

Paris, 28 September 2026

Press release

Prix Versailles 2026: The World's Most Beautiful Stations

Today, 28 September 2026, Prix Versailles is unveiling the World's Most Beautiful Stations List 2026.

Featuring nods to local heritage combined with creativity and innovation, these “most beautiful” projects have emerged as new and iconic urban spaces.

Jérôme Gouadain, Prix Versailles Secretary General, introduces this year's outstanding selection:

“Prix Versailles shines a light on the top locations that illustrate how excellence in design has become a driver of progress. In the realm of transport stations, the stakes are high when it comes to creating cultural expressions that are simultaneously beautiful, fashionable and sustainable, that reinforce passenger mobility whilst revitalising local neighbourhoods and that support modernisation whilst showing respect for existing architecture.

These strategies, with their ability to stimulate exchanges and assert a project's local roots, remain all too rare on today's global scene. In succeeding in this endeavour though, the winning travel hubs give us proof that 21st century passenger stations can be the bridges to a more desirable future.”

Three passenger stations from the 2026 List will also receive the further distinction of a World Title (Prix Versailles, Interior or Exterior), to be awarded at UNESCO Headquarters on 10 December next.

The awards discerned by Prix Versailles aim to promote intelligent sustainability, in which culture serves and transcends the notion of the environment.

The next World Selections will be announced on 19 October for the Sports category.



PRIX VERSAILLES

WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL STATIONS LIST 2026

Town Hall Station

Melbourne, Australia

Lyon Part-Dieu Station

Lyon, France

Colosseo - Fori Imperiali Station

Rome, Italy

Monte Sant'Angelo Station

Naples, Italy

National Museum Station

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Western Station

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

LAX/Metro Transit Center

Los Angeles, United States

*The Laureates are listed in the alphabetical order of the countries they represent
(based on their two-letter ISO 3166 country codes).*



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PRESENTATION OF THE LAUREATES

Town Hall Station

Melbourne, Australia

Beneath Swanston Street, Town Hall Station enjoys a fantastic location in the heart of Melbourne's historic centre.

Designed by Hassell, RSHP and WW+P, it stands out for the sheer size of its underground volumes. Its concourse, built under City Square, is punctuated by eight imposing columns like trees whose branches hold up the canopy above and endow the whole hallway with a cathedral-like feel. Coppery vaulted ceilings tower 10 metres above the particularly wide platforms, accentuating the impression of openness and space.

This monumentality is echoed in State Library Station, with which Town Hall Station shares a “trinocular” structure: three tunnels that intersect to form spacious expanses.

The stations' civic and commemorative dimensions are further extended by the images and stories that appear in their artwork, with Dannie Mellor's *Forever* occupying the glass façade of State Library, while Maree Clarke's *Barerungar* lines Town Hall's Federation Square entrance. *Tracks*, which is likewise the work of Maree Clarke, is installed along the platforms of all five of Metro Tunnel's new stations.



© Jim Stephenson



© Jim Stephenson



© Peter Bennetts

Lyon Part-Dieu Station

Lyon, France

In Lyon, walking through a building to get from one street to another is a way of life and, although it wasn't originally designed that way, Part-Dieu Station had become a shortcut between different neighbourhoods.

Its conversion into a sprawling multimodal hub accounted for that practice, not to mention its spectacular increase in foot traffic over the years. This regional, national and international train station, one of Europe's top stations in terms of the number of connecting passengers transiting through it, has doubled in size thanks to the architectural teams at AREP and L'AUC, with additional access points and pass-throughs to boot.

Place Charles Béraudier, a two-level urban square, is now home to France's biggest bicycle parking garage. A gallery bearing the same name stretches 210 metres in length and stands 15 metres tall, facing out onto new public areas.

It took a decade or so of work to transform this very dense infrastructure into a real community space, open to one and all. Inspired by the hidden passageways (*traboules*) of the Vieux-Lyon and Croix-Rousse districts, Lyon Part-Dieu has devised its own, eminently contemporary, railway version.



© Romuald Nicolas



© Romuald Nicolas



© Romuald Nicolas

Colosseo - Fori Imperiali Station

Rome, Italy

For the chic Rome Metro, digging is always a trip back in time. And now, the Colosseo-Fori Imperiali Station at the junction of Lines B and C has transformed this hurdle into an incredible contemporary project.

