



# BONDI ART DECO ARCHITECTURE WALK



WAVERLEY COUNCIL

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THE OFFICIAL GUIDE

The walk was written and curated by Waverley Council  
in celebration of 100 Years of Art Deco.

This walk celebrates Bondi's iconic Art Deco and Inter-War architecture, which for a century has provided unique character to its streetscapes and a rare, intact backdrop to the world-famous beach. Since 1925, when Art Deco captured the world's attention at the Paris International Exhibition of Modern and Industrial Decorative Arts, its streamlined forms, geometric motifs and vibrant colours have defined Bondi's architectural style.

Its historically significant Art Deco and Inter-War buildings blend timeless sophistication and contemporary vibrancy. Explore just a selection of these extraordinary pieces of architecture and their defining period details on this walk, starting at North Bondi and ending with the iconic Bondi Pavilion at Bondi Beach.

**Allow up to 60 minutes. Includes some sloping terrain. The sites on this walk are private properties, please do not enter them.**

# BONDI ART DECO ARCHITECTURE WALK

## 1. North Bondi curves

23-37 Campbell Parade



The blue three-storey building was built c. 1936, with splayed and curved bays responding to its corner location and beach views. Its long façade is divided by a blade wall forming a distinctive element on Campbell Parade. Cantilevered concrete awnings emphasise the façade's curves.

286 Campbell Parade – 1937



The rendered Art Deco building opposite, dating from 1937, features classic Art Deco detailing on its ornamental parapet. Both buildings retain a strong sense of their early character.

Art Deco embodied dynamic progress, faith in modern technology and featured strong vertical or horizontal emphasis and streamlining. Buildings of the era often display a mix of style from the Inter-War period, including Georgian Revival, Free and Stripped Classical, Old English, Mediterranean, Spanish Mission or Functionalist.

## 2. Lurline – North Bondi

282 Campbell Parade – Lurline – 1930s



Lurline's rounded balconies are typical Art Deco features, paired with a vertical element. You are standing on Bondi's last sandhill, known as "porkchop hill" because of its shape. Despite being close to Sydney, Bondi developed late because of its sandhills, which were not cleared until 1920.

In its early colonial history, today's beach and park (plus 175 acres) were owned by Warwickshire convict William Roberts (who

arrived on the Second Fleet in 1790, transported for seven years for horse theft). He built the South Head Road nearby and was rewarded with a land grant by Governor Macquarie in 1810. From 1855, public use of the beach was allowed by new owner Francis O'Brien. In 1882, 25 acres of beachfront was resumed for recreation. By 1900, wicker fences and marram grass halted the southerly sand blow.

## 3. Art Moderne – Campbell Parade

270 Campbell Parade – 1939  
272 Campbell Parade – Sunray – 1930s  
274 Campbell Parade – 1930s



Art Deco style blossomed in the 1930s, yet was termed Art Moderne until the 1960s. It first became influential in furniture and interior design, and was notable for repetitive motifs expressed in concrete, brick, steel, terracotta and glass.



270 Campbell Parade was designed in 1939 by architect F.G. Leslie Allen. The Art Deco influence is clear in the façade's decorative face brickwork, vertical articulation and geometric shapes.

Motifs of the Inter-War Functionalist style are evident on 274 Campbell Parade. The style was influenced by modern European architecture and typically has an asymmetrical massing of simple geometric shapes and clean lines. Use of stucco and Greco-Roman, Egyptian, Aztec and African motifs were common.

Waverley has the second highest density of Inter-War buildings in Sydney. The 1920s also brought new domestic technologies, notably gas and electric refrigerators, stoves and ovens, and hot water systems, all of which substantially reduced domestic work.

## 4. Art Deco row – Campbell Parade

236 Campbell Parade – Belmont Court Flats – 1930  
238 Campbell Parade – Fairlawn Flats, 1930  
240 Campbell Parade – 1930s



242 Campbell Parade – 1930s  
246 Campbell Parade – Mariposa – 1934  
248 Campbell Parade – Monterey – 1934  
226 Campbell Parade – Franklin – 1930s  
228 Campbell Parade – Shangri-La – 1930s  
230 Campbell Parade – 1930s



The Art Deco style was self-consciously "modern" and characterised by clean, geometric and elegant lines. Its influence can be seen in the architect's plans for 246-248 Campbell Parade, built in 1934 as two connected apartment buildings named *Mariposa* and *Monterey* (undergoing restoration at present).



