

These Are the World's Most Jaw-dropping Skyscraper Observation Decks



Phil Velasquez/Chicago Tribune/Getty Images

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Rising triumphantly out of the ground, skyscrapers are an important part of a city's identity. Physically, they give people a point of reference, usually identifying the center of a city or its downtown area. They also give people a sense of pride, as skyscrapers represent their community to the world. They're symbols of power, wealth, commerce, and even freedom or hope.

The best part of a skyscraper is getting to the top. Many of the world's tallest buildings have incredible observation decks that let visitors view a city from an entirely new perspective. "It used to be that just having a space up high was enough," [William Baker](#), the structural engineer behind the Burj Khalifa, told *Travel + Leisure*. But observation decks are now more than just a window to the world, they're full-on experiences with adrenaline producing ledges, bespoke cocktails, yoga, and Instagram-worthy photo ops.

To be clear, not every structure with an observation deck is a skyscraper. "The Council on Tall Buildings says it has to be 50% occupied to be on the building list instead of the tower list," Baker said. Meaning that Toronto's CN Tower, which has an observation deck, isn't considered a skyscraper because there isn't anything in the middle

To celebrate [Skyscraper Day](#), which happens annually on September 3, we've gathered the most insane skyscraper observation decks for you to experience right now, from glass slides jutting out over Los Angeles to wine bars more than 1,000 feet up. And if you've already checked these off your list, don't fret, new ones are currently in the works. According to Baker, "the future of skyscrapers is very robust."



Phil Velazquez/Chicago Tribune/Getty Images

John Hancock Building: Chicago, Illinois, U.S.

An "amazingly wonderful building" that provided much inspiration to engineer William Baker, the John Hancock Building is an iconic part of the Chicago skyline. The observation deck offers one of the most exciting ways to view the city: Tilt, a glass panel that literally tilts out and over the Magnificent Mile at a staggering 1,030 feet up. Baker, who has done [the Tilt experience](#) himself sums it up best, "It takes your breath away."