architects and firms involved include Frank Gehry, Cooper, Robertson & Partners, and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.



Photo: Getty Images/lithonica



Completed in 1904, the **Ansonia Hotel** is a Beaux Arts–style building with a storied past. It was first conceived as a self-sufficient hotel, and the rooftop was home to a farm with chickens, ducks, and goats (the animals didn't stay up there long). The Ansonia was also the first address that Babe Ruth called home in the city. In 1972, the hotel was designated a New York City Landmark, which officials called its effect as one of “joyous exuberance profiled against the sky.”



Photo: Getty Images/Henglein and Steets



The 22-story, steel-framed **Flatiron Building** was completed in 1902. Its wedge shape, conceived by architect Daniel Burnham, fit perfectly into the triangular plot that intersects Broadway and Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. While many buildings at the time were designed with bulky, fortified bases, the Flatiron is consistent from the bottom to the top, making the architecture that much more charming.



Photo: Getty Images/Lorenzo Bianchi



At nearly ten acres, **Washington Square Park** is considerably smaller than other New York parks. Yet the densely used green space—which is positioned in the midst of the trendy Greenwich Village neighborhood and includes the beautiful Washington Square Arch—has become a hallmark of the city.



Photo: Getty Images/Tim Robbins



In 1883, thousands of New Yorkers showed up to the opening ceremony of the **Brooklyn Bridge**. After 13 years of construction, locals were still weary of its safety, and to prove its strength, authorities invited a circus entertainer to walk 21 elephants over the bridge. The 1,595-foot-long structure was the world's longest suspension bridge until 1903, when the nearby Williamsburg Bridge overtook it by 4.5 feet.



Photo: Getty Images/Rudi Von Briel



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, which was designed by architect and founding trustee architect Richard Morris Hunt, opened to the public in late 1902. Located on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, the Beaux Arts structure became in 1910 the first public institution to acquire a work by Henri Matisse. Today, tens of thousands of artworks and objects are on view in the two-million-square-foot building.