Building names are significant, reflecting the emergence of international travel across the Pacific by passenger ship in that era. In 1932, the Oceanic Steamship Company (later called the Matson Line) introduced two "new sovereigns" of the Pacific – *Mariposa* and *Monterey* – and over the next few decades new standards of speed and luxury linked the South Seas, Australia and New Zealand to Hawaii and America's West Coast.

In this row of Art Deco-influenced buildings from the 1930s, with names including Franklin and Shangri-la, architects applied decorative and textured finishes expressing geometrical motifs and patterns especially at street and parapet levels. Regular arrangement of building elements is common, paired with vertical and horizontal fins or piers, stepping of the building mass, and decorative elements concentrated on the upper portion of the building.

## 5. Mixed styles – Warners Avenue

142 Warner Ave – 1936  
144 Warners Ave – Lexington – 1930



The three-storey *Lexington* building, at 144 Warners Avenue, displays the era's love of mixed styles. Its features blend Art Deco with Stripped Classical. Built in 1930, the front elevation is divided into two bays by rendered brick pilasters that extend to the decorative parapet concealing a hipped roof. Original front verandas have been infilled with windows. The ground-floor garage houses twin parking for cars which, in Sydney, did not outnumber horse and cart until 1924.

No 142 Warners Avenue, built in 1936, also features a decorative pyramidal parapet and typical Art Deco colours from a palette considered simple compared with the array found in buildings of the earlier Victorian and Federation eras.

The Inter-War building boom did not make flat ownership easy. The land title system made it impossible for individuals to buy them, and banks would not lend. Most apartment buildings were Torrens titled, with one person owning all a building's flats. Although Company Title created collective ownership of apartments, it was little used in Waverley before 1940. Strata title did not come into existence until the 1960s.

## 6. Functionalist corner building – Warners Avenue

136 Warners Ave



This Functionalist corner building, designed by the architect G. N. Kenworthy in 1938, makes a feature of its face brick and has little applied decorative detail, in contrast with earlier buildings on Campbell Parade.

The decorative details are generally much simpler and are incorporated into the building form. The horizontal emphasis of the façade is expressed in banded brick finishes. No render or paint is used, relying on natural brick colours and skilled decorative brickwork to provide embellishment and shadow.

## 7. Inter-War buildings – Warners Avenue

3-13 Brighton Boulevard



Inter-War buildings in Sydney, constructed between the 1920s and 1940s, reflect a blend of global architectural trends and local adaptations. This group of flats feature repetitive monochrome brickwork and Stripped Classical detailing.

Residential flats from this period frequently feature symmetrical facades and brickwork with contrasting textures and patterns. The interiors often include timber panelling, terrazzo flooring, and ornate plaster ceilings. These buildings contribute to Bondi's streetscape and are a testament to the city's growth during the inter-war years.

## 8. Wandella and Jugiong – Brighton Boulevard

1 Brighton Boulevard, "Wandella"



Three streets meet in this larger 5-way intersection known as the Brighton Boulevard Heritage Conservation Area. It forms a strikingly rich townscape featuring Art Deco flat buildings across stops 7 and 8.

*Wandella* features a fine mix of Art Deco and Early English styles, with unusual light polychrome decorative brickwork and windows providing façade articulation.

37-43 Gould Street / 25 Hastings Parade



The 1940s Art Deco building *Jugiong* features light and dark rounded brick corner banding. Of special interest are the shopfronts, which retain much of their original tiling and glazing. The central recess on the Hastings Parade elevation is an Art Deco highlight.

## 9. Hastings Parade

8 Hastings Parade



The 10 arched openings on one façade at 8 Hastings Parade make an extraordinary streetscape contribution. The building is in the Free Classical style, distinguished by curved parapets and central semi-circular pediment.

## 10. St Anne's Church

47 Mitchell St Bondi



St Anne's Shrine won architecture's coveted Sir John Sulman Award for excellence in public buildings in 1935. It was the first church to receive the Royal Australian Institute of Architects medal. One commentator described the building as 'perhaps the highlight of ecclesiastical architecture in Inter-War Sydney' and 'a tour de force of brickwork construction with highlights of sandstone trim'. It is described as a fine example of Inter-War Romanesque architecture, from a period when architects moved 'cautiously towards the uncluttered simplicity of mass and detail favoured by the Modernists'. Sandstone for the church was quarried nearby at Clyde Street.



The church was not completed to the competition-winning design of architects Joseph Fowell (1891-1970) and Kenneth McConnel (1899-1976) until the 1960s. The National Trust described the church as 'absolutely, vitally important ... An incredibly fine example [of Inter-War architecture] ... with very beautiful Australian in its [interior] detailing'. St Anne's includes an ingenious and possibly unique ventilation system (dismantled yet stored onsite).

