

History Of Paris France Can Be Traced Back To 250 BC

Contributed by Martyn Davis
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France is a country that is steeped in history and wherever you turn, you can see the magnificent buildings and monuments that have been constructed throughout the centuries.

{bot_wrgoogle}The first signs of civilization around the Paris region of France date back to around the fourth millennium BC where dug out canoes have been found. And even as long ago at the time of 250 BC there was a fishing village along the River Seine in what we now know as Paris and because of the strategic position of the area for controlling river shipping, it was always under a different rule. The Romans took over after the revolt of 52 BC.

After Attila the Hun invaded the region in 451, it was thought that Paris was to be attacked, but according to legend Sainte Genevieve, who is still the patron saint of Paris today, saved it.

Clovis I commissioned the first cathedral and the first abbey, which was dedicated to Sainte Genevieve and he was buried in Paris on his death in 511, alongside St Genevieve.

It became under the rule of the Franks, but the city was neglected by the Empire and suffered grievously from Viking raiders who repeatedly sailed upriver to attack it. In 885 the city was faced with a massive Viking invasion force, believed to have numbered 700 ships and 30,000 men!

The Grand-nephew of Count Odo, was elected King of France in 987 and he again made Paris his capital and founded the Capetian dynasty, which still exists today.

It is as early as the 12th century that the distinctive character of the Paris districts started emerging and the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris was built in 1163 in the Ile de la Cite area of Paris, which was the centre of government and religious life.

Philippe Auguste became the king in 1180, and under his rule there were a number of major building works, which were carried out in Paris. He built a new city wall and began the construction of the Palais du Louvre, as well as paving streets and establishing a covered market at Les Halles.

Edward III of England claimed the French throne by virtue of his decent, but the French barons rejected this, and hence the Hundred Years war began and the history of Paris in the 14th century was dictated by outbreaks of plague,

political violence and uprisings.

The English captured Paris in 1420, but Henry V of England died at the Chateau de Vincennes, just outside Paris city in 1422 and despite the assistance of Joan of Arc, Charles VII of France tried but failed to retake the city in 1429.

Of any Valois monarch, Francois I probably had the greatest impact on Paris, transforming the Louvre and establishing a glittering court including people such as Leonardo da Vinci.

King Henri IV made Paris his place of residence and he undertook a number of major public works in the city. This included construction of the Pont Neuf, Saint-Louis Hospital, Place des Vosges and Place Dauphine. He also made extensions to the Louvre.

Paris became the intellectual and cultural capital of the Western world during the latter half of the 18th century, as it became a centre of the enlightenment and new thinking, which was encouraged by the state, with King Louis's mistress, Madame de Pompadour, supporting the city's intellectuals and prompting the king to construct striking new monuments.

Paris became the capital of an empire and a great military power and in a ceremony held in the Notre-Dame Cathedral in May 1804, Napoleon crowned himself Emperor.

Russian and Austrian armies invaded France in 1814 and on 31 March 1814, Paris fell to the Russians, which was the first time in around 400 years that the city had been conquered by a foreign power.

Paris was again retaken back by the French and this city continued to grow and expand with more famous monuments being built and just with this very brief history focusing on Paris, the History of France is fascinating and there are numerous sites that you can still marvel at the architecture from years gone by.

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