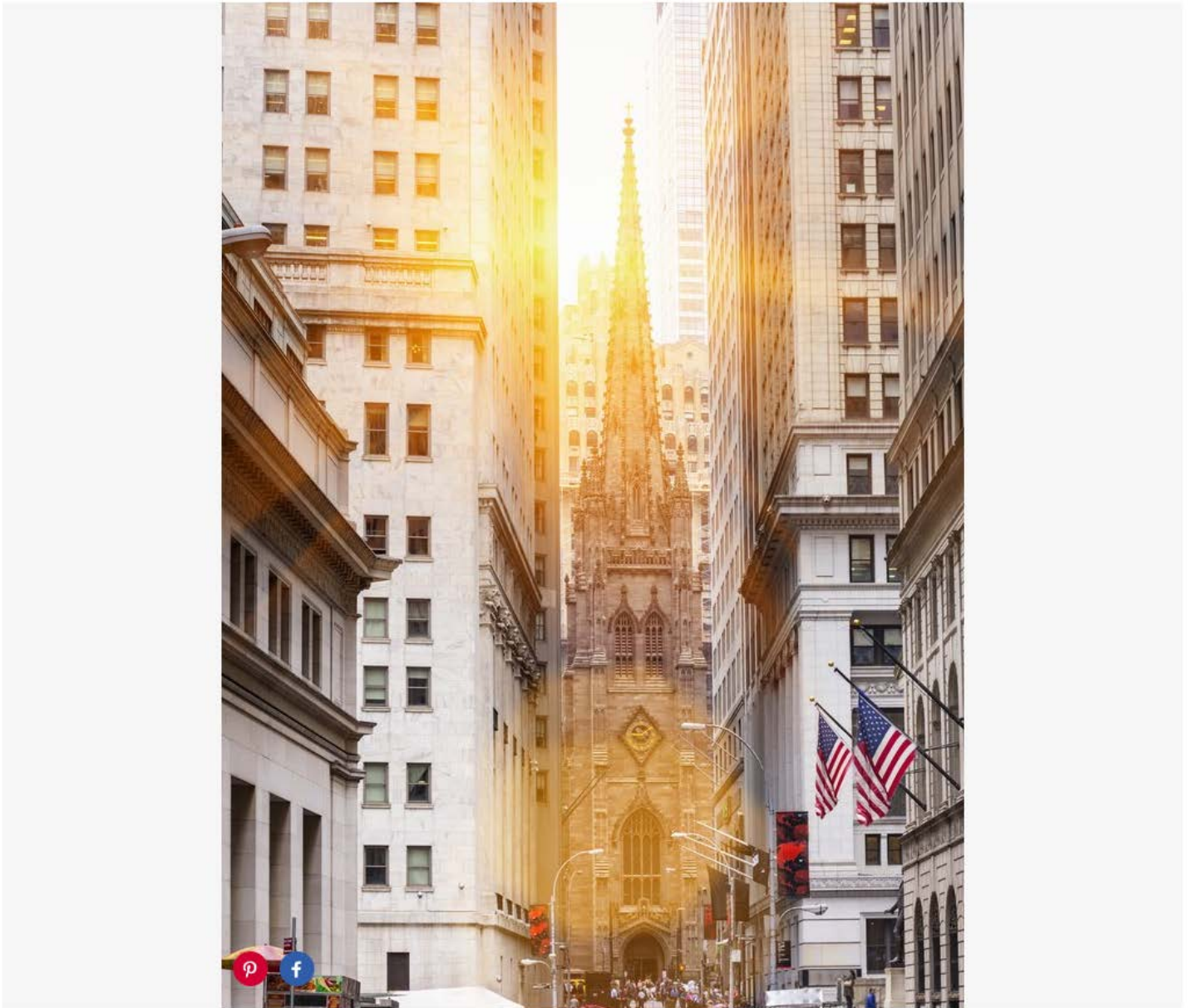


Photo: Getty Images/Henglein and Steets



Trinity Church in downtown Manhattan is located at the intersection of two of the city's most famous thoroughfares, Broadway and Wall Street. The Gothic Revival structure was completed in 1846 and, at 281 feet tall, was New York's tallest building at the time. After the attacks on September 11, 2001, the church stood strong, even while modern buildings around it crumbled.



Photo: Getty Images/Michael Marquand



Located along the western tip of Brooklyn's picturesque Eastern Parkway Blvd, the Brooklyn Museum is a 560,000 square foot museum that contains roughly 1.5 million works of art. Designed by the once prominent architecture firm, McKim, Mead & White, the Beaux-Arts structure is the third largest museum (by way of sheer size).



Photo: Getty Images/Hufton and Crow/VIEW



Designed by starchitect, Bjarke Ingels, **VIA 57 West** is a beautiful residential building that was completed in 2016. The structure has a pyramid-like design with an open-air garden in the middle of structure for tenants to enjoy.



Photo: Getty Images/Meinzahn



The General Research Room of the **New York Public Library**. Built in 1911, the library is located in midtown Manhattan on Fifth Avenue, between 40th and 42nd streets.



Photo: Getty Images/Artem Vorobiev



The High Line is a 1.45-mile-long park built on an elevated stretch of the former New York Central Railroad (which operated from 1831–1968). The first of three planned phases of the park opened to the public in 2009.



Photo: Getty Images/Matteo Colombo



Grand Central Terminal was first opened in 1891. The Beaux Arts building features a ceiling in its main concourse that depicts the zodiac signs, including some 2,500 stars. Outside the station, the famous statues atop the façade were conceived in France, but built in Queens.



Photo: Getty Images/Spencer Platt



Designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, **One World Trade Center** officially opened to its occupants (including *Architectural Digest's* parent company, Condé Nast) in late 2014. Standing a symbolic 1,776 feet tall, the patriotic building is currently the tallest in the Western Hemisphere.



Photo: Getty Images/Mel Longhurst



When the **Woolworth Building** opened in 1913, it soared 792 feet over downtown Manhattan, making it the world's tallest skyscraper. Financed by businessman Frank Woolworth and designed by architect Cass Gilbert, the stunning skyscraper held on to that title for nearly two decades.



Photo: Getty Images



A gift to the U.S. from France, the **Statue of Liberty** was erected off the southern tip of Manhattan in 1886. From the ground to the tip of her torch, Lady Liberty stands just over 300 feet tall. Designed by Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, the statue has a crown of seven rays, representing the seven seas and continents, and a tablet inscribed with “July IV MDCCLXXVI,” celebrating the date the U.S. declared independence from British.



Photo: Getty Images/Spencer Platt



When the **Waldorf Astoria** opened on Park Avenue in 1931, it became the tallest and largest hotel in the world. Over the years, the Art Deco luxury hotel has entertained many famous patrons. In 1955, at the height of her career, Marilyn Monroe resided in the Waldorf Astoria's \$1,000-per-week suite. What's more, every sitting U.S. president since Herbert Hoover has stayed at the hotel while visiting New York.



Photo: Getty Images/Jon Arnold



When the **Chrysler Building**—among the most recognizable examples of Art Deco architecture—was completed in 1930, it was 1,050 feet tall, and took the crown for the world's tallest building (though not for long, as the Empire State Building superseded it in 1931). Striking gargoyles decorate corners of the 61st floor, while all floors above the 71st are unoccupied, there simply to facilitate access to the spire.



Photo: Getty Images/Roberto Machado Noa



When the **Empire State Building** opened in 1931, then-president Herbert Hoover pressed a button from the White House to turn on the tower's lights. The gesture was symbolic, of course—a building employee in New York actually switched on the lights. At 1,454 feet, the Empire State Building was the world's tallest skyscraper for over four decades.



Photo: Getty Images/David Handschuh/New York Daily News Archive



The Cloisters, which opened to the public in 1938, is the branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art devoted to the art and architecture of medieval Europe. The museum and gardens are located near the northern tip of Manhattan, on a four-acre lot overlooking the Hudson River.