

Paris, 3 November 2025

Press release

Prix Versailles 2025: The World's Most Beautiful Stations

Today, 3 November 2025, the Prix Versailles is announcing the names of the seven projects included on the World's Most Beautiful Passenger Stations List 2025.

Each of these recently inaugurated stations bears witness to remarkable architectural ambition and is a fitting addition to an extraordinary list of laureates.

Jérôme Gouadain, Secretary General of the Prix Versailles, underscores the grandeur of the ideals embodied by these edifices:

“Excellence lends itself to recognition and humility, and is a necessary quality in this day and age, when there is such a need to extend the harmony manifested in these new passenger stations across entire continents.

The commitment and the technical and aesthetic prowess demanded by these structures are the highest possible tribute to the building community.

Already a part of this century's heritage, this infrastructure is revitalising the role that we as a society attribute to mobility. At each site, beauty is given concrete form, like a lung breathing new life into the city, a shared symbolic territory in the service of its inhabitants.”

On 4 December at UNESCO Headquarters, three stations from the 2025 List will receive the further distinction of a World Title – Prix Versailles, Interior or Exterior.

The awards discerned by the 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 10 November for the Sports category.



PRIX VERSAILLES

WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL STATIONS LIST 2025

Gadigal Station

Sydney, Australia

Mons Station

Mons, Belgium

Baiyun Station

Guangzhou, China

Saint-Denis – Pleyel Station

Saint-Denis, France

Villejuif – Gustave Roussy Station

Villejuif, France

KAFD Station

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Qasr Al Hokm Station

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

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



PRIX VERSAILLES

PRESENTATION OF THE LAUREATES

Gadigal Station

Sydney, Australia

Gadigal is the name of the Aboriginal people who were the original custodians of the land around this part of Sydney. Today, that ancient clan symbolises the ambitions of the city that is home to Australia's first metro system.

Located 25 m beneath high-rise buildings, this station designed by Foster + Partners (in collaboration with Cox Architecture) is the epitome of absolute modernity.

At each entry, there is a monumental work of art entitled *The Underneath*, inspired by early railway tunnels and made of ceramic tiles in intense hues. It uses contrast to denote the movement of passengers through streamlined spaces whose curves and colour variations retrace the underlying geology.

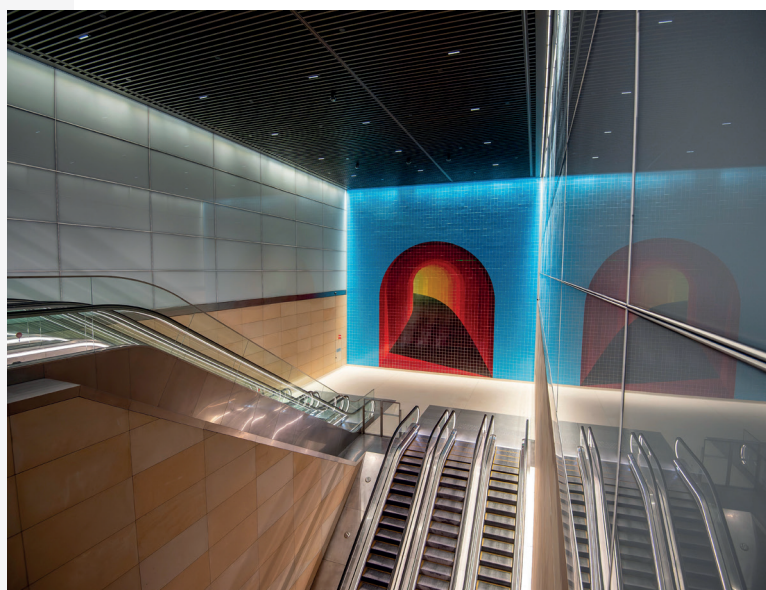
The future-facing Gadigal Station humanises the metro, encouraging and facilitating the shift to an ecological footprint through public transport.



