

## DZ Bank - Berlin, Germany

Ben Claflin

The DZ Bank building adapts to meet the needs of its surrounding site and the unique population of Berlin. Despite strict regulations for buildings in the heart of Berlin's historical district, *Gehry Partners* designed a mixed-use building that respects Berlin's complex past while subtly showcasing the future's engineering powers.

The design process began in 1995 and resulted in a 20,000-square-meter building with commercial and residential components completed in 2001. On the exterior, the DZ Bank building is encircled by the Pariser Platz and Brandenburg Gate to the North and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe to the South. *Gehry Partners* successfully designed the exteriors to blend into the historical setting, using buff-colored limestone to match the Brandenburg Gate and repetitive windows to match the surrounding buildings' designs.

In order to allow Berlin's historical sites to shine, DZ Bank's complex organic forms and glass atriums are hidden within the building. As the lighting consultant, *AG Licht* harnessed the natural light from the twenty-nine-meter-long main atrium to bring natural light into the space and the surrounding offices. Within the grand atrium is a conference room made of complex, organic forms commonly seen in Frank Gehry's work. The glass atrium is supported by a complex system of cross members, consisting of rods with a 10 cm diameter spaced 80 cm apart from one another. The building also utilizes various materials, including titanium in the main organic form, wood in the 100-person conference room, steel, and limestone.

The main atrium also separates the residential and commercial components of the building. On the southern side, there is an additional atrium and thirty-nine apartments. The atrium, once again, brings natural light to each unique apartment space. In order to house families of various backgrounds, the apartments range from studios to multi-floor penthouses.

Overall, DZ Bank successfully complements its surrounding site while providing its inhabitants with unique spaces that harness natural lighting.

## Bibliography

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