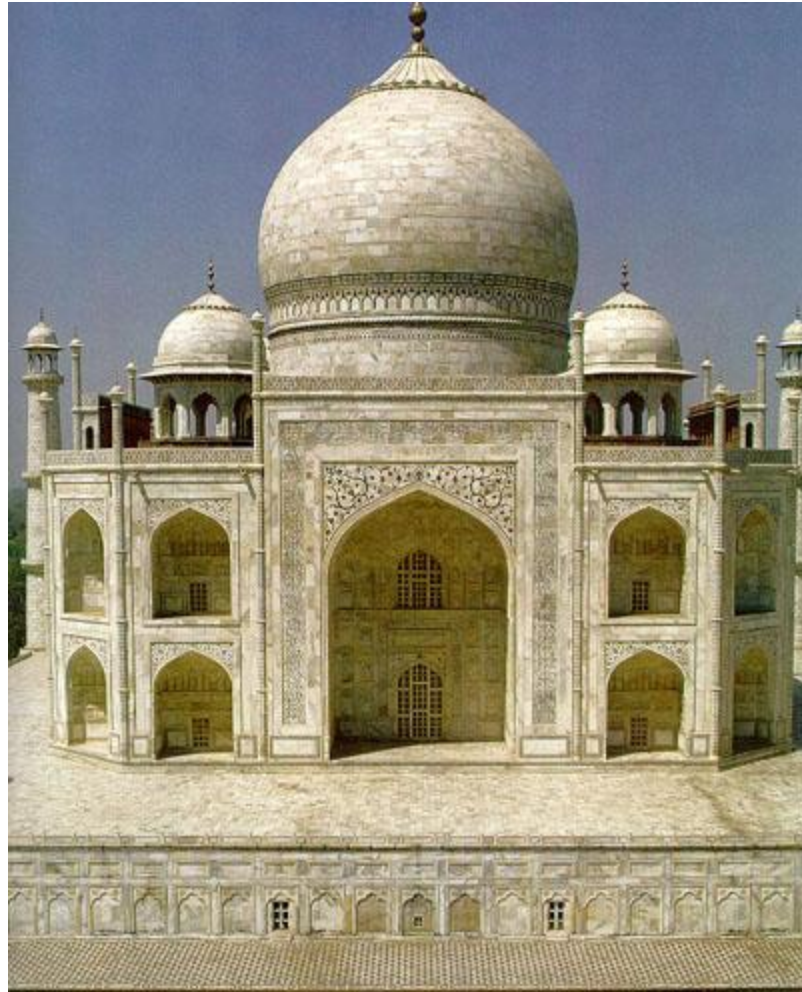


Places to go in Asia



Taj Mahal

- Agra, India
- means “Crown Palace”
- built by a Muslim, Emperor Shah Jahan (died 1666 C.E.) in the memory of his dear wife and queen Mumtaz Mahal
- a mausoleum that houses the grave of queen Mumtaz Mahal at the lower chamber; the grave of Shah Jahan was added to it later
- built entirely of white marble
- constructed over a period of twenty-two years, employing twenty thousand workers
- completed in 1648 C.E. at a cost of 32 Million Rupees







The Great Wall of China

- twenty five foot high, twenty foot wide, and over 5500 mile long wall
- made of earth and stone and was built to protect China from northern invasions
- stretches approximately 851.8 km (5,500.3 miles) from east to west of China
- mostly built during the Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644)





The misconception is wrapped up in broader myths about what is and what is not visible from space. For the record: No manmade structures on Earth can be seen with the unaided astronaut's eye from the moon. But many things -- highways, dams and even large vehicles -- are easily spotted from Earth-orbit with no optical aids.







Angkor Wat

- Cambodia
- means “City Temple”
- built by the Khmer civilization between 802 and 1220 AD
- honors the Hindu god Vishnu and is a symbolic representation of Hindu cosmology
- enormous temple symbolizing the mythic Mt. Meru









Forbidden City

- center of Beijing
- imperial palace during the Ming and Qing dynasties
- world's largest palace complex
- served for almost five centuries as the home of the emperor and his household, as well as the ceremonial and political centre of Chinese government
- now houses the Palace Museum







