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## Shanghai or Austin: Who's Sexier?



Associated Press

Tall buildings, big events, modernity: The characteristics of a sexy Chinese city.

Condom sales, birth rates, transmitted disease and toys: The determinants of a sexy U.S. city.

In unrelated surveys released this week, Shanghai was named China's sexiest metropolis ([in Chinese](#)) while Austin, Texas was [crowned](#) with that honor for the U.S.

The survey results provide a gimmicky glimpse into cultural psyches in the G-2 nations, where economic, philosophical and military rivalry increasingly highlights their differences, and similarities.

It's hard to draw absolute conclusions from unscientific, unconnected efforts to gauge an issue so personal. And the surveys approached the topics from different angles.

Beijing-based Horizon Research Consultancy Group said respondents to its recent China survey based their No. 1 ranking for Shanghai on the basis of some of its most visible attributes: wealth, modernity and tall structures like Oriental Pearl Television Tower, plus its iconic image.

"The interviewees taught us what's sexy about cities and their value," He Fan, manager of Horizon Research, [told the Shanghai Daily](#). Runner up Chinese cities included Hong Kong, for its star power, and Chongqing, for its beautiful women.

The so-called "lad's mag" that did the U.S. survey, Men's Health, tried to get, as it said, closer to "nookie

rates.” More data driven, its rankings considered Nielsen Co. estimates of condom sales, state records on births and financial reports from sex toy makers.

Seven of its top 15 U.S. cities were in Texas, while cold weather cities generally ranked low in that survey, with Portland, Maine last at No. 100. “One possibility is that in an area where’s it’s hotter, people need to dress lighter and that puts pressure on them to look better and keep in better shape,” Matt Marion, the deputy editor of the magazine [told Reuters](#).

One way to think about the results is, in top-down administered China, people take sexual cues by peering skyward at the big picture. In democratically run America, it’s the individual who matters.

Another possibility – just judging from television fare in the two nations – is that sex remains [a more private matter](#) in China than the U.S., at least in terms of how openly it is discussed and therefore measurable.

Or maybe, Shanghai and Austin stick out simply because Paris — not to mention Bangkok — is located neither in China nor the U.S.

The surveys are surely far from the last word on urban sexiness.

As for how Shanghai and Austin might stack up in like-for-like tests of their sex appeal, the reports offer possible clues.

Taking the Chinese standard of modern real estate as a starting point, Austin’s tallest skyscraper, [The Austonian](#), is only 42% as tall as the 492-meter [Shanghai World Financial Center](#), according to Emporis.

Using the more individualized metric for the U.S., Austin is darn proud of its University of Texas Spirit Squad (aka [cheerleaders](#)), even if there is no denying Shanghai’s androgynous Expo mascot [Haibao](#) has drawn its share of stares.

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