© Aaron Hargreaves



© Brett Broadman



© Sydney Metro

Mons Station

Mons, Belgium

Mons Station is the linchpin of an urban reorganisation project, in which roads have been transformed into pedestrian squares, and the passenger station is now accessible from the city centre, with no need to cross any streets.

All the artistry of Santiago Calatrava was to put work in an airy, streamlined style made up of steel and dazzling white to form a cathedral-like walkway that stretches 165 metres in length, connecting the historic heart of the city to the south and the emerging Grands Prés district to the north.

The monumental gallery, which welcomes visitors below an expansive, suspended canopy, is a nod to the Galerie de la Reine in Brussels and exemplifies cultural and commercial vitality within a modern, multimodal transport facility.

Entirely enclosed and insulated, its design guarantees comfortable temperatures in winter, while the skylight at the apex of the roof allows for natural ventilation in summer.



© Santiago Calatrava LLC



© Santiago Calatrava LLC



© Santiago Calatrava LLC

Baiyun Station

Guangzhou, China

In theory, nothing would seem to be more deeply rooted in the earth than a facility dedicated to 24 high-speed train lines, 6 subway lines and 3 bus terminals.

And yet, Baiyun Station now stands out for its bright and airy layout, designed by the team at Nikken Sekkei.

Where there was once nothing but a mass of unused airspace, there are now shops and offices contained within an ethereal structure that has become the real cornerstone of the Baiyun business district.

A multi-storey, circular pedestrian walkway connects the railway platforms to the surrounding commercial and office spaces, but more than that, it is interwoven with gardens to create a three-dimensional urban park that irrigates and unites the local community.

Stylised versions of Guangzhou's traditional arcades flood the station with natural light and deliver a unique spatial identity that is simultaneously monumental and human. Inspired architecture, indeed.



© Yang Min / mintwow



© Yang Min / mintwow



© Yang Min / mintwow

Saint-Denis – Pleyel Station

Saint-Denis, France

At the edge of three municipalities, this iconic Grand Paris Express station was built in a territory marked by urban divide. While a structure already existed to cross the 48 tracks serving Gare du Nord in Paris, the challenge for Kengo Kuma & Associates was to establish coherence between separate neighbourhoods.

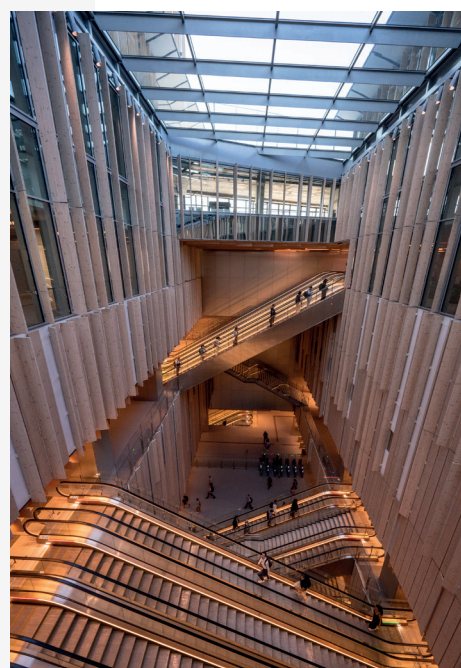
A draped effect, rising to a height of 35 metres, underscores the stature of this public facility where natural light reaches all the way to the platforms, 28 metres below ground.

“The place is the product of nature and time”, the architect explains.

In striking contrast to traditional passenger stations built out of steel and concrete, the atrium here is entirely covered in wood, “a magical material” that creates warm spaces. In connection with time, more than 100 sculptures inspired by the earliest depictions of women in Palaeolithic art will be installed along the full height of the atrium, making the project part of a multi-millennial continuum.



