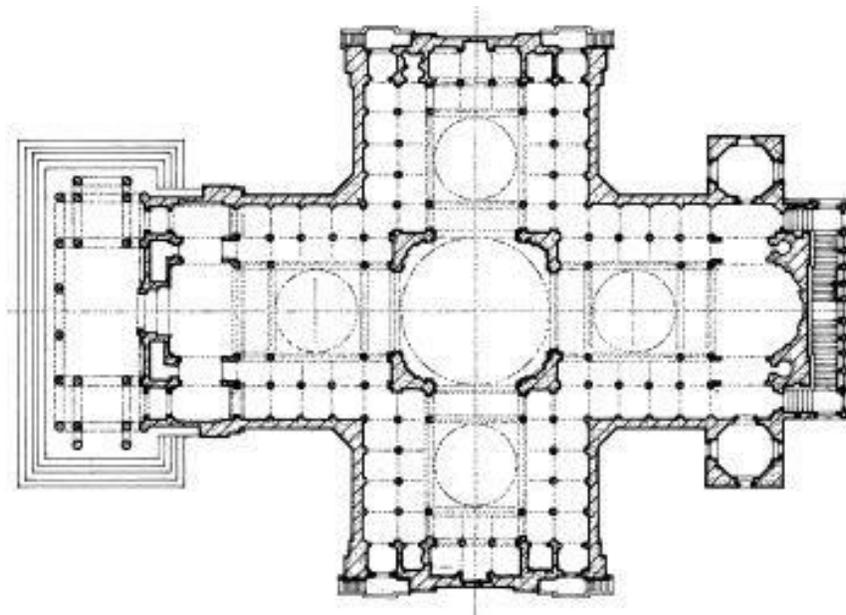
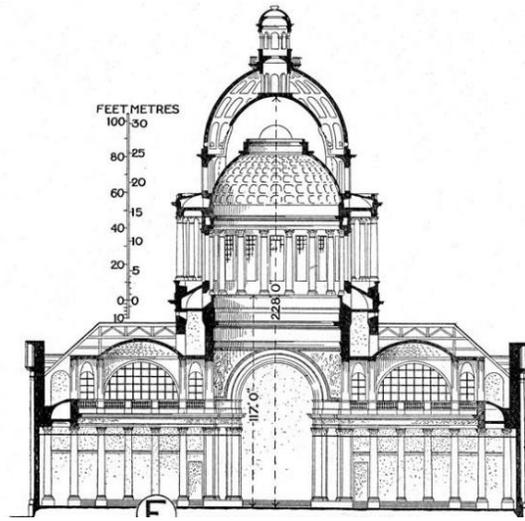


Pantheon Paris

Place de Pantheon, 75005

Metro: Cardinal Lemoine

10 AM – 6 PM (Every Day) 7 €



A grandiose building. Soufflot's ambition was to **outdo the churches of St. Peter's in Rome and St. Paul's in London**. The monumental peristyle was **inspired by the Pantheon commissioned by Agrippa in Rome**.

A decorative program - From 1874 onwards, the sanctuary was decorated with paintings on canvas **marouflé** illustrating the life of Saint Geneviève and the story of the beginnings of both Christianity and the monarchy in France.

The crypt. Tombs of the eminent personalities who shaped France's national identity. A permanent exhibition gives details about the lives and works of those who are buried here, from Voltaire and Rousseau to Alexandre Dumas.

Foucault's pendulum. First installed in 1851 and removed then reinstalled in 1995, demonstrates the Earth's rotation.

The Pantheon Paris (**Latin Pantheon, from Greek Pantheon, meaning "Every god"**) is a building in the Latin Quarter. It was originally built as a **church dedicated to St. Genevieve**, but after many changes now combines liturgical functions with its role as a famous burial place. It is an **early example of Neoclassicism**, with a facade modelled after the Pantheon in Rome surmounted by a dome that **owes some of its character to Bramante's "Tempietto"**.

