

Jean Nouvel
Torre Agbar
Barcelona, Spain



Photo ©Thomas Mayer

"This is not a tower. It is not a skyscraper in the American sense of the expression: it is a unique growth in the middle of this rather calm city. But it is not the slender, nervous verticality of the spires and bell towers that often punctuate horizontal cities. Instead, it is a fluid mass that has perforated the ground – a geyser under a permanent calculated pressure.

The surface of this construction evokes the water: smooth and continuous, but also vibrating and transparent because it manifests itself in coloured depths - uncertain, luminous and nuanced. This architecture comes from the earth but does not have the weight of stone. It could even be the faraway echo of old formal Catalan obsessions, carried by a mysterious wind from the coast of Montserrat.

The uncertainties of matter and light make the campanile of Agbar vibrate in the skyline of Barcelona: a faraway mirage day and night; a precise marker to the entry of the new diagonale that starts at Plaça de las Glorias. This singular object becomes a new symbol for an international city."

Jean Nouvel

The building houses the new headquarters for Aguas de Barcelona (Agbar), the municipal water company.

The reinforced-concrete structure, crowned by a glass and steel dome, has a multi-colored facade of aluminum panels, behind glass louvers, in 25 different colors.



Photo ©Thomas Mayer



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There are 4,400 windows and 56,619 transparent and translucent glass plates. The louvres are tilted at different angles calculated to deflect the direct sun light.



Photo ©Thomas Mayer



Photo ©Thomas Mayer

Elliptical in plan the 31 floors are without internal columns, the perimetric structure and the central concrete core, containing the services and emergency stairwells, are the important elements of the building. Six lift shafts rise up inside the outer walls.



Photo ©Thomas Mayer

4,500 yellow, blue, pink and red lights, placed over the facade, illuminate the tower at night.



Photo ©Thomas Mayer

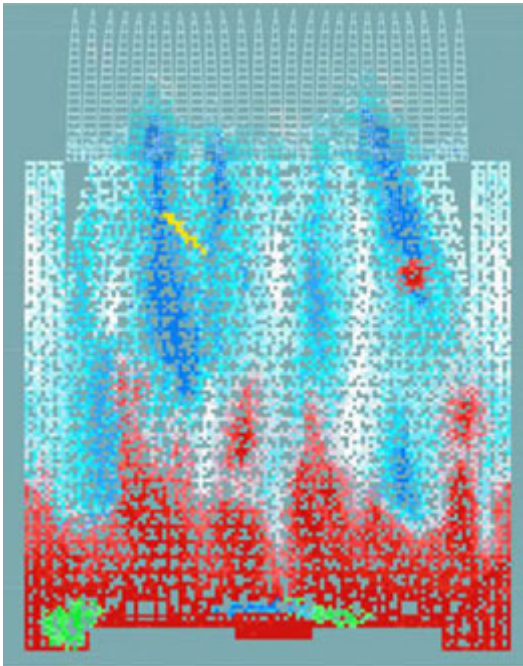
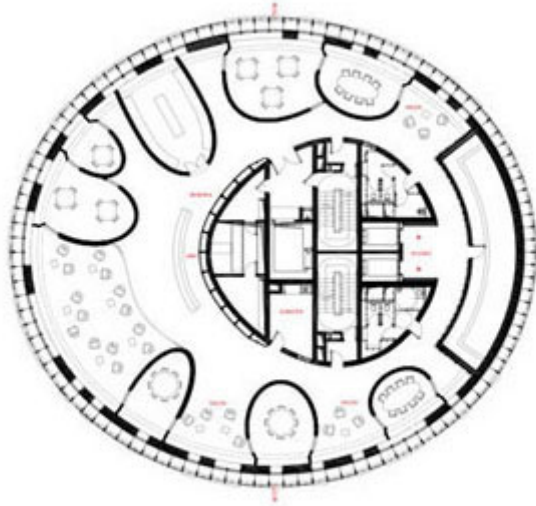
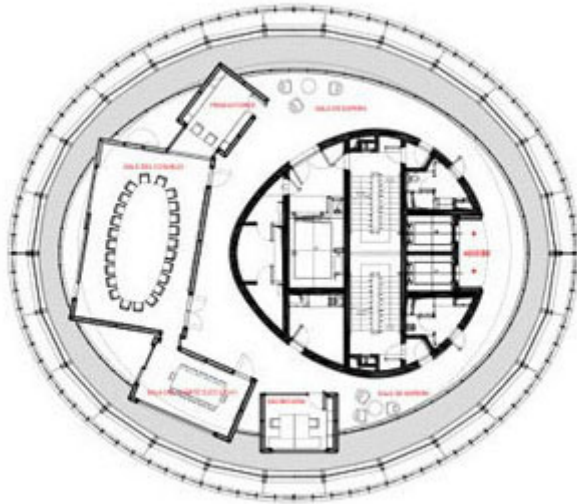


