



25 best architecture firms in France

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France has long been renowned for its rich history, heritage, and culture, spanning centuries of art and architecture movements which has influenced architects and designers from around the world. From notable gothic churches and baroque palaces to Le Corbusier's modernist icons to post-modern classic Centre Pompidou, the country has showcased exemplary architecture. It is still a centre for architectural innovation today, with firms pushing the limits of building and design. With the new generation of firms emerging, redefining architecture of the 21st century, the architectural landscape of France is more dynamic than ever. The following list is a selection of 25 such forms that are distinguished for their creativity, ingenuity, and technical expertise in bringing some of the most notable architecture in the country to life.



1. Dominique Coulon & Associés

Dominique Coulon & Associés is a highly acclaimed architecture firm located in Strasbourg that has gained national and international recognition for its quality public facility designs. With over 25 years of experience, the firm has worked on diverse projects, including media libraries, schools, sports facilities, residential homes, and housing. The firm's architects, Dominique Coulon and Steve Lethos Duclos strive to develop projects that balance contrast and complexity while maintaining spatial quality and natural light, which is achieved through precise geometry. Dominique Coulon & Associés has won numerous awards and distinctions, including the Prix de la Première Oeuvre, Équerre d'Argent award nominations, and the Chicago Athenaeum International Architecture Award. The firm also received the first prize in the Eiffel Trophies for steel architecture in 2017 for the Media Library in Thionville and was nominated for the European Union prize awarded by the Mies van der Rohe Foundation.



2. Brenac and Gonzalez Architecture Agency

Established in 1981, Brenac and Gonzalez Architecture Agency was founded by Olivier Brenac and Xavier Gonzalez. The agency now has three new partners and a diverse team of around 40 professionals who work on various projects, including housing, cultural, educational, offices and health-related facilities, divided equally between public competitions and private commissions. Their approach to architecture is inspired by the idea of a "perpetual present," where the focus is on a constant quest for fleeting and immutable elements of the world. This approach aligns with the concept of modernity defined by Baudelaire, who believed that it is a combination of both transitory and eternal aspects. The agency strives to incorporate both contemporary and timeless aspects in its work, making it profoundly modern.



3. Ferrier Marchetti Studio

Ferrier Marchetti Studio is an architecture firm based in Paris and Shanghai that has received numerous international honours and has been featured in several solo exhibitions across the globe. In 2010, they established the Sensual City research lab with philosopher Philippe Simay, and the founders are also involved in teaching and writing about architecture and urban planning. Their methodology involves a co-design process with clients, collaboration across diverse fields, cutting-edge research and development, and the creation of innovative tools for representation and experimentation. They also share their expertise through publications.



4. Renzo Piano Building Workshop (RPBW)

The Renzo Piano Building Workshop (RPBW) was founded by Renzo Piano in 1981 and has offices in Genoa, Italy and Paris, France. The team consists of 12 partners, including Pritzker laureate Renzo Piano, with around 100 architects and 30 support staff. The firm has extensive experience working on building projects in France, Italy and abroad, providing architectural design and consultancy services. In addition to architecture, RPBW also provides interior design, master planning, landscape design and exhibition design services. The firm has significantly contributed to the architecture scene in France with notable works including the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, the Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Center in Nouméa, and the Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé in Paris. RPBW is also currently working on several projects in France, such as the Paris North Hospital, La Samaritaine department store renovation, and the transformation of the former Renault factory on the Île Seguin into a cultural centre. Through their designs, RPBW strives to create buildings that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing while respecting the cultural and historical context of their surroundings.



5. Ateliers Jean Nouvel

A world-renowned architecture firm, Ateliers Jean Nouvel integrates various disciplines of design, including architecture, urban planning, interior design, landscape design, graphic design, and product design. The multicultural team of 130 people from more than 20 countries has produced award-winning designs for numerous prestigious commissions around the world. Institut du Monde Arabe and the Musée du quai Branly, Philharmonie de Paris and the forthcoming Tour Signal which is going to be the tallest skyscraper in the city are a few of the notable contributions of the firm in France. The firm has also been involved in the revitalization of post-industrial sites in France, like the rehabilitation of the former Renault factories in Boulogne-Billancourt and the Docks de Saint-Ouen. These projects demonstrate the firm's commitment to pushing boundaries and redefining the limits of contemporary architecture.



