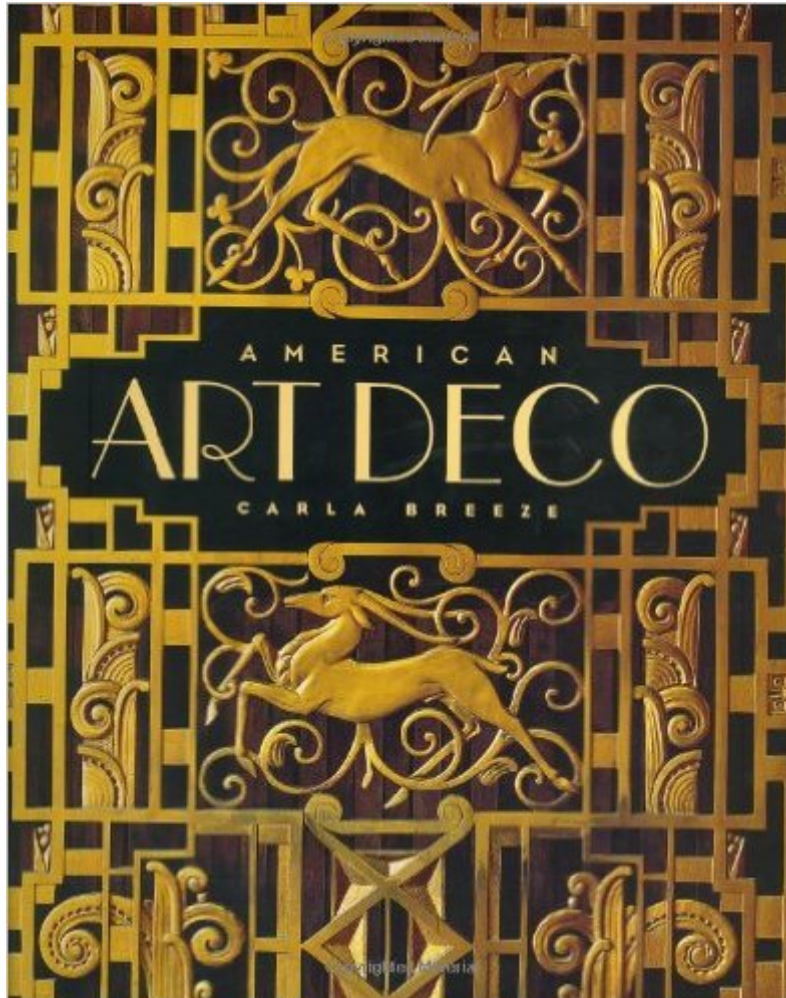


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# American Art Deco: Architecture And Regionalism



## Synopsis

A lavishly illustrated survey of American Art Deco architecture. Art deco architecture flourished in large cities and small towns throughout America in the 1920s and 1930s. Many of the best examples office buildings, movie theaters, hotels, and churches are still in use. Deco architects, artists, and designers drew on European styles but were most committed to a style that grew organically, as they saw it, from their native soil. Two themes bound Deco buildings and their decorative schemes together: a regional pride that tied buildings to their specific locales and functions, and a growing national symbolism that asserted the buildings' identity as uniquely, independently American. American Art Deco features description and over 500 color photographs of seventy-five lavish and innovatively designed buildings across the country that have been preserved both outside and in, giving the full scope of this beloved, exciting style.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 287 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; 1 edition (July 17, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0393019705

ISBN-13: 978-0393019704

Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 1.1 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (18 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #467,751 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #98 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Decoration & Ornament](#) #102 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Decorative Arts & Design > Interior & Home Design > Decoration & Ornament](#) #215 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Regional](#)