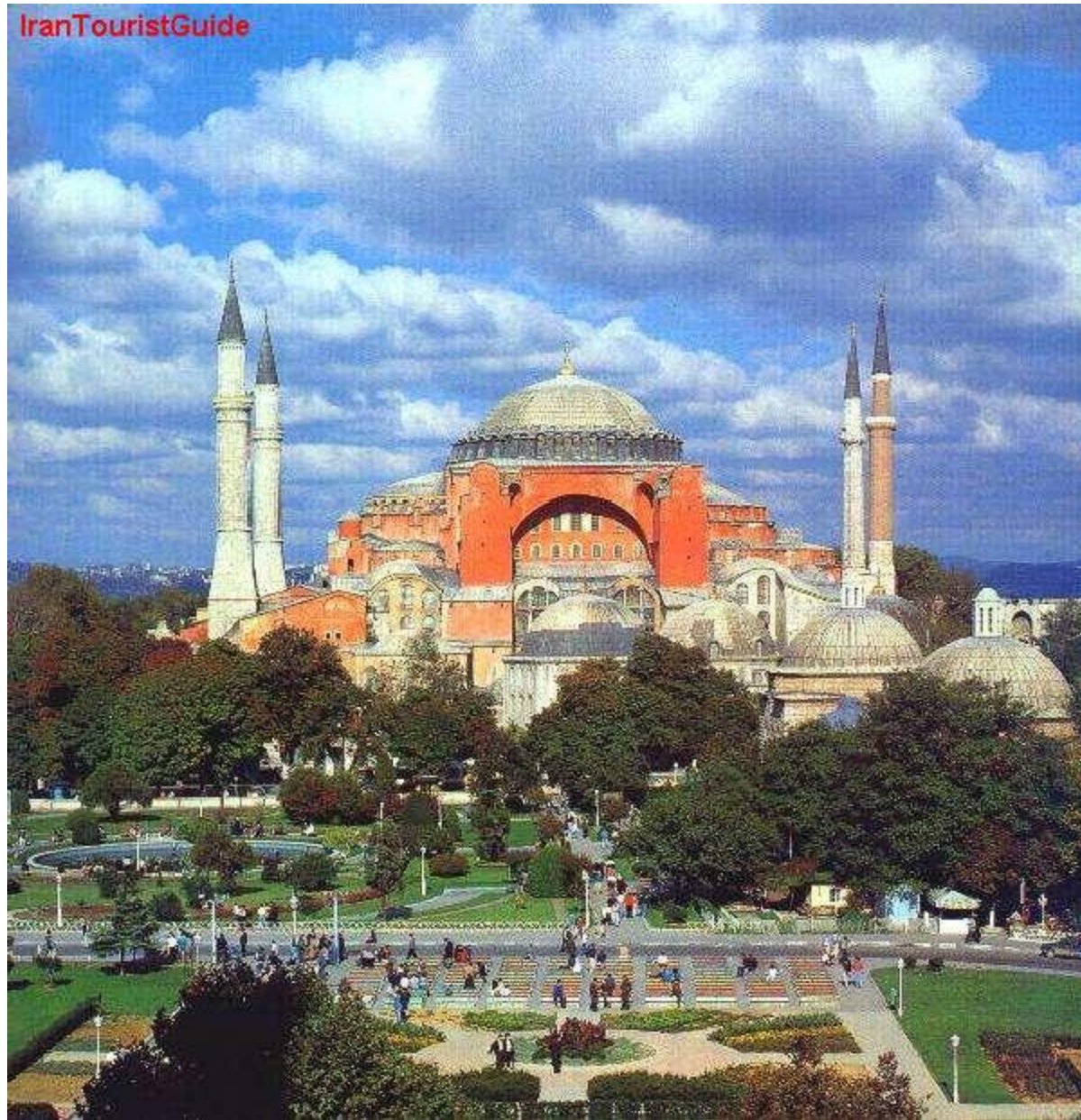


Hagia Sophia

- translation: Church of the Holy Wisdom
- Istanbul, Turkey
- former Byzantine church and former Ottoman mosque
- now a museum
- the original (of which nothing remains) was commissioned by Constantine the Great
- Hagia Sophia was rebuilt in her present form (version #3) between 532 and 537 under the personal supervision of Emperor Justinian I
- one of the greatest surviving examples of Byzantine architecture, rich with mosaics and marble pillars and coverings