Located in the 5th arrondissement on the Montagne Sainte-Geneviève, the Panthéon looks out over all of Paris. Its architect, Jacques-Germain Soufflot, had the intention of **combining the lightness and brightness of the gothic cathedral with classical principles**. Soufflot died before his work was achieved, and his plans were not entirely followed. The transparency he had planned for his masterpiece was not attained. Nevertheless, it is one of the most important architectural achievements of its time and the **first great neoclassical monument**.

The reason the it was built was to replace the damaged Sainte-Genevieve church under the orders of Louis XV who was putting this monument up as a gratitude to God after his health had recovered. Soufflot was chosen for accomplishing the task. Because of financial problems, Soufflot could not finish the building during his life; he died before seeing it completed and his pupil who finished it, **did not exactly have the same ideas of his master** and made some changes. However there is little doubt that this building is one of the greatest neoclassical monuments and a true masterpiece.

Shortly after the Pantheon was built came the French Revolution. It was then when the Revolutionist government **changed the church into a mausoleum**, a place to bury exceptional Frenchmen who had sacrificed their lives for their country or who had done something great for France. The Pantheon **flipped back and forth to a church over the years** but eventually assumed its lasting role as a burial place for martyrs and brilliant French citizens for good.

The Pantheon has a crypt which is in the **subterranean chamber** which is the final resting place for many well known (and some historically famous) French writers, poets and scientists. These important people include

Voltaire -Rousseau Victor Hugo Marat Emile Zola Jean Moulin Soufflot Louis Braille Marie Curie

History Interior Dome of the Panthéon

Pediment of the Panthéon with the motto: Aux grands hommes, la patrie reconnaissante ("To the great men, the grateful homeland").

King Louis XV vowed in 1744 that if he recovered from his illness he would replace the ruined church of the Abbey of St Genevieve with an edifice worthy of the patron saint of Paris.

The overall design was that of a **Greek cross with a massive portico of Corinthian columns**. Its ambitious lines called for a vast building 110 metres long by 84 metres wide, and 83 metres high. No less vast was its crypt. Soufflot's masterstroke is concealed from casual view: **the triple dome**, each shell fitted within the others, permits a view through the **oculus** of the **coffered inner dome** of the second dome, frescoed with The Apotheosis of Saint Genevieve. The outermost dome is built of stone bound together with iron cramps and covered with lead sheathing, rather than of carpentry construction, as was the common French practice of the period. **Concealed flying buttresses** pass the massive weight of the triple construction outwards to the portico columns.

The re-modelled Abbey of St. Genevieve was finally completed in 1790, coinciding with the early stages of the French Revolution. In 1791, the National Constituent Assembly, ordered that the building be changed from a church to a mausoleum for the interment of great Frenchmen.

In 1851, physicist **Léon Foucault** demonstrated the rotation of the earth by constructing a 220 ft Foucault pendulum beneath the central dome. The original sphere from the pendulum was temporarily displayed at the Panthéon in the 1990s during renovations at the Musée des Arts et Métiers. The original pendulum was later returned to the **Musée des Arts et Métiers**, and a copy is now displayed at the Panthéon.

From 1906 to 1922 the Panthéon was the site of Auguste Rodin's famous sculpture The Thinker.

The Crypt - Burial place

The inscription above the entrance reads AUX GRANDS HOMMES LA PATRIE RECONNAISSANTE ("To great men, the grateful homeland"). By burying its great people in the Panthéon, the nation acknowledges the honour it received from them. As such, interment here is severely restricted and is allowed only by a parliamentary act for "National Heroes". Similar high honours exist in Les Invalides for historical military leaders such as Napoléon, Turenne and Vauban.

In 2007, President Jacques Chirac unveiled a plaque to more than **2,600 people recognised as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem** in Israel for saving the lives of Jews who would otherwise have been deported to concentration camps. The tribute in the Panthéon underlines the fact that around three quarters of the country's Jewish population survived the war, often thanks to ordinary people who provided help at the risk of their own life.