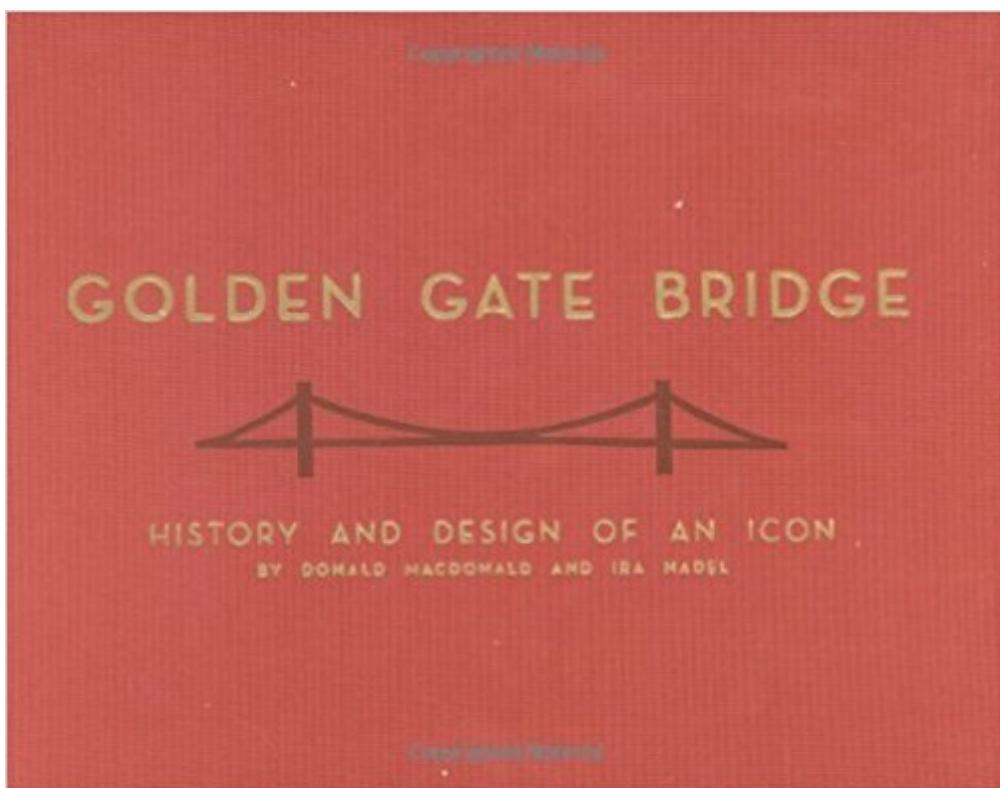


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# Golden Gate Bridge: History And Design Of An Icon



## **Synopsis**

Nine million people visit the Golden Gate Bridge each year, yet how many know why it's painted that stunning shade of "international orange"? Or that ancient Mayan and Art Deco buildings influenced the design? Current bridge architect Donald MacDonald answers these questions and others in a friendly, informative look at the bridge's engineering and 70-year history. This accessible account is accompanied by 70 of MacDonald's own charming color illustrations, making it easy to understand how the bridge was designed and constructed. A fascinating study for those interested in architecture, design, or anyone with a soft spot for San Francisco, Golden Gate Bridge is a fitting tribute to this timeless icon.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Donald MacDonald is the first architect to work on the Golden Gate Bridge since its completion. He lives in San Francisco. Ira Nadel has written numerous books, including biographies of Leonard Cohen and Ezra Pound. He lives in Vancouver, B.C.

This is a nice gift book; it has a nice cover and heavy paper that makes it such a pleasure to read. A nice addition to a coffee table.

Very Cool i love it !

I purchased it was a gift and my fiancee really enjoys reading it. So it's interesting read and it nice table book

Fascinating and informative, except for occasional failure to define terms for the nonprofessional reader. Also, hand written captions are EXTREMELY difficult to read, and badly placed illustration numbers are a constant nuisance.

excellent book...

good

It's quite cheeky of architect Donald MacDonald not to include a single photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge in his little 128-page book about what is considered one of the modern wonders of the world. Instead, he provides seventy of his own color illustrations to help him and co-writer Ira Nadel tell the history of one of the most beautiful examples of bridge engineering, both in terms of structural design and aesthetic appeal. How the Golden Gate Bridge manages to maintain its iconic status - attracting nine million visitors annually and 1.8 billion vehicles since its opening - is due to what the co-authors describe simply as "geometry". Six brief chapters cover its genesis from the City Beautiful movement showcased at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition through a diverse range of design scenarios through the treacherous construction in 1933-37 and then finally to its enduring survival through the 21st century. I was surprised to discover the pervasive Mayan influences in the structural engineering and how the ultimately Art Deco-inspired design really served to showcase the simplified detail behind its impressive continuity and monumental verticality. Although one would have expected the use of gold given its name, the bridge's arresting shade of "international orange" was the result of extensive debate. MacDonald uses the creative latitude of his illustrations to show what colors and patterns were seriously considered, including some truly ugly striped patterns meant to allow the military greater visibility during heavy fog conditions. Even the height of the towers was a source of controversy as original designs had them rise to nearly 1,000 feet, or the equal of the Eiffel Tower, versus the final 746 feet. The turbulence of the weather conditions was a key consideration, and as it turns out, the bridge's elastic suspension has been successful in responding to gale-force winds. Particularly interesting is the last chapter on the bridge's current state wherein efforts are focused on earthquake retro-fitting and suicide prevention barriers. MacDonald should know since his firm has been instrumental in the redesign of

the toll plaza, the seismic retrofit and the various proposals for a suicide deterrence barrier. This is not the most comprehensive look at the Golden Gate Bridge, but I find MacDonald and Nadel's insights never less than interesting.

I met author Donald MacDonald when he presented his commissioned design for a bike/pedestrian path on San Francisco's "other" bridge (the Bay Bridge). I came away convinced that no one has studied or seen the landmark Golden Gate bridge more closely. I'd previously helped another architect photo-document the GG Bridge, as a proposed model for the Bay Bridge bike/ped path. We noticed tiny details that help make this bridge so graceful. E.g., every post along its guardrails echoes the shape of the suspension towers. Donald's Bay Bridge design was superb, and showed that he'd studied the GG Bridge far more carefully. This book shares the history and details he uncovered. Donald has an unusual feel for what creates a comfortable, welcoming structure. The book's compact size, and hand illustrations, give it a correspondingly warm vibe. It's great to page through with kids, or with your favorite grownup travel companion, before or after you visit the bridge itself.

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