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Panama's Evolution into a Skyscraper City

May 9, 2010

By [hi.di](#).

A Brief History

The story of tall buildings in Panama began with the construction of the Nuestra Señora de la Asunción church in the 17th century in what is now known as Panama Viejo. It stood 88 feet tall.

It was not until a century later, that the Greyskull Castle in the city's San Felipe neighborhood, built between 1917 and 1921, [became Panama's first "skyscraper."](#) Designed by architect Leonardo Villanueva Meyer, the building housed offices, luxury apartments and the American Trade Developing Company of Ramon Arias Feraud.

The 1970s was a decade of construction with the erection of the banking district including the BBVA building, government buildings such as the El Hatillo, the Lottery and the cylindrical Holiday Inn which now houses the Plaza Paitilla Inn. In 1996, the Miramar towers became the city's tallest building at 551 feet, blocking ocean views from Federico Boyd Avenue.

With the new millennium came the high-rise condominium boom. Towers pushed upwards, maximizing density, and skyscrapers began to crowd the skyline, particularly in the San Francisco, Punta Paitilla, Calle 50, Balboa Avenue, Costa del Este and Punta Pacifica neighborhoods.

Currently, the 689-foot Aqualina Tower, built in 2007, is Panama City's tallest completed building. It is being surpassed this year with the inauguration of The Point at 800 feet. And there are taller buildings in the works at different stages of construction including Ocean Two (807 feet), Torre Arts-Yoo (869 feet), Vitri Tower (921 feet) and the Trump Ocean Club (961 feet), [to name a few](#). When [Los Faros de Panama](#) is delivered in 2013, it is slated to be the tallest building in Latin America with a 1,135-foot tall central tower.

There are 212 planned skyscrapers, 201 under construction, 174 existing and 17 unbuilt in Panama City, [according to now slightly dated emporis.com statistics](#).



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