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Simply Divine – The World's Most Spectacular Churches

Hamburg, December 17, 2013 – Angular, asymmetrical, colorful and just plain extraordinary, there are modern churches that will have one looking in vain for a traditional steeple. All around the world, architects are designing ever more eye-catching houses of worship – chapels and synagogues whose shapes and colors will be impressing visitors long after the upcoming holiday season has passed. Emporis (www.emporis.com), the international provider of building information, has now compiled a selection of the world's most spectacular churches.

One of the most recent examples, the *Neue Synagoge (New Synagogue)* in the German city of Mainz, is reminiscent at first sight of building blocks in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, piled on top of one another and interspersed by slanting triangular and rectangular windows. In actual fact, this Jewish place of worship, completed in 2010, is intended to represent an outsized version of the Hebrew word *Kedushah*, meaning blessing. The architects of *Iglesia Parroquial en Rivas Vaciamadrid* in Madrid, Vicens + Ramos, also make strong use of corners and edges, with finger-like protuberances projecting like truncated pyramids out of the north side of the church. The building is also notable for its rust-colored facade, which sets it apart from other churches in terms of color.

The World's Most Spectacular Churches

Church Name	City	Country	Architect
Catedral Metropolitana Nossa Senhora Aparecida	Brasília	Brazil	Oscar Niemeyer
Cathédrale de la Résurrection	Évry	France	Mario Botta Architetto
Chapel of the Holy Cross	Sedona	USA	Anshen + Allen
Hallgrímskirkja	Reykjavík	Iceland	Guðjón Samúelsson
Iglesia Parroquial en Rivas Vaciamadrid	Madrid	Spain	Vicens + Ramos
Jubilee Church	Rome	Italy	Richard Meier & Partners
Leaf Chapel	Hokuto	Japan	Klein Dytham architecture
Neue Synagoge Mainz	Mainz	Germany	Manuel Herz Architects
Tempeliaukio Church	Helsinki	Finland	Timo & Tuomo Suomalainen
United States Air Force Cadet Academy Chapel	Colorado Springs	USA	SOM

Source: www.emporis.com

With fewer angles, but all the more rotund instead, are the *Cathédrale de la Résurrection* in Évry, France, and the *Leaf Chapel* in Hokuto, Japan. The former catches the attention with its circular footprint and the trees ringing its steep rooftop like a crown. The *Leaf Chapel*, on the other hand, is reminiscent of a cupola nestling against a slope. Its two-part shape consists of a glass half that is stationary and a second half made of steel that can be pushed up over the other. In favorable weather conditions, the indoor chapel can quickly be made into a location for an open-air wedding.

A harmonious combination of rectangular and round elements is displayed by the *Jubilee Church* in Rome, Italy. While the right-hand half is composed of rectangular blocks that house the various rooms and a bell tower, the left-hand side is characterized by three semi-circular layers that grow smaller as you move outward, and which lean over the other parts of the building like a cocoon. Especially for the "Eternal City" Rome with its countless Christian churches from two millennia of history, this asymmetrical house of worship does not just represent a feat of daring, but also a singular architectural highlight.

Wherever one looks, church architecture is undergoing a process of upheaval. Outstanding designs are making modern houses of worship stylish works of art. Whether this modernization of the appearance will benefit the image of church as an institution and lead to more people attending services, will remain to be seen. One thing, however, is already certain: These ten spectacular churches are unique architectural masterpieces.



About Emporis

Emporis is a leading database of information about building and construction projects, based in Germany. For over a decade Emporis has helped companies, organizations and individuals stay informed about the building industry. The Emporis Skyscraper Award is the world's most renowned prize for high-rise architecture.

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