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1. Notre-Dame Cathedral

Notre-Dame de Paris (pronounced "NOH-truh DAHM duh pah-REE") is a masterpiece of French Gothic architecture built between 1163 and 1345 on the Île de la Cité in Paris, featuring 69-meter twin towers, magnificent stained glass rose windows, and famous gargoyles. It witnessed Napoleon's self-coronation in 1804 and gained literary fame through Victor Hugo's 1831 novel "The Hunchback of Notre-Dame." On April 15, 2019, a devastating fire destroyed the spire and two-thirds of the roof, though firefighters saved the main structure and rose windows, with reconstruction underway and a target reopening of December 2024.

2. Arc de Triomphe

Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile (pronounced "ARK duh tree-OHNF duh lay-TWAL") is a 50-meter tall Neoclassical monument at Place Charles de Gaulle in Paris, commissioned by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1806 and completed in 1836. The architecture features famous sculptures including "La Marseillaise," with 128 battle names and 558 generals' names inscribed on its surfaces. In 1920, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was added beneath it with an eternal flame and it stands at the center of twelve radiating avenues including the famous Champs-Élysées.

3. Eiffel Tower

La Tour Eiffel (pronounced "EYE-ful TOW-er") is the world's most-visited paid monument, standing 330 meters tall, built in 1887-1889 as the entrance arch for the 1889 World's Fair. Despite initial criticism calling it a "metal monstrosity," the 10,100-ton iron tower constructed with 18,038 metal parts and 2.5 million rivets was saved by its scientific utility for radio transmission. The tower features three levels and is maintained by 1,500 workers who repaint it every seven years, illuminated by 20,000 light bulbs that sparkle every hour after sunset, welcoming 7 million visitors annually.