Spanning four levels at a maximum depth of more than 30 metres, it has created a vast underground cavity where archaeological finds unearthed during construction now accompany passengers in transit.

Archaeological Park of the Colosseum, in collaboration with Sapienza University, developed the museum portion's design.

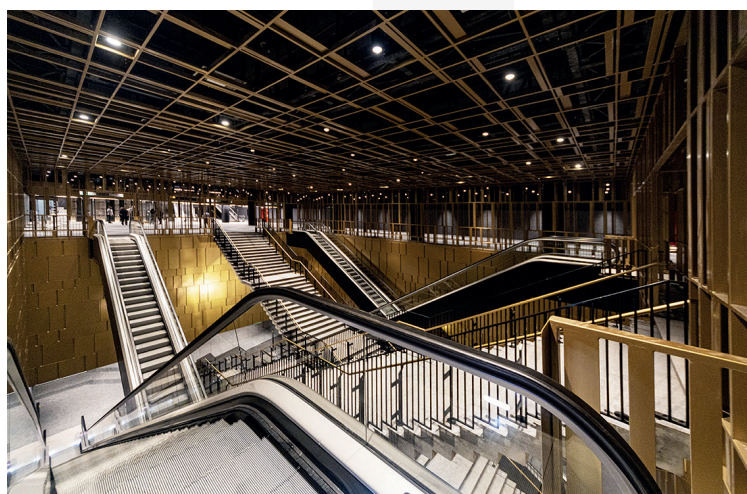
Ancient wells are the common thread running through the architecture, which plays with shadow and light to reveal the different strata that form the bedrock of Rome.

More than a station within a museum or a museum within a station, the structure has turned travel into an archaeological adventure, in which the public's descent towards the platforms is a literal dive into the city's history, and where an oculus treats transferring passengers to an unexpected view of the Colosseum.

The station takes its riders on a true journey in every sense of the word, resulting in a unique and profoundly Roman experience.



© Metro C



© Aldo Magnani



© Pasquale Gentile

Monte Sant'Angelo Station

Naples, Italy



© Amedeo Benestante / Anish Kapoor

Descend into this Metro station and symbolically step through the gates of hell. Designed by artist Anish Kapoor, working with the architectural firms Future Systems and AL_A, Monte Sant'Angelo Station – a project that began more than twenty years ago – has turned crossing the threshold to the underground world into its own complete experience.

Two monumental openings made of corten steel and aluminium provide access to a whole subterranean world that at once calls to mind Mount Vesuvius, a cave and the legend of the Cumaean Sibyl. At a depth of 48 metres, the immersion continues, surrounded by intentionally rough walls and ceilings, before passengers are carried back up to the surface. The first active station on Line 7, its 6,500 m² of space serves Federico II University's Monte Sant'Angelo Campus as well as the city's western neighbourhoods.

Here, art is not featured by the Metro. Instead, the station itself is a sculpture that the public can enter all the way down to the bowels of the earth.

A mythological, contemporary projection that brings past, present and future together.



© Amedeo Benestante / Anish Kapoor



© Anish Kapoor

National Museum Station

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

This Metro station was designed to be the gateway for visitors to the National Museum and the city's historic centre.

Created by the teams at Arup architecture practice, it stands out for its lattice façade, an impressive concrete shell modelled after the topography of Tuwaiq Mountain, with Najdi-inspired triangular openings through which the radiant blue of the interior can be seen.

The neighbouring coach station is reminiscent of a Bedouin tent, so the addition of this building brings the local landscape together with traditional Saudi dwellings in the same scene. Once inside, visitors encounter a change in scale and perception, with the blue walls transforming into a glittering sky at the heart of a stone mountain.

The vast atrium, steeped in natural light, accompanies passengers to the platforms, the deepest of which are located 33 metres below ground.

An interchange station for Metro Riyadh's Blue and Green Lines, the site delivers an experience that is as surprising as it is precious: the sense of stepping inside the crystal of a geode... a real treat for the eyes!



© Hufton + Crow



© Hufton + Crow



© Hufton + Crow

Western Station

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Located on the site of an old open-air market-place, Western Station was designed by Omrania to transform the spot without taking away from its public utility.

Like a little slice of the city, a local ecosystem is evolving, with shops and a mosque, as well as many pedestrian areas that are great for a stroll or a get-together, set up all around the station's tracks.

Its silhouette is made up of two long spaces topped with undulating roofs. Inspired by desert dunes, their curved lines provide shady thresholds where light and air flow through the buildings freely.

