



Mumbai hopes to preserve its stunning Art Deco architecture as it begins a survey of the historic buildings

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[Miami](#) in Florida holds the world crown for the greatest number of Art Deco buildings in one city, but you might be surprised at the city that comes second. [Mumbai](#), India's bustling capital of film, finance and fashion, is studded with the relics of a massive [Art Deco](#) construction boom that gripped the city at the end of WWI.



Mumbai is taking stock of its Art Deco architecture. Image by Joe Bindloss

Coinciding with the rise of the Bollywood movie industry, a new wave of Indian entrepreneurs and millionaires demanded swish modern residences to match their swish modern lifestyles and lavish modern incomes. Accordingly, the coastline surrounding the British colonial quarter of Fort was filled in with ranks of [graceful Art Deco towers](#), each unique and inescapably modern, in that 1930s, Flash-Gordon-vision-of-the-future kind of a way.



Stunning Art Deco building in Mumbai. Image by Joe Bindloss

Despite being some of the most expensive real estate on earth – property values on Mumbai’s sleek Malabar Hill top 100,000 rupees per square foot (US\$1550), on a par with central London or New York – the Art Deco apartment blocks facing the Arabian Sea are falling into decline, caught in a sorry cycle of monsoon rain, atmospheric pollution and neglect. But Mumbai is starting to take notice of its Art Deco heritage. A dedicated group of Mumbai citizens are now devoting their free time to surveying Deco structures across the city, from iconic Deco cinemas like the Eros and the Regal to the grand sweep of apartment buildings along Marine Drive.



The Eros building in Mumbai. Image by Joe Bindloss

Led by financier Atul Kumar, the team hopes to record the breadth of Deco architecture in the city – there are at least 200 known Deco buildings – as a first step to preserving this legacy for the future. Central to the project is a new website, [Art Deco Mumbai](https://www.artdeco-mumbai.com), with lavish photographs of dozens of classic Mumbai Deco buildings. Alongside the Victorian monuments of Fort, Mumbai's Deco architecture is also listed as part of the Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble Precinct, a list of buildings that India has put forward for recognition on the Unesco World Heritage list. Between the two campaigns, the future of Mumbai's Deco past is looking brighter than it has for decades.

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/news/2017/06/29/mumbai-takes-stock-art-deco-heritage>