

Eritrea: Asmara and Its Modernist Architecture

Perched on a plateau that rises two kilometers above the Red Sea, the Eritrean capital of Asmara has one of the world's highest concentrations of early modern architecture. Constructed primarily between 1936 and 1941 by Italian colonists under Fascist rule and isolated during a 50-year conflict with Ethiopia, the urban fabric of Asmara's city center represents a bold attempt to create a utopian city based on modernist planning and architectural ideals. Unconstrained by the more conservative environment of Europe, Asmara's architects and engineers borrowed from a wide range of building styles including Novecento, Neo-classicism, Neo-Baroque, Futurism, and, most predominantly, Rationalism – a distinctly Italian interpretation of the Modern International Style...

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