## Customer Reviews

Architectural photographer Carla Breeze has focussed her camera on the best seventy-five Art Deco buildings across the Nation and produced a glorious book of color photos that perfectly captures the style. I really liked this book because she concentrates on the architectural detail of each building (with 450 photos) and in many cases, when this detail is on the outside, it is just not viewable from the ground. The introduction has an interesting eighteen-page photo section dealing with materials: metal, concrete, terra cotta, mosaic, glass, wood and stone. I found this very useful when looking at the images. Each building starts on the spread (though some have more pages)

with a street address and some background text and captions for the photos. The elegant layout does not interfere with the wonderful buildings (a tip of the hat to book designer Robert Wiser). Could anyone take a better photo of the stunning Niagara Mohawk Power headquarters in Syracuse on page seventy-three, I doubt it. To complement this lovely book have a look at Rediscovering Art Deco USA: A Nationwide Tour of Architectural Delights by Barbara Capitman, Michael Kinerk and Dennis Wilhelm, a methodical nationwide survey, though it concentrates on commercial buildings rather than houses. If you are Deco spotting on the road leave a space in the glove compartment for David Gebhard's excellent The National Trust Guide to Art Deco in America (Preservation Press) if it's not in this book then most likely it's not worth looking at.\*\*\*FOR AN INSIDE LOOK click 'customer images' under the cover.

This is the finest book presently available on American Art Deco Architecture, in my opinion. Beautifully photographed and printed in Italy (288 oversize pages in full color), it's a must have if you have an interest in Art Deco and/or Architecture. All the finest American examples are here, the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation Building in Syracuse, the Chrysler Building in New York, the Louisiana State Capitol in Baton Rouge, and the Eastern Columbia, Wiltern Theatre/Pellissier and Bullocks Wilshire Buildings in Los Angeles, just to name a few. Most of the buildings are photographed from the outside as well as inside, with numerous detail photographs of doors and moldings. Carla Breeze is an architectural photographer by trade and she does a superb job with this book, I especially like the fact that perspective control has been used in the photographs (all the vertical lines are parallel) which makes for a much more pleasing look. The sleek and modernistic style of Art Deco, popular during the 1920's and 1930's, has yet to be matched, in my opinion, and Ms. Breeze captures the essence of it skillfully.

This is quite simply a fantastic book, the images are crisp and well presented and the text is easy to navigate. Every major Art Deco building in America is chronicled and presented in its best light. It is such a relief that so many of these great buildings have survived, unlike many other architectural styles, Art Deco has always had a huge throng of admirers, people who loved the style and fought very hard to help preserve it. Everytime I set foot in one of these great buildings, like the Louisiana State Capitol or Radio City Music Hall or the Chrysler Building I am reminded of the sheer artistry that went into these buildings and am disappointed at the austere, crass styles that have followed. I highly recommend this wonderful book, frankly it is the best I have seen on American Art Deco.

For many, a trip to downtown is a visit to something and for something. It is seldom seen as a time of reflection, to see the "what and why" of the great boundaries of concrete, glass and steel. Even our great structures specifically designed to create a feeling of wonder or awe appear to be less a creation for humans than a mere sidelight of structural shrugs, a busy nod to a slight deviation in the casting of the concrete, and, "This won't cost too much more to add this, this \*thing\* to the design, will it?" It didn't always work this way. This is a completely beautiful book. Criticisms are few and far between and are of the "Why didn't she make this a bigger book" variety. This is a big book. Art Deco was, and is, one of the highest achievements of architecture ever - ever! One look at the Niagara - Mohawk building should convince just about anyone. This book is a required review of the remaining Art Deco buildings with the most integrity. I only wish that there was more in the way of, say, South Miami Art Deco and more southern works extant but that is the point: You come away from this book looking for the momentous in your own city or area. When you find a (usually restored) specimen, you simply must stop and gawk for great periods of time. What a great book!

Each page inspires awe in this book. Gorgeous photos jump right off the page. Worth every penny if you are a lover of all things Art Deco. I find myself torn with this book. I want to show it to everyone I know, but I also want to keep it all to myself, sacred, like a holy book. So many of the pages would be excellent as framed art prints.

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