

Düsseldorf
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Düsseldorf's architecture

is a sight to behold

From rooftop terraces and green architecture to Benrath Palace and the Dreischeibenhaus, Düsseldorf's architecture features a mix of engineering expertise and styles ranging from organic to romantic. A city featuring charming old alleys and spectacular works by star architects such as Christoph Ingenhoven, Renzo Piano and Frank Gehry.

Shopping and clean air at Kö-Bogen I and II

Kö-Bogen II, or KII for short, sits like a green cube on the corner of Bleichstrasse and Schadowstrasse in Düsseldorf city centre. Boasting Europe's largest green facade, it is a building that quite literally breathes. Designed by Ingenhoven Architects and housing offices and retail space, it absorbs as much CO₂ as 80 large trees. The staggered planting ensures the hedges on the building all get enough sunlight and rainwater. Opposite, the triangular Markthalle building features a grass-covered roof terrace, making it the ideal place to relax and take a selfie. Not far away at the upper end of magnificent Königsallee stands Kö-Bogen I. This two-part ensemble by New York architect Daniel Libeskind is both famous landmark and shopping destination. The Wehrhahn train line runs underground, creating a large space with six stations in which graduates of the Academy of Arts have played with immersive geometric shapes, interactive elements and sound installations.

MedienHafen – architectural heaven

Düsseldorf's MedienHafen is a showcase for outstanding architecture. Visitors who love exceptional buildings will find masterpieces by Frank Gehry, David Chipperfield, Joe Coenen, Steven Holl and Claude Vasconi just a short walk apart. In particular, Gehry's three-part Neuer Zollhof, with its organic shapes that defy all geometry, became one of the city's architectural icons almost right from the start. The road at the southern end of MedienHafen is flanked by the Float buildings. Designed by Renzo Piano, they look like random ice floes that appear to be floating thanks to the free-standing ground floor. MedienHafen is home to 700 organisations, including cultural institutions and creative agencies, as well as some of Düsseldorf's best and most popular restaurants. A guided tour provides more insights into this architectural playground by the water.

High-rises from the 1950s set the tone

Alongside the unmistakable Rhine Tower, the city's skyline has been dominated by the Mannesmann Hochhaus from the 1950s. The skyscraper was the first in Germany to be built using a skeleton frame, and its narrow end facing the Rhine exudes elegance with its facade of glass and blue-enamelled steel. Dreischeibenhaus, meanwhile, was inspired by contemporary influences from the United States at the end of the 1950s. The 94 metre high building is made up of three six-metre-wide offset elements, which ensures that every office enjoys plenty of daylight no matter which way it's facing. The building is also known as the Thyssen Haus, as it was once the headquarters of the German industrial giant of the same name.

Village charm, leisurely walks and late-19th century grandeur

Architecture in Düsseldorf experienced a boom during Germany's industrial heyday in the 19th century. The Kyffhäuserblock in the district of Oberkassel, for example, was one of the first major residential blocks of the 20th century, and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa still looks down from its facade onto the traffic below. As building plots were sold individually at the time, everyone built according to their own ideas, producing a charming mix of architecture in all shapes and colours.

The roots of districts such as Kaiserswerth, which offer a village contrast to bustling Kö-Bogen and MedienHafen, date back even further. Visitors are drawn here by the charm of the 12th century imperial palace ruins, the cobbled streets and the baroque buildings with their boutiques, delicatessen and cafés.

Elsewhere, Benrath Palace combines tranquillity and elegance. Built in the 18th century to a design by Nicolas de Pigage, this masterly ensemble is one of Europe's most stunning, and walking around its landscaped park, which extends all the way to the Rhine, is a delight.

Düsseldorf's architectural icons

- Kö-Bogen II, designed by Ingenhoven Architects, is more than just a visual highlight. Thanks to its more than 30,000 hornbeam plants, it's also Europe's largest green facade.
- Düsseldorf's MedienHafen is a riot of sculptural, floating and flowing shapes created by international star architects. Its most iconic ensemble is the Neuer Zollhof by Frank Gehry.
- The 25-storey Mannesmann Hochhaus was constructed between 1954 and 1958 right next to the Mannesmann headquarters by Peter Behrens and was the first high-rise in Germany to be built using a skeleton frame. Thyssen Haus, also known as Dreischeibenhaus, is a high-rise building constructed using three six-metre-wide offset elements, influenced by contemporary American trends at the end of the 1950s.
- With its eye-catching pink facade and beautiful gardens, Benrath Palace is one of Europe's prettiest late-baroque palaces. It was designed in the French style by Nicolas de Pigage.

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