Temple Mount

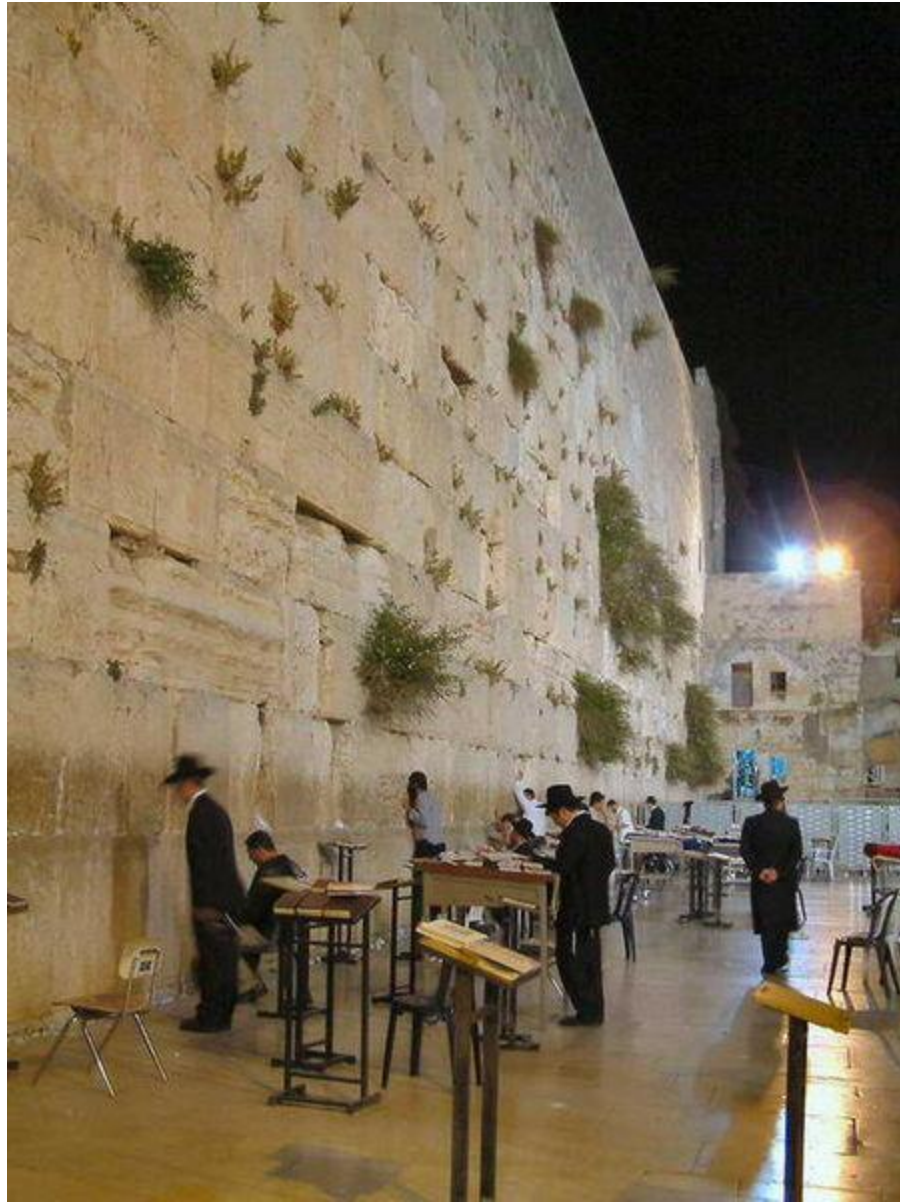
- Jerusalem
- called “Noble Sanctuary” in Arabic
- sacred to Jews, Muslims and Christians
- site of the great Temple of Jerusalem, the holiest place in Judaism
- the site of the Prophet Muhammad's journey to heaven described in the Qur'an
- Christians revere it as a place frequently visited by Jesus and some believe it will play a major role in end-time events







Temple Mount is the site of the Wailing Wall, which is referred to by Jews as simply the Western Wall.





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The Wailing Wall, Jerusalem, circa 1927

Wailing Wall

- considered by both Jews and Muslims as a significant and holy site
- today there is a fence separating men from women - Orthodox Jewish men don't believe that it is acceptable to pray right alongside women
- for the Jews, it is one of the last remaining portions of the ancient Temple of Solomon
- believed that this portion of the Temple was not destroyed because the *Shekhinah* (divine presence) continues to reside there (so praying there is like praying directly to God through the wall)
- acquired the name Wailing Wall because of the nature of the prayers said there, bemoaning the destruction of the Temple
- in addition to spoken prayers, it is also common for prayers to be written on slips of paper (*kvitlach*) which are slipped into the cracks
- for Muslims, it is not only part of the huge platform which forms the foundation of the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, but it is also believed to be the gate through which Muhammad was carried by a mythical creature known as the Buraq when he arrived at Jerusalem for his ascent to heaven (*miraj*)



