

TOP 10 MOST VISITED MUSEUMS WORLDWIDE



Museums have been a source of cultural, historical, and scientific knowledge and artefacts for many years now. With the increase in travel, gradually every year the interest in these institutions rises. Last year, the 20 most visited museums in the world welcomed more than 107 million visitors. This represents a mild increase of 0.2% compared to 2016. To portray the importance of museums and stress some interesting aspects, Tourism-Review.com presents the Top 10 Most Visited Museums Worldwide.

1. The Louvre, Paris – 8.1 million visitors (+9.5%)

It is one of the largest art museums in the world. Once it was an ancient castle for French kings, built by Philip Augustus in 1190. As a museum, it was first opened to visitors on November 8, 1793. The Louvre occupies a space of approximately 195 thousand square meters and has a total exposition area of 60,600 square meters. The exhibition is divided into seven large parts, varying from Etruscan to Islamic art. Paintings of the most prominent painters are present here, from Rubens, Rembrandt, Titian to Vermeer. Though the most famous item present is obviously the Mona Lisa painted by Leonardo Da Vinci. But other important artefacts include the Code of Hammurabi or Liberty Leading the People painting by Eugène Delacroix.

2. National Museum of China, Beijing – 8.063 million visitors (+6.8%)

Finished at the time of the 10th birthday of the People's Republic of China, the National Museum of China is one of the largest and most modern museums in the world. It was inaugurated on February 28, 2003 but was closed again for renovation and rebuilding in 2007. The modern-day National Museum of China was reopened on March 1, 2011. It has 48 exhibition halls. The main exhibitions are Ancient China and the Road to Rejuvenation. The first covers Chinese history from Yuanmou Man 1.7 million years ago to the end of the Qing Dynasty. The latter stresses the importance of the communist development in the country. The Simuwu Ding from the Shang Dynasty is considered one of the most important artefacts present (the heaviest piece of ancient bronzeware in the world).

3. National Air and Space Museum, Washington, D.C. – 7 million visitors (-6.7%)

Founded in 1946 under the name National Air Museum, the National Air and Space Museum represents

a center of research of the history and science of aviation and space travel and the most visited museum in the United States. It houses about 60,000 artefacts out of which almost all are originals of the original backup craft. The museum is divided into two facilities – one building being on the Mall in Washington D.C. and the other at the Washington Dulles International Airport (the Udvar-Hazy Center). The most important items include the Apollo 11 command module, the Friendship 7 capsule, the Spirit of St. Louis monoplane or the Wright brothers' plane.

4. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City – 7 million visitors (+4.5%)

Everyone has probably heard about the Museum Mile, located in New York City between Fifth Avenue and 57th Street. It is here where the best museums of the United States are present, the largest of which is the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In the museum one can find almost everything from Paleolithic artefacts to examples of pop art. There are collections of African, Oceanian or Middle Eastern art. A specialty is also the hall, which gathers clothes worn by the inhabitants of all five continents for seven centuries. There is also an exposition of art and architecture, as well as musical instruments from different countries. Though, American art is the main attraction of the museum.

5. The Vatican Museum, Rome – 6.4 million visitors (+5.9%)

The Vatican Museum is the largest museum in the world and is a part of the complex of museums founded by Pope Julius II in the early 16th century. It contains 1400 halls, 50,000 objects and to get around all the exhibits you need to walk more than 7 kilometers. The main point of attraction is the Sistine Chapel. However, the structure of the museum is very peculiar, as you can reach the farthest point – the Vatican Pinacoteca – just past all the previous ones. The route starts with the Egyptian Museum, after which follows the famous Belvedere and Raphael's Stants. Finally, after that is the Sistine Chapel, rightly called the main local shrine.

6. Shanghai Science and Technology Museum, Shanghai – 6.4 million visitors (+1.7%)

Opened in December 2001, the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum is one of the scientific and educational centers of China. It promotes ideological progress and modern science under the theme called "Nature, Mankind, and Technology". It has 14 main permanent exhibitions and 4 science-themed cinemas. Some notable exhibitions are Spectrum of Life, Light of Wisdom, World of Robots or Space Navigation. It is split into two wings. One portrays natural life, different species and much more and the other has interactive exhibits about computing, robotics, and space travel.

7. National Museum of Natural History, Washington D.C. – 6 million visitors (-15.5%)

Opened in 1910, the National Museum of Natural History is one of the largest natural history museums worldwide. It contains over 126 million artefacts varying from plants, animals, fossils to meteorites, human remains and much more. It is also home to about 185 professional scientists, which is the largest group of scientists dedicated to this cause in the world. The main building's area is about 140 thousand square meters with 30,200 square meters being exhibition and public space. Some of the most popular attractions are the tarantula feedings in the Insect Zoo or replicas of giant whales and various other marine life in the Sant Ocean Hall.

8. British Museum, London – 5.9 million visitors (-8%)

The British Museum was founded on June 7, 1753 of the initiative of the government. On January 15, 1759 it officially opened for the general public. The museum is also referred to as the Museum of Stolen Masterpieces or the Museum of All Civilizations. To an extent, the names are justified. After all, the treasures presented in the museum were not received in the most honest way. For example, the Rosetta stone was taken from Napoleon's army in Egypt. Many other artefacts were taken with governmental permissions, like sculptural friezes of the Parthenon or sculptures of the mausoleum in Halicarnassus as well as the temple of Artemis in Ephesus.

9. Tate Modern, London – 5.6 million visitors (-3.1%)

Created in 2000, Tate Modern is the national gallery of international modern art of the country. The museum, or more precisely gallery, holds collections of British and international art from 1900 to the most modern paintings. It is one of the largest museums of modern and contemporary art worldwide. It consists of 8 areas with named themes and subjects. At times, there are also temporary exhibitions of contemporary artists in the Turbine Hall. Some of the most important painters whose works are present here are Pablo Picasso, Matisse, Dali, Ernst. Pop art also has its place in the museum, for example works of Andy Warhol or Roy Lichtenstein.

10. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. – 5.2 million visitors (+22.8%)

Last on the list is the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. The museum was established in 1937 by the US Congress. The core collection includes works donated by Paul Mellon, Samuel Henry and other collectors in the country. The museum follows the development of Western Art from the Middle Ages to present day. The only painting by Leonardo Da Vinci in the Americas is also a present item. The gallery's collection includes more than 140 thousand paintings, drawings, sculptures etc.

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