The structures are connected by a passage-way like the seasonal riverbed of a *wadi*.

A multimodal hub and major stop on Riyadh Metro's Orange Line, Western Station delivers an alternative vision of railway transport, where trains travel along a viaduct running the length of the place without disrupting public use of the land.

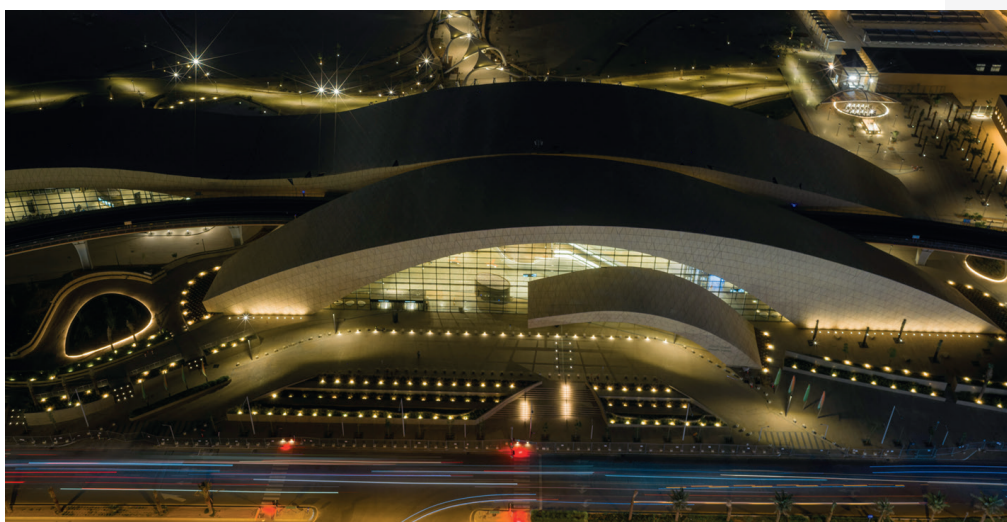
Visitors can then glimpse those trains from the site's bustling squares and gardens.



© Omrania



© Omrania



© Omrania

LAX/Metro Transit Center

Los Angeles, United States

In the heart of a Californian metropolis that has historically been heavily car-centric, the new station is radically reinventing airport transit, for a more ecological, more equitable experience. The multimodal platform, created by Grimshaw Architects in collaboration with Gruen Associates, connects Metro's C and K Lines, 16 bus lines, a regional bike hub, and forthcoming automated people movers.

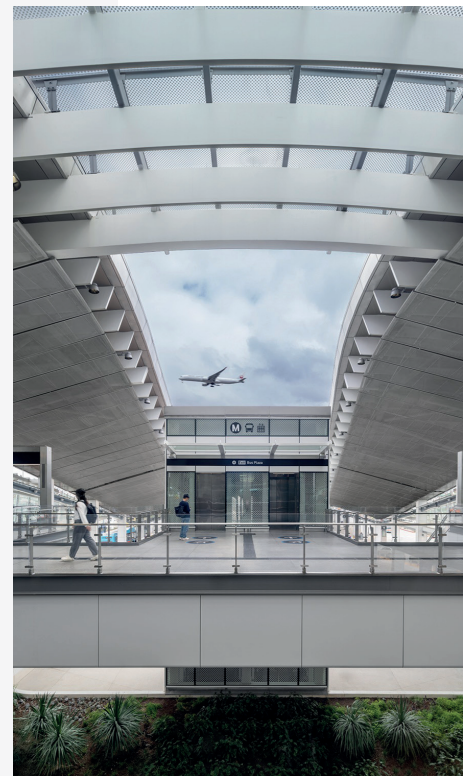
Capped with sweeping sculptural canopies and glass ceilings, this infrastructure is unobtrusive, placing the focus instead on a smooth journey for travellers.

Designed with the local climate in mind, the site uses limited air conditioning thanks to its natural ventilation and awnings. Solar panels cover about half of the building's interior energy demand.

This project is a complete departure from the massive freeway network all around it. In contrast to those concrete blocks, LAX/Metro Transit Center has a light and airy feel, providing a sanctuary dedicated to sustainable mobility and making an impressive urban statement to the world.



© Jason O'Rear



© Jason O'Rear



© Jason O'Rear



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