Mecca

- town in Saudi Arabia
- most holy city in Islam
- revered for being the first place created on Earth as well as the place where Ibrahim, together with his son Isma'il, built the Ka'ba. The Ka'ba, the centre of Islam, is a rectangular building made of bricks. Around the Ka'ba is the great mosque, al-Haram, and around the mosque, in between the mountains, are the houses that make up Mecca.
- revered as a holy city even before the first revelations came to Muhammad
- important in two points: Centre of the compulsory pilgrimage, and a focal point for all Muslims
- every year some two million pilgrims attend the hajj

CLICK ON PLACES TO OPEN ARTICLES

SAUDI ARABIA







Petronas Towers

- Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- tallest twin buildings in the world
- Tower One is fully occupied by Petronas (Malaysian-owned oil and gas company) and a number of its subsidiaries and associate companies, while the office spaces in Tower Two are mostly available for lease to other companies (Reuters, Microsoft, Boeing)







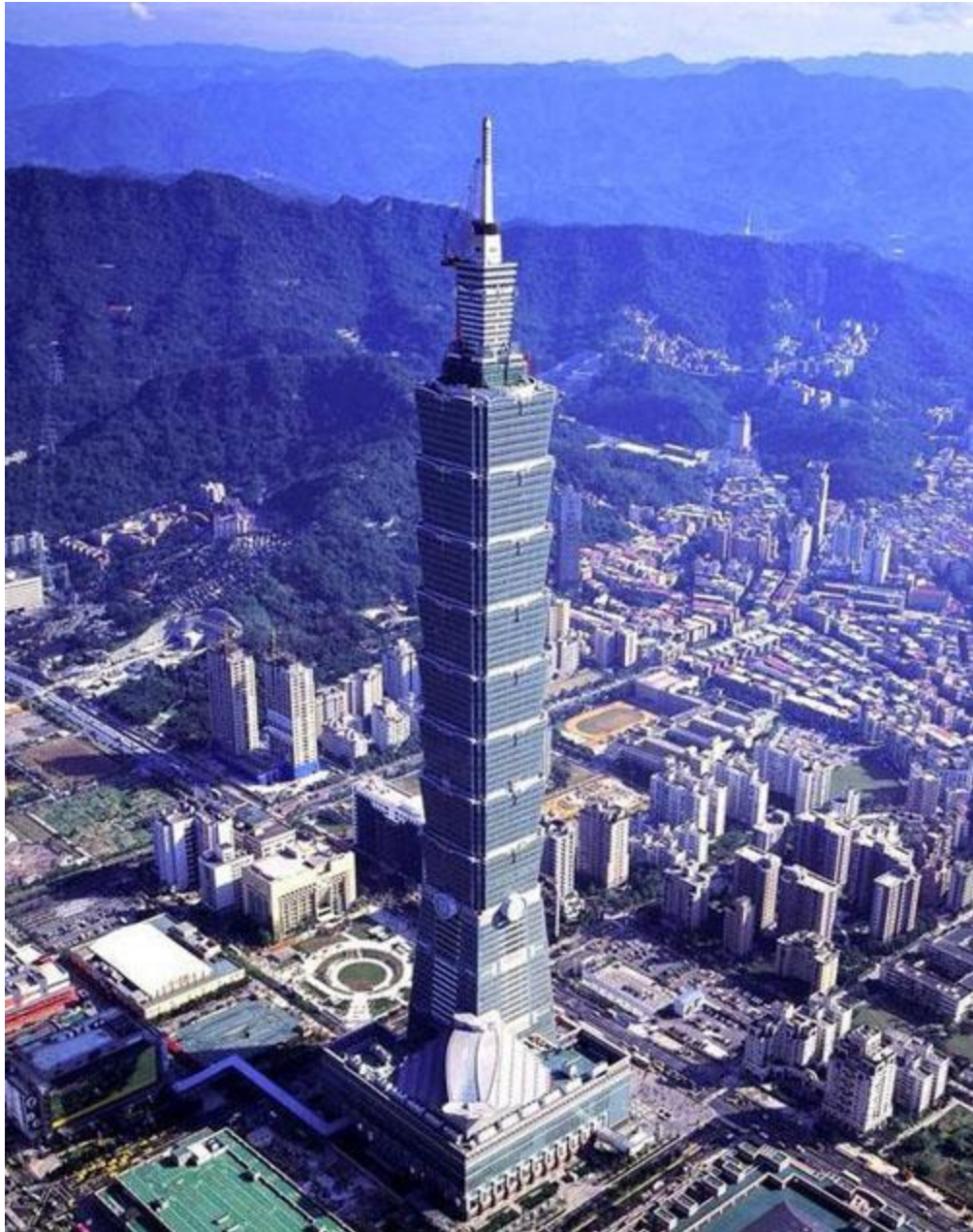


Taipei 101

- also known as the Taipei Financial Center
- located in Xinyi District, Taipei, Taiwan
- became the world's tallest skyscraper upon its completion in 2004
- designed to withstand typhoons and earthquakes







