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The World's Tallest Cities

Joshua Zumbrun, 01.30.09, 06:00 PM EST

New York City remains No. 1, but China is catching up.



In Pictures: The World's 10 Tallest Cities

The soaring global economy of the last 20 years pushed the world's leading financial centers to enduring heights. Not their stock markets, which have collapsed, but their skylines.

All but two of the world's 20 tallest buildings (the 1,451-foot Sears Tower and the 1,250-foot Empire State Building) were built during

this long bull market, according to Emporis, a global building-information company. Today the world's tallest cities reflect that growth.

In Pictures: The World's 10 Tallest Cities

[New York City](#) still stands tallest, with 35 towers over 700 feet, more than any other city. But China is catching up. [Hong Kong](#) is No. 2 with 30 such towers, and Shanghai is No. 4 with 21 towers.

These cities have risen fast. In 1999, Shanghai completed the 1,380-foot Jin Mao Tower. It was Shanghai's first building taller than 700 feet; since then the city has built 20 more.

No city in the world, however, has developed as explosively as Dubai. As oil wealth flooded the United Arab Emirates, the emirate of Dubai on the Persian Gulf poured money into construction, much as Houston had done decades earlier.

Today, Dubai is home to the world's tallest tower. The 2,684-foot Burj Dubai was topped off in January of this year. The building is scheduled to open in the fall of 2009. It will be the world's tallest building by 1,000 feet. The second-tallest building, Taipei 101 in Taiwan, is a comparatively modest 1,671 feet.

With the rise of China and Dubai, Chicago is now No. 5. Shenzhen, the Chinese city just north of Hong Kong, is closing in.

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