

Historic Places in Downtown Los Angeles

Pershing Square

While the five acres that make up Pershing Square can be traced back to early Los Angeles, the park was officially established in the 1870s. The space evolved over the years as the city changed. The current design from 1993 includes a play area, dog park, public art, seating area, and stage.

Bradbury Building

Built in 1893, the Bradbury Building is one of the oldest buildings in Downtown Los Angeles. Millionaire Lewis Bradbury, for whom the building is named, had it designed to look the way he imagined buildings 100 years in the future would look. The Bradbury Building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Million Dollar Theatre

Completed in 1918, the Million Dollar theatre was one of the largest movie palaces on Broadway. It was built by Sid Grauman, a famous performer, who in addition to the Million Dollar built the Chinese Theatre and Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood. Reportedly, the Million Dollar was named for how much it cost to build. Between the 1960s and 1980s, the theatre became a popular venue for well-known Latin artists including Mexican singer Vicente Fernandez. In recent years, the theatre has been used as a church and a filming location. The twelve-story office building above the theatre houses loft apartments.

Los Angeles Central Library

Downtown Los Angeles's first library existed in different places across the city before it found a home in one location. Completed in 1926, the Los Angeles Central Library is the largest library in Los Angeles. Well known architect Bertram Goodhue designed the library using a "light of learning" theme. All of the statues, artwork, and the torch atop the library's crowning pyramid, symbolize how the library is a place of learning. In the 1970s, the library was almost torn down until people came together to save it. A few of these individuals ultimately formed the Los Angeles Conservancy! The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Grand Central Market

Opened in 1917, Grand Central Market is one of the oldest markets in L.A. Grand Central Market takes up the first floor and basement space in two adjacent buildings that were built before the market began. A department store and dried goods shop occupied the space before the market took over. An interesting fact about the two buildings is that one is the first fire-proofed building in L.A. and the other is the first steel-reinforced building in L.A. This means they were built to withstand different types of damage, which may be why they still exist today! Though the shops and restaurants have changed over the years, Grand Central Market is still a lively place with nearly forty different places to eat from. In 2017, the Market celebrated its 100th birthday with a one hundred-layer cake!

Visit laconservancy.org to learn more about these places.



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