- The Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, the organization that determines the title of the "World's Tallest Building," recognizes a building only if at least fifty percent of its height is made up of floor plates containing habitable floor area. Structures that do not meet this criterion, such as the CN Tower, are defined as "towers."
- Unfinished buildings also don't officially count.

CN Tower,
Toronto,
Canada



Burj Dubai,
Dubai, UAE



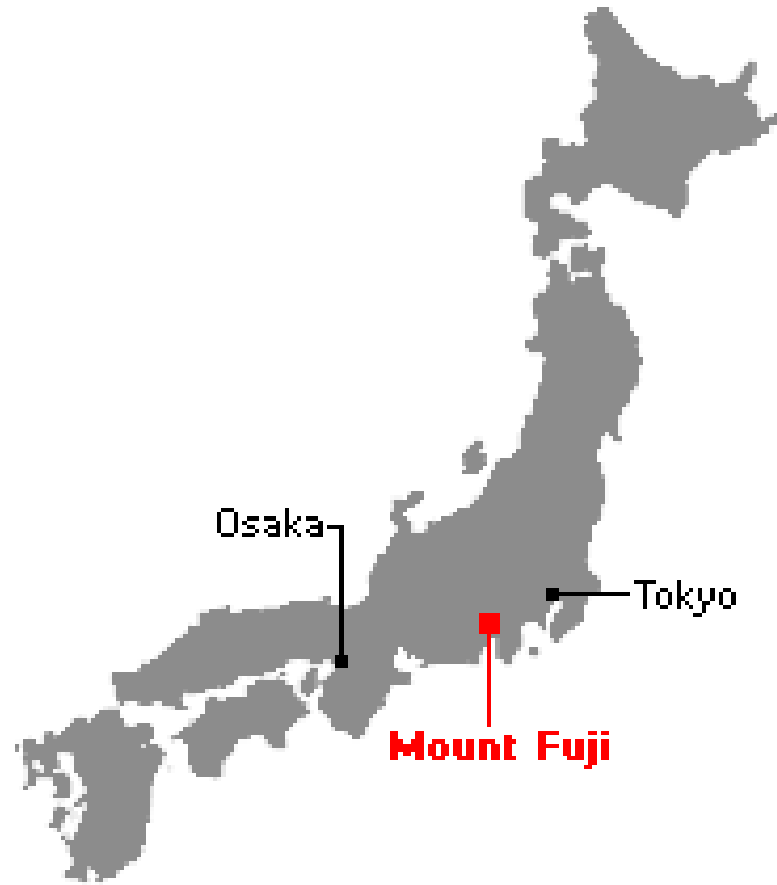
Lotte Super Tower 123,
Seoul, South Korea –
to be completed in 2014





Mount Fuji

- Japan
- 3776 meters; 2.34 miles; 12,388 feet
- has been worshipped as a sacred mountain
- for Shintoists (modern followers of the native religion), Mt. Fuji is sacred to the goddess Sengen-Sama and is an embodiment of the very spirit of nature (the Fujiko sect goes even further, believing the mountain itself is a sacred being with a soul)
- dormant volcano, which most recently erupted in 1708



Osaka

Tokyo

Mount Fuji











Mount Everest

- formed about 60 million years ago
- 29,035 feet (8850m); found to be six feet higher in 1999
- name in Nepal: Sagarmatha (goddess of the sky)
- name in Tibet: Chomolungma (mother goddess of the universe)
- named after Sir George Everest in 1865, the British surveyor-general of India
- was once called Peak 15









Mount Ararat

- dormant volcanic cone in Turkey
- 5,165 m (16,946 ft)
- believed to be the landing place of Noah's ark
- in Armenian mythology Mt. Ararat is the home of the Gods, much like Mt. Olympus is in Greek mythology



