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CSP

Ring of Fire Aquarium Osaka, Japan



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The Osaka Aquarium, known in Japan as the Kaiyukan, was designed by the principals of CSP to immerse visitors in the Pacific Ocean. The design responsibilities included programming, site planning, architecture, exhibit design, interior design, and graphic design. The Aquarium was conceived as an expression of the Ring of Fire and a corresponding Ring of Life, the diversity of marine habitats and animals found around the Pacific Rim. A large tank in the center of the building represents the open ocean, and eight surrounding habitats and smaller tanks represent life found around the Ring of Fire. The visitor experience is a multi-layered linear path of travel from above the surface to the ocean depths, following a labyrinth of continuous immersion between walls of acrylic. The design team was also responsible for the design of the adjacent Tempozan Marketplace, a retail complex including many restaurants and specialty shops, plus plaza and parking under. The design work was done in collaboration with Environmental Design Research, a division of the builder, Takenaka.