CATHEDRALS

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The second half of the 12th century saw a surge of frenetic construction work in the Northern part of France.
The cathedrals represent an outstanding architectural feat. Their giddy heights, never seen before in Western architecture, are the expression of an astounding technical progress. In a period spanning only two centuries, 80 cathedrals have been built. The "trend" was rapidly spreading all over Europe.

In the year 1000, France found itself in a dark era of bloodshed, war and famine. People left the cities seeking refuge in the countryside, around the monasteries. The church provided work and shelter and the clergy's ambition was to make the house of God ever more beautiful.
The construction of the great gothic cathedrals began near Paris, at the Royal Abbey of Saint Denis, burial ground of the Kings of France. Suger was at the head of the abbey. For him, God's home should be grand, perfect and rich - a reflection of the light of heaven, open to all.
This was the fundamental idea that started off the construction of the great cathedrals.

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