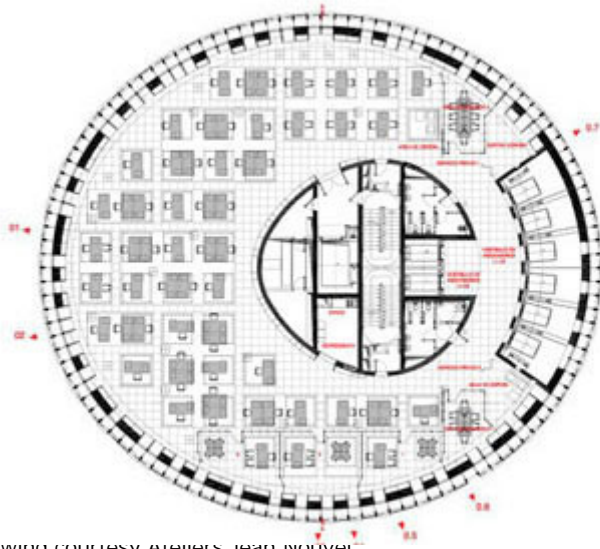
Image courtesy Ateliers Jean Nouvel



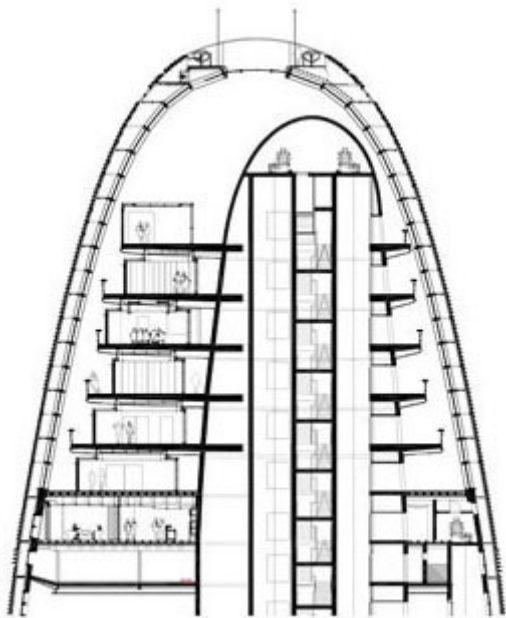
Drawing courtesy Ateliers Jean Nouvel
Plan 25th Floor



Drawing courtesy Ateliers Jean Nouvel
Plan 29th Floor



Drawing courtesy Ateliers Jean Nouvel
Plan 31st Floor



Drawing courtesy Ateliers Jean Nouvel
Section

Tower height: 142 meters
Total area: 47.500 square meters
Completed: July 2005

Photographed by [Thomas Mayer](#)

Client: Aigues de Barcelona / Sociedad General de Aguas de Barcelona SA
Architect: [Ateliers Jean Nouvel](#)
Associate architects:
b720 Arquitectura
Garcia-Ventosa Arquitectura
Leopoldo Rodas Arquitecto

Project architects:
Jean Pierre Bouanha
Cristiano Benzoni

Project team:
Florence Rabiet
Alexa Plasencia
Emmanuelle Lapointe
Cristina Algas
Julie Fernandez
Francisco Martinez
Pascaline Paris
Elisabeth Farres

Contractor: Master SA Ingenieria i Arquitectura
Antoni Eixarch
Oriol Gimenez
Jesus Mendoza

Engineers:
Brufau/Obiol SA
Gepro
Acoustics:
Estudi Acustic
Higini Arau
Lighting: Yann Kersalé

[Jean Nouvel](#) arcspace features

January 2, 2006