## 11. Inter-War apartments and California Bungalows – Beach Road

31, 33, 35, 37, 39 Beach Road



Beach Road contains many interesting examples of Inter-War apartment buildings and California Bungalow houses, with diverse decorative detail.

Of particular interest is a group of flat buildings on the left side that are notable for their similarity. They have distinctive names over their entries that evoke the sophistication of Europe and the south of France in the Art Deco period, with names like Biarritz Flats emblazoned in typical Art Deco typography.

Tulon Flats is next, and the missing name for the following building is Astor Flats. Its title was discovered during research for this walk, found written on one of Waverley Council's 1930s linen-backed thick cardboard suburb blockplans. The remaining names are Havilah Flats, Teran Flats and Weean Flats.

## 12. Beach Road brickwork

5 Beach Road



The austere brickwork and plain yet distinctive Art Deco vertical decoration of No 5 Beach Road makes a unique contribution to Bondi Beach Inter-War identity.

Flats such as these were once considered a dire peril to national identity. The acclaimed war correspondent Charles Bean describing them as a threat to the ANZAC spirit. He argued the 'mushroom flats' posed a 'danger to our future citizens', implying that Australia might fail in future to produce men like those

who had just fought and perished in World War I. The sentiment suggested that true Australians were not renters and that Bondi's surge in condensed apartment living could erode the national fighting spirit.

Land subdivision advertisements extolled the virtues of Bondi, however. One auction notice from 1920 stated: *Real estate at Bondi with its splendid beach is always in demand [by] people who desire the congenial climate that Bondi offers; daily visitors number millions every year, values are always going up, the demand is greater every day – don't fail to buy a lot now and reap big profits.*

## 13. Corner of Campbell Parade and Beach Road

220 Campbell Parade / 1 Beach Road



By the late 1930s, a wall of hotels, guest houses and flats extended the length of Campbell Parade to cater for the boom in sea bathing. The nearby Hotel Bondi (built between 1915-1920) and 1 Beach Road, dating from 1925, were early additions to the accommodation options available for beach holidaymakers. No 1's original gold-letter entry signage "Berkeley Court" also welcomed residents and their guests to its sought-after private dining room. Today, Campbell Parade's buildings display a variety of architectural styles, and the largely uninterrupted Inter-War streetscape frontage forms a remarkably original, rare and significant backdrop to the world-famous Bondi Beach.

## 14. Bondi Beach Public School – Campbell Parade

Bondi Beach Public School – 85 Warners Ave



Bondi Beach Public School opened in 1923, in time for the great influx of young families seeking homes in the Inter-War period. In Waverley municipality the population increased from 36,797 in 1921 to 55,902 in 1933. The building boom of the 1920s saw property prices rise sharply: from 1923 to 1926 land values rose an average of 37 per cent.

The public school is an example of Georgian Revival architecture. It has a symmetrical design around a classical central portico, with stone Tuscan-style columns supporting the entablature above. The gable above the portico breaks up the long line of the pitched and tiled roof.

The site was acquired in 1916, yet the state government investigated other sites before eventually deciding to erect a school, originally called North Bondi Public. A new wing was added 1932. Enrolments peaked in 1937.

## 15. Bondi Pavilion

Cross road to Bondi Pavilion. Designed by Robertson and Marks (Leith C. McCredie, architect).

Builder: John Howie & Sons.



Bondi's architectural crown is the recently restored Bondi Pavilion. The building opened on 21 December 1929 with an 180,000-strong crowd keen to experience the newly completed "Playground of the Pacific". Today, the building features in a cultural landscape of national significance for its iconic status as a showcase of Australian beach lifestyle. It is historically significant as the site of many 'firsts' in surf lifesaving and as the largest beach improvement scheme carried out in the Inter-War years when surf bathing increased in popularity once bans were lifted in 1904.

The Bondi Pavilion, in the Mediterranean-Georgian Revival style, is of social and aesthetic significance as a landmark recognised internationally as a symbol of Australia's surf culture. While it has been modified, the building's relationship to the promenade and beach retains its integrity to the 1928 design.

Bondi is of high significance for its place in Australia's history of beach bathing, surfing, and surf lifesaving in the 20th century. Its catalogue of Art Deco and Inter-War architecture, too, is becoming even more highly prized for the important contribution it makes to Bondi's distinctive character and the unique backdrop it provides to the world's most famous beach.

