



THE NEW GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

SITE ARCHITECTURE

BRIDGE PAVILION – Welcome Center & Museum Store

The centerpiece of the 75th anniversary visitor improvement projects, the new Bridge Pavilion is a 3,426-square-foot facility on the northern edge of the existing Bridge Plaza, just across from the renovated Bridge Café. For the first time, visitors to the Bridge will be welcomed at the Pavilion by National Park Service rangers and Conservancy staff, find orientation and informational services, along with the opportunity to explore interpretive exhibits and displays on the history, stories, and secrets of the famed span. High-quality commemorative and interpretive merchandise is also available for purchase.

A modular structure, designed by San Francisco-based Project Frog, the new Bridge Pavilion was delivered as a “smart building kit” ready for assembly, and constructed onsite, generating just 1/6 of the onsite waste of conventional building projects. The Pavilion is constructed from environmentally-responsible materials and operates using at least 25 percent less energy than a traditional building of the same size. Green elements include: high-performance insulating glass units incorporating suspended film technology, large windows to maximize natural light and a complete LED lighting system for artificial light, an ultra-high efficiency furnace with an economizer function, and low-flow commercial plumbing fixtures.

Clad in the Bridge’s famous International Orange color on three sides, the spectacular storefront consists entirely of sophisticated glass from floor to ceiling. Inside, the open, column-free space and high ceiling height improves acoustics, and allows for unconstrained interpretive exhibit design, provided by Macchiatto.

BRIDGE ROUND HOUSE – Tours & Photos

Completed around the same time as the iconic span, the historic art-deco Round House is located on the southeast side of the Golden Gate Bridge. The building’s large windows and unique circular wooden structure offer panoramic views of the Bridge, the City of San Francisco, and the surrounding national parklands. Originally opened as a restaurant in 1938, the Round House has had several reincarnations in its 75 years, including offices for Bridge engineers and most recently, as a gift center. It is now transformed once again, as part of the 75th anniversary project to improve the visitor experience at the Bridge.

Renovation of the 1,960-square-foot building began on June 19, 2011, and was led by the architects of EHDD, with signage design from Macchiatto and general construction by Fisher Development. The enhancements eliminated the visual clutter inside the building, installed a new round central column, and restored the original radial joist ceiling to emphasize the circularity of the structure and to draw the visitor’s attention out to the spectacular view. Wherever possible, renovations incorporated sustainable materials,

from rapidly renewable cork flooring and FSC wood casework, to energy efficient LED lighting, and increased insulation in the walls and ceiling.

As the only public indoor space with a view of the Bridge from the south, the new Round House serves as the meeting place for the new Golden Gate Bridge Tour program and home to the Golden Gate Bridge Photo Experience. Advanced “green screen” technology allows visitors to capture picture-perfect commemorative photos—including on top of the Bridge Tower—on even the foggiest of San Francisco days. Those wanting a more in-depth look into the story behind the Bridge—the workers, the challenges and dangers of construction, its connection to the surrounding parklands, and the beauty of the Bridge as an engineering marvel of the modern world—can reserve personally guided 45- and 60-minute tours that depart from the Round House. Reservations: www.goldengatebridgetour.com or (877) 349-7625.

BRIDGE CAFÉ

Significant enhancements and renovations have been made to the existing art-deco Bridge Café, located across from the Pavilion in the Bridge Plaza. Reopening May 15, 2012, a new “grab-and-go” menu features healthy, sustainable, and local food options. The menu follows the principles of *Food for the Parks*, a Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy initiative. This is in support of the National Park Service *Healthy Parks, Healthy People* program that aims to expand the availability of nutritious, local, and sustainable fresh food to national park visitors.

VISITOR INFORMATION:

<http://www.goldengatebridge75.org>

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