14 MUST SEE PHOENIX Architectural Sites
WELCOME TO PHOENIX

The best way to truly know great architecture is through directly experiencing it. When the AIA Committee on Design travels we make sure we visit the best architecture our destinations have to offer – and we hope our little guide can help you slip a few tours into your visit.

Certainly not meant to be an exhaustive guide, the following pages represent 14 top projects in Phoenix (and outlying areas) we recommend to experience while you are here. We have also listed a few historic Phoenix sites for your tour as well.

Enjoy!

1. PHOENIX ART MUSEUM (1996 & 2006)
   1625 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix
   602.832.4092 | www.phxart.org
   Tod Williams/Billie Tsien Architects
   The new entry off Central Avenue leads to a glass-enclosed lobby that provides an unexpected introduction to the Phoenix Art Museum. The lobby is enclosed with 113 lineal feet of glass wall, and the lobby’s outdoor covered plaza is adjacent to a tranquil landscaped glade and contemporary waterfall.
   The four-level Ellen & Howard C. Katz Wing for Modern Art includes 25,000 SF of gallery space houses the museum’s collection of modern, contemporary, and Latin American art, as well as the museum’s renowned fashion design collection.
   A 48-foot high, light-filled atrium and flying staircase provide views of all of the galleries from every level, and a central elevator provides easy access. Unique design features, such as two upper-level enclosed overlook balconies and a sub-ground light well with a tranquil water pool, provide creative new ways to view the sculpture garden and downtown Phoenix.

2. PHOENIX CENTRAL LIBRARY (1995)
   1221 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix
   602.262.4636 | www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org
   Will Bruder + Partners w/ Wendell Burnette Architects
   The Phoenix Central Library has become a landmark on the Phoenix skyline and an icon of late 20th century modern architecture.
   The library houses a 1,000,000 volume collection, including a rare book room containing examples of fine printing and binding. The great reading room on the fifth floor is the largest reading room in North America.
   Using a single, small central open core, the ‘crystal canyon’ provides vertical circulation with three high-speed elevators and a grand five-level staircase.
   The thermal mass of the walls and a highly efficient mechanical system cut energy usage to one-third the amount initially projected by city planners and utility experts.
3 SANDRA DAY O’CONNOR  
UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE (2000)  
401 W. Washington Street, Phoenix  
Richard Meier & Partners  
As an interruption of Phoenix’s Jeffersonian grid and “downtown” of glass box and faux adobe, the Sandra Day O’Connor courthouse and federal building is a gravitational point of interest and anchor for the sprawling city of Phoenix.

The 500,000 square-foot building with six stories and underground parking is sited on two central city blocks between the governmental and business districts. The building’s exterior massing harmonizes with the indigenous, rectilinear geometry of its context, but the focus is a massive atrium lobby housing the ceremonial, glass-clad Special Proceedings Court which rises as a cylindrical building volume, offering occupants and visitors a naturally climatized public space of outdoor proportions.

4 PHOENIX UNION BIOSCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL  
(2007)  
512 E. Pierce Street, Phoenix  
www.phxhs.k12.az.us  
Orcutt|Winslow  
Bioscience High School is an immersion into exploration itself—designed as a teaching tool, with the future of science and technology in mind. Fossils are cast into the large east and west facing concrete walls to tell the story of geological time relationships, and illustrate environmentally-appropriate orientation for solar exposure in the Sonoran desert, while finishes are designed to represent DNA strands and chromosomes.

Open to a diverse student population, the building emphasizes collaboration, team teaching, and independent learning. A town square concept compliments flexible classroom and lab models that have the ability to morph with upcoming technology, rigorous curriculum, and various teaching strategies—preparing students for mentoring and internships with Bio-Genomic Research Neighbors and the surrounding TGEN community.

5 ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
WALTER CRONKITE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM (2008)  
555 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix  
602.496.5555 | cronkite.asu.edu  
Ehrlich Architects : Design Architect  
HDR Architecture, Inc. : Executive Architect  
This new, LEED Silver, state-of-the-art facility has become an integral part of the fabric of ASU’s new downtown campus. The project was completed via fast-track, design-build delivery, taking a staggering 22 months to complete – from the start of programming to occupancy. The six-story, 225,000 sq.ft. building consists of retail on the ground floor, the School of Journalism in the “middle floors” and is topped with a steel structure that houses production facilities for both the Cronkite News Watch and KAET-8 (Phoenix’s PBS affiliate). This technology-driven, flexible facility brings a burst of color and life to an emerging district, activating the street and encouraging collaboration. The activity and energy inside the building is broadcast to the community and beyond.
METRO LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM & PUBLIC ART (2008)
Phoenix | Tempe | Mesa

METRO Light Rail runs more than 20 miles through Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa, with 28 unique stations. METRO teamed with architects, engineers, environmental experts and artists to plan the area’s first light rail system. The public art that resulted is a celebration of place and community. Each station boasts its own unique character with artwork that strives to add substance, style and sometimes a touch of whimsy to the transit experience.

