

## Art Deco

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The Art Deco-architecture became, in contrast to other Art-Deco-disciplines, not mastered by the French but by the Americans. The buildings created for the International Exposition in Paris in 1925 of Ornamental Arts and Modern Industrials belonged for the largest part to Art Deco, but these buildings only stayed temporary. Later designers only know them of photographs and drawings. Purists claim nevertheless that those art deco buildings formed the only real Art Deco that ever existed.

The today's still striking skyscrapers of New York, Chicago and other American cities, with their pointed towers, multi-stage fixtures, decorative praise work and geometrical friezes, have become the embodiment of Art Deco. Moreover less impressive buildings, such as cinemas, department stores, hotels and private-houses contain some Art Deco-elements.

In countries all over the world, many examples can be found of the principles of Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus or elements of the majestic French Art Deco. The Exposition of 1925 in Paris, which in fact was only a transition, was the first exhibition in Paris of Art Deco-architecture. A lot of the buildings carried still the tracks of the preceding monumental style of around 1900, but several pavilions were already strongly modernistic, some all over, most however in added details.

In the same functional, modernistic style France Robert Mallet-Stevens and Eileen Gray worked in France, Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van Rohe in Germany and Walter Reitz and Adolf Loos elsewhere in Europe. In the United States Frank Lloyd Wright created houses that completed their natural surroundings. They were constructed of wood and glass, and were more appropriate to their frequently woody surroundings than the constructions with an austere style of white colour of Gropius, Mallet-Stevens and Eileen Gray.

Interesting is the specific, white plastered with pastel shades Art-Deco-architecture of Old Miami Beach in Florida, where combinations exist of bowed and flat walls, circular and polygonal windows, against straight frames and excessively, frequently 'curved' fence work (railings?): elements which all can be find in the modernistic buildings of Le Corbusier, representatives of the Bauhaus and other.

So many skyscrapers were built in this period in Manhattan. The Chrysler building was named the 'vertical city' of offices where the elevators are the most important transportation methods.

For more then 60 years it is a symbol of the city of New York and it has endured all style changes. The skyscraper, symbol of business success, industry and capitalism, started to create the horizon of Chicago and New York at the turn of the century.

The Chrysler Building, Empire State Building, Chanin Building, the Rockefeller Centre and the Radio City Music Hall remain the most complete forms of American Art-Deco-architecture. Moreover nearly every city in the U.S. has at least one Art-Deco-building: a post office, cinema, supermarket or office building.