6. Dominique Perrault Architecture

Paris-based international design firm, Dominique Perrault Architecture was founded in 1981 and later expanded its offices to Geneva and Madrid. Comprising a multidisciplinary team of architects, urban planners, and designers from around the world, the firm gained world recognition for winning the competition for the National French Library in 1989, post which they completed major architecture projects like the Velodrome and Olympic swimming pool of Berlin, the extension of the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg, and Olympic tennis centre in Madrid. The Dufour Pavilion at the Château de Versailles, the prestigious Hippodrome de Longchamp, and the Poste du Louvre building, in Paris are a few noteworthy heritage rehabilitations undertaken by the firm.



7. Hamonic+Masson & Associés

Hamonic+Masson & Associés is a Paris-based architectural firm founded in 1997 by Gaëlle Hamonic and Jean-Christophe Masson. The practice has worked on various projects, including Maison Métal in Parc de la Villette, which earned them recognition at the crossroads of art and architecture. They have also co-curated the French Pavilion at the 2008 Venice Biennale and have opened exhibitions at the Cité de l'architecture & du Patrimoine. They work in different sectors, such as housing, public facilities, retail, offices, infrastructure, and urban design, in France and internationally. They are currently involved in the debate on high-rises that has become a hot topic in France and have worked on several projects in Paris, including the first housing project measuring 50m since the 1970s. The agency also won "large scale" consultations such as Inventons la Métropole du Grand Paris II in 2019 and Imagine Angers consultation in 2018.



8. AZC Atelier Zündel Cristea

AZC Atelier Zündel Cristea was founded in 2001 by Grégoire Zündel and Irina Cristea, both alumni of the Strasbourg School of Architecture. The Paris-based agency employs architects with a diverse range of creative, technical, and organizational skills, allowing them to engage in all stages of architecture projects, from conception to construction supervision. The firm primarily works on projects related to the metropolises, including residential buildings, logistics and educational buildings, multi-sports halls, and metro stations in cities such as Paris, Rennes, and Lyon. Their current focus is on bringing project design as close as possible to their context, considering the general state of the framework, such as the environment, economic situation, and program.



9. Emmanuel Combarel Dominique Marrec

The Emmanuel Combarel Dominique Marrec Architecture studio was founded after receiving the Albums de la Jeune Architecture in 1993 and the Villa Médicis Hors les Murs in 1996. Their work focuses on defining living environments through architectural projects that take into consideration landscape, usage, lifestyles, and materiality. The team's philosophy evolved over twelve years of experience working on a variety of projects in all areas of architectural practice, including new construction, renovation, urbanism, and design. The studio strives to create simple, sober, and direct architecture that addresses contemporary environmental and societal issues without nostalgia or stylistic concerns, ultimately aiming towards building well.



10. **Dietmar Feichtinger Architectes (DFA)**

Dietmar Feichtinger Architectes (DFA) is a Paris-based firm established in 1993. With thirty workers spread out between Paris and Vienna, the team primarily serves Europe. The firm earned a solid reputation for its creative architecture and empathetic design approach. Its work explores the interaction between engineering and architecture while linking the two together. DFA strives to integrate environmental and sustainable development in tasteful and sensitive architecture that is respectful of both humans and nature. The firm has received international recognition for its awards and publications' excellence in design.



11. Manuelle Gautrand Architecture

Manuelle Gautrand Architecture is an architecture firm based in Paris founded in 1991. Manuelle Gautrand is the principal architect and director, and Marc Blaising is the partner and financial and administrative director. The team of architects is responsible for designing projects for public contracting authorities and private firms in France and abroad, with each architect-project manager overseeing a project. The firm's philosophy is centred around creating innovative and sensitive architecture that is contextual and unique to each location, striving to bring beauty and poetry to their designs while finding the DNA of each city and site.