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PALO VERDE LIBRARY & MARYVALE COMMUNITY CENTER (2009)
4402 N. 51st Avenue, Phoenix
602.262.4636 | www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org
Gould Evans & Wendell Burnette Architects

The new Palo Verde Library & Maryvale Community Center sought to revitalize the Maryvale neighborhood of Phoenix and invigorating the existing urban context of the surrounding community.

The facility, a collaborative effort by Gould Evans with Wendell Burnette, is a multi-use facility highlighted by its large public collection area, a gymnasium, and a 150-seat auditorium for recital, drama, and public lectures. Through proximity to the street and transparency of program, the library conceptually and literally exercises the mind; the community center (and park and pool) conceptually and literally exercises the body. This mind/body dialogue resonates between two equally scaled volumes that incorporate the library collection and gymnasium.

7

CESAR CHAVEZ LIBRARY (2007)
3635 W. Baseline Road, Laveen
602.262.4636 | www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org
Line and Space Architects

The City of Phoenix is proud to provide exceptionally designed libraries that foster communities with works of the imagination and information resources. The Cesar Chavez Library is designed to uphold this standard by becoming a space for family and friends – “a Living Room” for the growing Village of Laveen.

Responding to a lake irreverently excavated in the desert, the Cesar Chavez Library is an opportunity to turn a contradiction into an asset. In order to realign the purpose of the site with what was previously created, the design had to address certain constraints. The Library is integrated into a park made of mounded earth, adjacent to a large man-made lake. Limitations imposed by the site and these values helped shape the design of the Library to become a fitting environment to teach lessons of ecology.

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ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
NELSON FINE ARTS CENTER
(1989)
51 E. 10th Street, ASU Campus, Tempe
www.asu.edu/tour/tempe/fac.html
Antoine Predock
The Nelson Fine Arts Center is organized as a processional sequence linking related buildings on the ASU campus. It asserts a low, unifying silhouette highlighted by towers and loft projections, analogous to the forms of the surrounding mountains and buttes.

The largest component of the complex is a museum housing the university’s art collection. Light-control strategies were adopted for optimum display, conservation and preservation of the collection. Of particular note is the natural lighting strategy which avoids static lighting of exhibitions while eliminating ultraviolet infiltration.

OPTIMA CAMELVIEW CONDOMINIUMS
(2009)
7717 E. Rancho Vista Drive, Scottsdale
www.optimaweb.com
David Hovey : Architect & Developer
Optima Camelview Village is a 700-unit mixed-use condominium development comprised of eleven terraced, bridge-linked buildings responding to the harsh desert climate by creating a pedestrian friendly shaded environment of interconnected landscaped courtyards. Every condominium has landscaped roof terraces and floor to ceiling glass.

Through design, research and testing, a terrace planting solution utilizing six inches of soil was developed permitting the economical construction of the landscaped terraces on all seven floors within 65 feet. A modular system of window components provides a varied façade of high performance glazing, shaded by natural stone and sun control louvers. Extensive natural daylight throughout the interiors, architectural shading devices and cantilevered shading terraces reduce energy consumption throughout this LEED development.

JOHNSON-JONES HOUSE (1999)
3306 E. Kachina Drive, Phoenix
Jones Studio, Inc.
Ahwatukee, Crow word for “House of Dreams,” is a suburban neighborhood attempting to dominate the southern base of the magnificent mountain preserve known as South Mountain Park.

In 1929, Frank Lloyd Wright completed plans for the San-Marcos-in-the-Desert Resort. It was never built. In 1997, the only private property left from the original location at the southern base of the mountain had been scraped to build the naked berm desperately pretending to conceal a 40-foot diameter water chlorination tank. No one knew this was an historical site and no one wanted a residential lot looking at a giant steel cylinder.

The question was not how to fit into the existing, suburban context. The question was how to continue a progressive lifestyle in an architecture surrounded by conventional houses.

On this land, there was once a promise of desert architecture uniquely reflecting Sonoran magic, still present in 1929. The Johnson-Jones House proudly stakes out its small territory and serves as a steward preserving one small piece of the promise.
COSANTI (1956)
6433 Doubletree Ranch Road, Paradise Valley
480.948.6145 | www.arcosanti.org/expCosanti/main.html

Paolo Soleri

Cosanti is the gallery, studio and residence of architect Paolo Soleri, who celebrated his 90th birthday on June 21, 2009. Soleri may best be known for Arcosanti, the prototype “arcology” (architecture + ecology) community founded in 1970, located 70 miles north of Phoenix, but Cosanti is where Soleri and his late wife established their residence in 1956, on a site just a few miles from Taliesin West (where Soleri studied).

Cosanti, which is open to the public, includes a series of structures including the original “Earth House,” and Soleri’s residence, all amidst carefully desert-landscaped courtyards, terraces, and garden paths.

