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# The Architecture of Happiness

*By Alain De Botton*



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## The Architecture of Happiness By Alain De Botton

The Architecture of Happiness is neither a textbook about the history of western architecture nor a book about the appreciation or decoration of architecture. It is the latest book that took Alain de Botton many years to finish. In the book, he studies a seemingly familiar but actually strange theme from an unique perspective--the relationship between the physical architecture and our happiness. Why do human need architecture? why can some beautiful architecture enable you feel happy? Why your views about the beauty of the architecture change? What is the relationship between architecture and our happiness? To these questions, the author answers from perspectives of philosophy, aesthetics and psychology, which will completely overturn your former ideas about architecture and change your attitudes towards architecture, life and happiness from the root.



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## **The Architecture of Happiness By Alain De Botton Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

With this entertaining and stimulating book, de Botton (*How Proust Can Change Your Life*) examines the ways architecture speaks to us, evoking associations that, if we are alive to them, can put us in touch with our true selves and influence how we conduct our lives. Because of this, he contends, it's the architect's task to design buildings that contribute to happiness by embodying ennobling values. While he makes no claim to be able to define true beauty in architecture, he suggests some of the virtues a building should have (illustrated by pictures on almost every spread): order combined with complexity; balance between contrasting elements; elegance that appears effortless; a coherent relationship among the parts; and self-knowledge, which entails an understanding of human psychology, something that architects all too often overlook. To underscore his argument, de Botton includes many apt examples of buildings that either incorporate or ignore these qualities, discussing them in ways that make obvious their virtues or failings. The strength of his book is that it encourages us to open our eyes and really look at the buildings in which we live and work. A three-part series of the same title will air on PBS this fall. (Oct. 3)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Alain De Botton, author of *How Proust Can Change Your Life*, *The Art of Travel*, and *Status Anxiety*, among other books, takes a humanistic approach in *Architecture of Happiness* and explores the ways in which our built environment affects us. He occasionally overindulges in florid prose, but critics agree that his more general observations of architecture are sound and interesting, if not entirely novel. The average reader will find much of interest in the broad range of eras, places, and styles that de Botton discusses. Well-placed photographs illustrate each point in the text. The book is so visual, in fact, that the BBC is making a three-part television series based on it, to air on PBS this fall.

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## Review

"De Botton is a lively guide, and his eclectic choices of buildings and locations evince his conclusion, that "we should be as unintimidated by architectural mediocrity as we are by unjust laws."

—*The New Yorker*

The next time I'm at a party, and the conversation turns to "serious topics," like what the stock market did today, I think I'll suggest we talk about something more important: architecture. I'll ask the investment banker why he bought the house he did and insist he answer the question. And then I'll start quoting Alain de Botton.

—*The National Post*

If this book were a building, it would be a contemporary reading room, I think, with big windows, and clean, built-in bookshelves with a fold-out step ladder just right for fetching slim volumes from the top shelf. The elegant clarity and brisk humour of his style, accompanied by pages of photos, opens your eyes to the rich possibility of thinking about your home, and your city, in a new way.

—*The Toronto Star*

"De Botton's books are the literary equivalent of the Slow Food movement. They demand to be lingered over, not because the concepts are difficult but because they are rich and deep. Be prepared to put down your

book frequently and turn his last few sentences over in your mind, testing his theses against the rooms and buildings you know well."

—*The Globe and Mail*

"In this simple, entertaining and brilliant book, Alain de Botton explores how architecture speaks to us and why it affects all aspects of human life. His great strength is to explain things we always knew but never understood."

—Christopher Hume, Architecture Critic, *Toronto Star*

"How did we ever manage without de Botton?"

— *Sunday Times* (U.K.)

"[de Botton] deals with questions of style, ideas of beauty, notions about why certain structures appeal to us. The author argues that we love beautiful buildings because they solidify ideas we have about ourselves and our world. They put into concrete form our aspirations; they compensate for our human weaknesses; in short, they make us happy. Virtually every page contains a sentence any essayist would be proud to have written. A lyrical and generously illustrated monograph about the intimate relationship between our buildings and ourselves."

— *Kirkus Reviews*

"Singlehandedly, de Botton has taken philosophy back to its simplest and most important purpose: helping us live our lives."

— *Independent*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Bobby Bagwell:**

Here thing why this kind of The Architecture of Happiness are different and reputable to be yours. First of all reading a book is good nevertheless it depends in the content of the usb ports which is the content is as delicious as food or not. The Architecture of Happiness giving you information deeper including different ways, you can find any publication out there but there is no guide that similar with The Architecture of Happiness. It gives you thrill looking at journey, its open up your own personal eyes about the thing this happened in the world which is perhaps can be happened around you. You can easily bring everywhere like in recreation area, café, or even in your method home by train. Should you be having difficulties in bringing the published book maybe the form of The Architecture of Happiness in e-book can be your substitute.

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**Sang O\Connor:**

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**Christopher McCormick:**

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