12. Atelier du Pont

Atelier du Pont was established in 1997 by two founding partners, Anne-Cécile Comar and Philippe Croisier. Over the years, they have added multiple skills to their team with people from different backgrounds. They are architects, interior designers, and designers who provide a global approach to their projects. Their focus is not only on architecture but also on urban planning, interior design, furniture, and artistic direction. They believe in contextual and generous architecture that incorporates traditional know-how, local raw materials, and the genius of the place. Their new agency, Impasse Lamier, located in the 11th arrondissement of Paris, is a showcase of their know-how and way of design.



13. LAN (Local Architecture Network)

LAN (Local Architecture Network) is a firm founded by Benoit Jallon and Umberto Napolitano in 2002, aiming to explore architecture as an area of activity that intersects with other disciplines. The agency's projects reflect its methodology which involves social, urban, ecological and functional issues. They work on a range of scales and programs such as the Maillon Theatre and the experimental housing in Bègles. The firm is involved in theoretical production through exhibitions, publications, and conferences. They also have two new projects: the Research Laboratory dedicated to Architecture and Reality (RAAR) and the Pianoterra Gallery restaurant. LAN's partners have been named Chevaliers de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2018.



14. A+Architecture

A+ is a group founded thirty years ago that has three areas of expertise: architecture, urban planning and design, site management and construction economics, and building engineering and environmental approach. It has 9 partners, and its team includes architects, urban planners, engineers, economists, project managers, OPCs, and professionals from related disciplines. They work on large-scale projects for public and private project owners. With Mediterranean roots, A+ continues to develop and integrate new skills and invest in new territories. The group has more than 100 employees and is based in Montpellier, Nîmes, Toulouse, and Paris, deploying their energy and know-how in innovative and sustainable projects that meet the expectations of project owners.



15. VIGUIER

VIGUIER is an architectural firm founded in 1992 by Jean-Paul Viguié and is now composed of 7 partners with diverse skills and experience. Their projects, for public and private clients, focus on placing individuals and society at the centre of an architectural approach that considers the environment and technological change. VIGUIER takes an ecosystems approach, integrating four disciplines (architecture, interior architecture, urban planning, and landscape design) and in-house support services to tackle projects at different levels of scale. The firm also supports research in experimental architecture and urban planning, collaborating with top researchers to provide clients with highly innovative projects. In 2019, the agency adopted a new name as part of a process of transmission.



16. Vincent Parreira Atelier Architecture AAVP

Vincent Parreira founded AAVP in 2000 because he felt it was time to embark on a new journey into space and he couldn't wait until 2001. Having grown up on construction sites, he loves cities and metropolitan areas, which is why he set up his agency in the 11th district of Paris. The agency dismisses boring architecture and believes that every building can make life better. With 6 schools, 1018 housing units, a hotel, and half of a museum, the firm has pushed the boundaries of each project.



public procurement projects for equipment and housing in 2007. Their recent projects include a house in Orsay, housing for Siemp and Efidis, a young workers' hostel and a crèche in Paris, as well as projects in Zac des Lilas and Zac Clichy Batignolles, macro lot E8, Paris 17. Their approach is creative and adaptive, generating innovative responses to each project.



18. Chartier Dalix architects

ChartierDalix is an architectural firm that was founded in 2008 by Frédéric Chartier and Pascale Dalix. The firm has already completed over twenty buildings, with around ten more in progress, including housing operations, a logistics centre, and a new Grand Paris Express station. Some of their notable projects include the new AP-HP headquarters in Saint-Antoine Hospital in Paris, a school group in Lille, and a 65,000 m² tertiary campus in Saint Ouen. ChartierDalix is also responsible for the restructuring of the Pinard building in the future Saint-Vincent de Paul district in Paris and the Caserne de Lourcine for the University of Law Paris 1.



19. ATELIERS O-S ARCHITECTES (Vincent Baur+ Guillaume Colboc + Gaël Le Nouène)

Ateliers O-S Architectes was established in 2007 by Vincent Baur, Guillaume Colboc, and Gaël Le Nouène following their experience in Rotterdam with OMA and West8. They adopt a conscious and responsible neo-artisanal approach to their projects, with a commitment to controlling the entire production chain from image to manufacturing. The firm undertakes public interest projects ranging from social housing to cultural equipment, emphasizing precision, social and spatial interaction, politeness, and courtesy in their work. Rather than adopting a fixed architecture, the architects seek to explore and reveal the potential uses and activities that are unique to each site, resulting in buildings that have hidden treasures of potential and unexpected spatiality.



