# The quiet streets of China’s Paris replica: inside Tianducheng’s ghost city



About 40 minutes from Hangzhou in eastern China lies Tianducheng, a real estate development that sought to replicate the charm of Paris but ultimately became known as a "ghost city" due to its struggle to attract residents. Initiated in 2007, the project aimed to create a unique and luxurious living space inspired by the French capital, featuring architectural elements such as a 354-foot replica of the Eiffel Tower, wide boulevards styled after Parisian streets, ornate fountains, and classical buildings.

Originally designed to house more than 10,000 residents, Tianducheng failed to reach this target for many years, with occupancy numbers reportedly as low as 2,000 at one point. Although the population had increased to approximately 30,000 by 2017, many parts of the city still retain an abandoned atmosphere. The local press and travellers alike have noted the eerie quietness of the area compared to the bustling streets of Paris it was modelled after.

French content creator Thomas Brag, together with his co-hosts Matt Dajer and Derin Emre from the YouTube channel Yes Theory, recently visited Tianducheng to verify reports of a deserted Paris clone. They found that while there are residents living there, the streets remained unusually empty. During their exploration, Derin remarked, "It’s weird. It feels like something’s missing," particularly noting the eerie presence of the replica Eiffel Tower without the typical crowds.

Despite this ghostly atmosphere, the team encountered welcoming locals. They shared meals, engaged in conversation, and even danced with people in the park situated beneath the tower replica, revealing a sense of community amongst the small population that calls Tianducheng home.

The project's challenges have been linked in part to its location, which made selling homes difficult. While intended as a luxurious and distinctive destination, Tianducheng’s distance from more established urban centres may have contributed to its slow growth and partially deserted streets.

The Express is reporting on this unusual example of architectural imitation and urban development, highlighting both the ambitious vision behind Tianducheng and the realities faced in building a new city modelled so closely on a foreign landmark.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tianducheng> - This Wikipedia article provides background information on Tianducheng, including its initiation in 2007 and its design to accommodate over 10,000 residents with a Parisian theme, featuring a replica Eiffel Tower. It also discusses the initial low occupancy and the growth in population over time.
2. <https://www.nomadasaurus.com/tianducheng-chinas-strange-city-paris/> - This article from Nomadasaurus details Tianducheng's failure to attract a large population, leading to a 'ghost city' reputation. It highlights the Paris-inspired architecture and contrasts it with the reality of low occupancy and unoccupied buildings.
3. <https://www.re-thinkingthefuture.com/case-studies/a5910-lost-in-time-tianducheng-china/> - Rethinking The Future describes Tianducheng as a failed attempt at creating a Parisian-style city in China, focusing on its struggles with low occupancy and an eerie atmosphere despite its ambitious architectural design.
4. <https://www.openculture.com/2023/12/a-visit-to-tianducheng-chinas-eerily-empty-1-billion-copy-of-paris.html> - This article from Open Culture explores Tianducheng's surreal environment and its reputation as a 'ghost town,' emphasizing the contrast between its intended luxury status and its actual abandoned feel.
5. <https://www.islands.com/1839143/china-replica-surreal-city-cities-paris-london-wyoming-jackson-hole-fake/> - Islands highlights Tianducheng as one of China's surreal cities, replicating famous international cities like Paris. It provides travel information and notes the city's location near Hangzhou.
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Window_of_the_World> - This Wikipedia entry is about Window of the World in Shenzhen, which also features replicas of famous landmarks. It contextualizes China's practice of building such attractions, relevant to Tianducheng's own replication efforts.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/2046454/terrifying-city-post-apocalyptic-paris-eiffel-tower-china> - Please view link - unable to able to access data