

The Fascinating Story of the Eiffel Tower: From Barcelona to Paris



The **Eiffel Tower**, an undeniable symbol of Paris, is today one of the most famous and visited landmarks in the world. But did you know that this iconic emblem of France was originally intended for the city of Barcelona? However, the inhabitants of the Catalan capital found it too ugly, which led Gustave Eiffel to propose his project to Paris. Although criticized by the French at its inception, the Eiffel Tower has become an essential icon of architecture and the Parisian urban landscape.

The history of the Eiffel Tower dates back to the late 19th century, a time when world exhibitions were very much in vogue. The French government planned to host the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris to celebrate the centenary of the French Revolution. On this occasion, a competition was launched for the construction of a monumental structure that would mark the entrance of the exhibition.

The original project of the Eiffel Tower was designed by Maurice Koechlin and Émile Nouguier, two engineers from

Gustave Eiffel's company. However, this project was not initially intended for Paris. Indeed, the designers had initially proposed their idea to the city of Barcelona, Spain. Unfortunately, the people of Barcelona rejected the proposal, considering it too ugly and unsuitable for their city.

Faced with this refusal, Gustave Eiffel decided to present the project to Paris. Although the French government expressed some reservations, the project was eventually accepted, mainly due to its potential use as a transmission tower for telegraph communications.

The construction of the Eiffel Tower began in 1887 and required the efforts of over 300 workers for two years. The monument was erected using innovative construction techniques for the time, including the use of riveted iron beams. This bold metal structure, rising to a height of 330 meters, was an unprecedented technical feat.

Yet, despite its architectural boldness and impressive height, the Eiffel Tower was met with some hostility from the Parisians of the time. Many art critics and intellectuals referred to the tower as a "monstrosity" and even signed a petition calling for its demolition. Some felt that the metal structure was unaesthetic and marred the traditional Parisian landscape.

However, over time, public opinion began to change. The Eiffel Tower quickly became a major tourist attraction, attracting millions of visitors each year.

Sources

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