20. Jakob + MacFarlane architects

Jakob + MacFarlane Architects is an experimental architecture laboratory that focuses on environmental transition and digital culture. They are interested in programmatic and urban social innovations, and their passion for construction and



21. Pietri Architectes

Pietri Architectes is an architectural firm whose style is inspired by the Mediterranean coast, mixed with Parisian and Haussmannian architecture. Led by Jean-Baptiste Pietri and a team of collaborators, the firm creates solar architecture that is generous, respectful of the environment, and balanced between North and South. With projects throughout France, PietriArchitectes adapts its architectural style to the context while maintaining a unique identity. The firm's portfolio includes various public and private programs, from single-family homes to apartment towers and a luxury waterfront hotel, with a focus on interior design.



22. [h2o architectes](#)

The h2o agency's work spans architecture, urban design, and historical monument restoration. The agency's founders prioritize interdisciplinary approaches and employ a project development process based on hypotheses to avoid singular project solutions. The chosen solution is based on a rigorously developed and client-collaborative process. They also prioritize societal issues such as the environment and sustainable development in their design processes. By combining an inductive and rigorous conceptual approach with a freer approach, the agency gives each project a soul that is both chiselled and playful while allowing for possible uses and appropriation.



23. Architecture Patrick Mauger

Architecture Patrick Mauger, established in 1999, has a unique approach to architecture. By collaborating with project initiators, decision-makers, and users, the firm creates spaces that adapt to future needs and respond to new uses. For each project, interactive forums are held with architects, users, and external experts to develop original solutions. The agency prioritizes plasticity and works on space, light, and matter to create a distinctive personality for each project. Their work includes creating, transforming, and extending buildings for various purposes such as work destinations, cultural, education, research, and housing, on scales ranging from interior design to urban spaces



24. AREP

AREP is a multidisciplinary architecture practice that was established in 1997. The firm focuses on renewing architecture, cities, and regions by bringing together a range of specialities and expertise. AREP's name is derived from architecture, research, engagement, and post-carbon, and they prioritize providing practical solutions to ecological issues through their client-centred EMC2B approach. They contribute to research, public dialogue, and changing practices through their published works. AREP has a strong international presence with nearly 1,000 employees from 30 different countries, and they are ranked first among architectural practices in France based on their turnover.



25. Patrick Schweitzer & Associés Architectes

Patrick Schweitzer & Associés Architectes, one of the top architectural firms in France was founded in 1983. The firm has completed numerous noteworthy projects such as the Strasbourg Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, the Théâtre National de Strasbourg, and the Cité de la Musique et de la Danse. They mainly specialise in residential, commercial, educational and cultural projects and are renowned for their creative and sustainable designs, incorporating energy-efficient components and resources. The company has earned a great number of accolades for their efforts, with the esteemed Mies van der Rohe Award in 2003 for the Cité de la Musique et de la Danse being one of them.

The selection curated by the Archello editorial team is based on a mixture of the amount of featured projects and the views they generated.

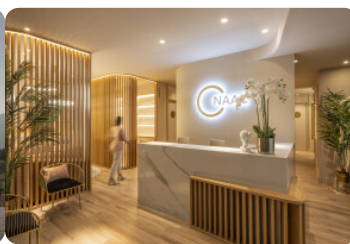
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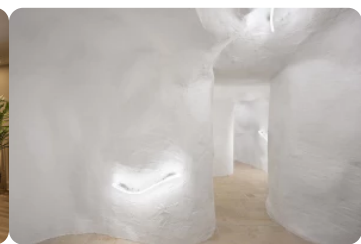
1 Detail: Rammed Earth Walls of Casa Ballena, Los Cabos



2 Mexican equestrian clubhouse provides haven for horses and horse lovers alike



3 Wooden lattice and monochromatic colours dictate this beauty clinic by In Out Studio in Spain



4 Selenite Dreams by BUREAU explores the essence of plaster and its transformation within space



5 David Adjaye's temporal device Architectural B