The orientation of the buildings is important. Many are below ground level and surrounded by mounds of earth. This acts as natural insulation to help moderate interior temperatures year round. Soleri also designed south-facing apses situated as passive energy collectors, accepting the light and heat of the lower winter sun, and creating shade from the higher summer sun.

TALIESIN WEST (1937)
12621 N. Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd, Scottsdale
480.860.2700 | www.franklloydwright.org

Frank Lloyd Wright

Taliesin West was Frank Lloyd Wright’s winter home and school in the desert from 1937 until his death in 1959 at the age of 92. Taliesin West is the main campus of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. It houses the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, and is open to the public for tours.

Many of Wright’s most famous buildings were designed in the drafting room at Taliesin West, including the Guggenheim Museum in New York City and Grady Gammage Auditorium at Arizona State University in Tempe.

Restoration work to the private quarters of Mr. and Mrs. Wright was completed in 2004, and tours of the home and school are conducted on a regular basis.

Taliesin West became a National Historic Landmark in 1982.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY POLYTECHNIC ACADEMIC BUILDINGS (2008)
7001 E. Williams Field Road, Mesa

Lake|Flato : Design Architect
RSP Architects : Architect of Record

The design for the new campus transformed a decommissioned airbase into an inviting pedestrian campus that celebrates the desert landscape. By segmenting the 245,000 SF program into five buildings, the architects formed four shady courtyards linked by a series of portals and arcades, creating a cohesive pedestrian campus.

Shady, open-air atria provide environmentally sensitive social spaces that maximize visibility, daylighting, and the sense of community. Purposeful environmental strategies – narrow building sections, shading devices and solar orientation allow 90% of the spaces to be effectively daylit, reduce thermal loads and contribute to a projected LEED Gold rating.

Exposed building systems and a simple regional palette reinforce the practical and straightforward philosophy of the Polytechnic program.
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ACCOMMODATIONS

INTERCONTINENTAL MONTELUCE RESORT & SPA (2008)
4949 E. Lincoln Drive, Paradise Valley, AZ
480.627-3200 | www.icmontelucia.com

HISTORIC PHOENIX

A
ARIZONA BILTMORE (1929)
2400 E. Missouri Avenue, Phoenix
800.950.6600 | www.arizonabiltmore.com
Albert Chase McArthur with Frank Lloyd Wright, Consulting Architect
The only existing hotel in the world with a Frank Lloyd Wright-influenced design, the Arizona Biltmore has been an Arizona landmark since its opening on February 23, 1929 when it was crowned “The Jewel of the Desert.”
Perhaps the most obvious and dramatic design link to Wright is the use of indigenous materials that led to the creation of the “Biltmore Block.” The pre-cast concrete blocks were molded on-site and used in the total construction of the resort. Designed by McArthur and sculpted by Emy Kopta, a prominent southwestern sculptor, the “Biltmore Block” features a geometric pattern that is said to represent a freshly cut palm tree.

B
DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN
1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix
480.941.1225 | www.dbg.org
Nestled amid the red buttes of Papago Park, the Desert Botanical Garden hosts one of the world’s finest collections of desert plants. One of only 44 botanical gardens accredited by the American Association of Museums, this one-of-a-kind museum showcases 50 acres of beautiful outdoor exhibits. Home to 139 rare, threatened and endangered plant species from around the world, the Garden offers interesting and inspiring experiences to more than 300,000 visitors each year.

C
TOVREA CASTLE & CORRARO CACTUS GARDEN (1930)
5041 E. Van Buren Street, Phoenix
602.534.6324 | www.phoenix.gov/PARKS/tovhist.html
In 1928, Alessio Carraro sold his San Francisco sheet metal business and moved to Arizona searching for his American dream. Carraro found that dream in 277 acres of creosote-studded desert in an area that at the time was just east of the Phoenix city limits. Where others saw a barren setting, Alessio envisioned a resort castle surrounded by dense desert vegetation.
From 1928 to 1930, Alessio Corraro, his son Leo, and a crew of about 20 workers shaped the landscape into a spectacular desert paradise. Crowning this landscape was the wedding cake-shaped “castle” reminiscent of his Italian homeland.

D
SOUTH MOUNTAIN PARK (1924)
10919 S. Central Avenue, Phoenix
www.phoenix.gov/PARKS/hikesoth.html
South Mountain Park has been mentioned as the largest city park in the world. At nearly 17,000 acres it certainly covers a lot of ground, although it isn’t a park in the sense of grass, playgrounds, lakes, and ducks. South Mountain Park is a desert mountain preserve.
The history of South Mountain Park/Preserve as a city park dates back to 1924. Prominent local citizens, with the help of Senator Carl Hayden, bought 13,000 acres from the federal government for $17,000. In 1935, the National Park Service developed a master plan for the park with riding and hiking trails, picnic areas and overlooks, all in rustic regional character. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built many of the facilities in the park, based on this master plan.