© Kengo Kuma & Associates / Éric Garault
/ Société des grands projets



© Kengo Kuma & Associates / Éric Garault
/ Société des grands projets



© Kengo Kuma & Associates / Éric Garault / Société des grands projets

Villejuif – Gustave Roussy Station

Villejuif, France

Dominique Perrault is the architect of metal (stainless steel in the case of this station) in all its forms – smooth, mesh, perforated, polished to a mirror finish or satiny – and of every shade of grey, all the way to the colour bronze.

In the middle of a wide pedestrian forecourt, an open pavilion topped with a spectacular glass roof blurs the line between interior and exterior.

It covers a dizzying cylinder measuring 70 m in diameter, that allows air to circulate and creates different ambiances by casting light 50 m below, down to the platforms of one of France's deepest passenger stations, through the interaction of reflections, shine and filters.

What Perrault calls the “architectonics of the link” reconciles the vertical motion of entry to the station with the horizontal movements of the city.

Here, there is no monumental urban façade closing off the area. Instead, empty space is wielded like a material in and of itself, with long escalators organising the flow of passengers.



© Dominique Perrault Architecture / Michel Denancé / Société des grands projets



© Dominique Perrault Architecture / Anne-Claude Barbier / Société des grands projets



© Dominique Perrault Architecture / Michel Denancé / Société des grands projets

KAFD Station

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

In 2000, the Saudi capital, with its 4 million inhabitants, did not yet have its own public transport infrastructure.

But today, KAFD Station, located in the city's financial district, is the hub of a network that now extends over 176 kilometres of tracks and 85 stations, making it the world's longest driverless transport system.

Designed by Zaha Hadid Architects, the new station connects the past to the future.

The façade echoes the patterns created by desert winds in sand, where multiple frequencies generate the complex swirling motifs found in the natural world.

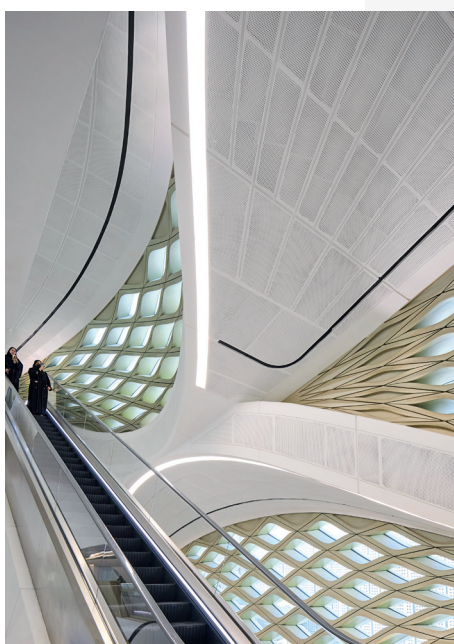
At the same time, the undulating waves that form the building's spine are the product of cutting-edge technology.

In fact, the station's expected rail, vehicle and pedestrian usage was modelled and mapped in order to conceptualise a space defined by changes in the frequency of traffic flows.

The effect is that of a stylised desert rose, whose curves tactfully soften the verticality of its towers.



© Hufton + Crow



© Hufton + Crow



© Hufton + Crow

Qasr Al Hokm Station

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



© Royal Commission for Riyadh City

Designed by Snøhetta, Qasr Al Hokm Station was created as a large urban plaza whose inverted conical canopy is intended to signal a paradigm shift in the city's development.

Like a periscope, this basin atop a glass roof reflects vibrant street life and indirect light from the plaza above down to the lower levels. From the concourse to the platforms, this creates a dynamic visual connection between the underground station and the cityscape above.

Thanks to a mirror effect, daylight is cast into the station, while at night, the internal lights of the station are reflected onto the surface of the canopy.



© Royal Commission for Riyadh City

The interior is treated in adobe render along an immense, inclined wall, perpetuating a longstanding tradition of Najdi vernacular architecture.

At the base of the atrium, a luxuriant garden unexpectedly materialises within the subterranean space.



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