



# Online Articles

## Scottsdale's Arabian Library Wins Smart Environment Award

Borrowing books from the library is the responsible and environmentally friendly thing to do, and this new library in Scottsdale Arizona makes us want to use the library all the time. Designed by Richärd + Bauer, the Arabian Library utilizes great green building design and innovative new thinking to encourage people to lend from the library. Not only that, but the building is gorgeous, inviting, brightly lit, and a recent winner of the 2008 IIDA/Metropolis Smart Environments Award.



Each of the Scottsdale Library branches are named after horses, and the new Arabian branch was designed by Phoenix-based Richärd + Bauer. The

*Department of Information Resources Promotion*





Library is part of a new breed of libraries that focuses on engaging readers and drawing in a new generation that relies almost solely on the internet for information. Libraries, have made a comeback with the green movement, but librarians are still challenged with engaging and interesting people in taking books home. To achieve this, the Arabian Library is arranged more like a bookstore to make books attractive and eliminate any barriers to sale, or in this case borrowing. In fact, special shelving had to be designed for this new library and is now being sold to other libraries as well.

Additionally, the librarians have removed themselves from behind the traditional desk and are stationed by computer kiosks to help patrons find the information they need. Books and materials can be reserved online and picked up at a drive-through window, or much like the grocery store checkout, books can be checked out at a self-checkout stand. All of these innovations are helping to make the library more popular and accessible, in fact Scottsdale's book circulation has increased 25% within the last year.

The building's beautiful architecture also plays a big role in bringing readers to the library. Whether it's because they want to borrow a book, hang out, chat with others, have a latte, or have meetings, the gorgeous building encourages all that activity. It houses a cafe and a bookshop, a secluded teen area with lounge chairs and a door to the courtyard, and a children's area with furniture built to their scale.

The building itself is shooting for LEED Silver rating and is constructed primarily from local materials. The structure's pre-rusted steel, granite, and recycled cotton insulation all came from nearby towns in Arizona. There are charging stations for alternative-fueled vehicles and the parking lot itself is reused from a previous building. Ceilings are made from recycled perforated MDF board and the hanging lighting fixtures can be moved as needed, giving the sense that the library is a big living room where Herman Miller chairs provide comfortable seating. Indoor air quality is also carefully considered and the building utilizes low VOC paints, and a HVAC system that circulates air in a underfloor system.





**Richärd + Bauer**'s library was inspired by the beautiful slot canyons of Arizona, which are suffused with light streaming down from above. Full length windows draw in light from the interior courtyard and views of the surrounding mountains are carefully framed to block views of busy road on the west side of the building. Meanwhile the library is part of a larger community campus, compromising of an aquatic center and two schools. Anyone have any good books you'd like to recommend?



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