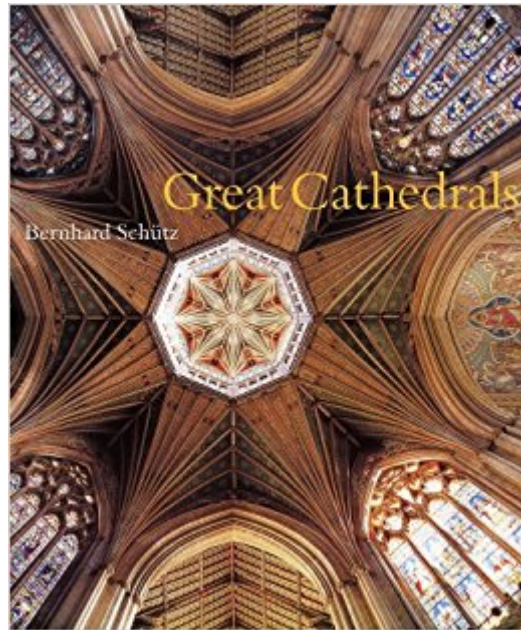




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# Great Cathedrals



## Synopsis

From Chartres to the cathedral of Florence, this volume covers the major Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals in France, England, Germany, Italy and Spain. Over 300 photographs showing the cathedrals inside and out, including close-up architectural and sculptural details and an authoritative text, combine to produce a survey of these buildings.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There are European cathedrals in almost every architectural style, including Romanesque, Baroque and Renaissance. But it is the Gothic style, perfected during the Late Middle Ages, that has come to epitomize the essence of the continent's truly great cathedrals. In this book, Schutz, an architectural historian at the University of Munich, explores the towering Gothic cathedrals of France, England, Spain, Italy and Germany, all nations of the former Holy Roman Empire. Schutz explains the complex structure of Gothic design, in which the most imposing edifices are "mere frameworks" whose soaring lines appear to belie the laws of gravity. Schutz's text is strong on architectural detail but weak on the social upheavals and theological transformations that marked the centuries he describes. However, this is a very useful art book, complemented as it is by 310 photographs and illustrations, 270 of them in full color, many of them full-page. The photographs by Albert Hirmer, Florian Monheim and Joseph Martin mix attention to detail (stained-glass windows at Strasbourg, the cloisters at Gloucester) with a fine sense of the whole. Here we see the glories of Chartres, Notre Dame and Reims cathedrals in France; Canterbury and Salisbury in England; and the Italian gems at Milan and Venice. This sumptuous book will make a lovely gift for spiritual pilgrims, art

aficionados and armchair travelers alike. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

The main attraction here is the inclusion of 270 crisp, oversized color plates, which capture Gothic structures from every angle, supplemented by historic, undated photos of cathedrals and their artworks and decorations. Schutz (emeritus, Univ. of Munich), a noted German authority on medieval and Baroque architecture, covers five to eight cathedrals each in France, England, Spain, Germany, and Italy. The text, though spare and basic, is illuminating. Churches in each country are introduced by a chapter-length essay and a map that notes locations. Sections on the cathedrals include an overview, floor plans, and magnificent plates. The illustrated glossary of cathedral terms and short bibliography are useful. The dilemma for selectors is determining whether their library needs another medieval cathedrals parade of greatest hits. Anne Prache's *Cathedrals of Europe* offers a broader and more in-depth historical survey of cathedral culture. For purely artistic and aesthetic appreciation, however, Schutz's entry merits consideration. Russell T. Clement, Northwestern Univ. Lib., Evanston, IL Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This wonderful (heavy) book is a tremendous achievement, especially for people who can't manage the time or money to go and visit these magnificent shrines in person. The photos are fantastic, the text is informative, but the real stars of the show are the cathedrals themselves, which I consider the most wonderful examples of architecture created by man. Well, maybe Ancient Greece should share the honor. Some lighter reading to understand these monuments of grace and strength: Ken Follett's *The Pillars of the Earth* and David MacAuley's *Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction*. Did you know that the "ignorant Europeans" who built these masterpieces typically set aside a hundred years to complete the project?

Seldom do you see a book with pictures that make you gasp with wonder at their glorious beauty. If you have an appreciation of sacred beauty, you will marvel, page after breathtaking page. Some of my favorite English cathedrals are featured. From these pictures I was able to enjoy many of the finer details that you cannot grasp in person, craning your neck at the magnificent vaulted ceilings. What wonder man created with the Lord's inspiration!

The book is very large and heavy, but that's a good thing because it's packed with information, maps, and lots of beautiful pictures. Very high quality.

Nice book. Pics are stunning. If cathedral pictures are what you like then you'll like this book.

beautiful-bought it for a gift-know they will enjoy. just didn't know it was so heavy-will need large coffee table.

A good overview of many of the great Cathedrals of Europe. Good history, great photo essays. Many details that you are not aware of unless you have seen them in person.

Beautiful Book! I bought this for a coffee table book. It has some amazingly gorgeous pictures.

THE BOOK IS A WONDERFUL PICTORIAL OF SOME OF THE GREAT CATHEDRALS AND WOULD BE CLASSIFIED, I WOULD IMAGINE, AS A COFFEE TABLE PIECE. MY DISAPPOINTMENT IS THAT I WOULD HAVE WISHED TO SEE MANY MORE FAMOUS CATHEDRALS OF EUROPE THAT HAVE SO MUCH HISTORY AND LESS VERBAGE ABOUT FEWER.

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