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World's fastest elevator: In Taiwan, skyscraper's lift travels at 60 km/h

As skyscrapers get taller, elevators are getting faster, but the CN Tower elevator still goes at a leisurely 22 km/h.

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The world's fastest skyscraper elevator is in the 509-metre high Taipei 101 building in Taiwan, shown here welcoming in the New Year 2013

By: Curtis Rush Staff Reporter, Published on Wed Jan 23 2013

As skyscrapers get taller, elevators are getting faster.

The new ones travel as fast as a car on a city street at over 60 km/h.

In the race to develop the world's fastest elevator, Asian cities are winning, according to new data released by Hamburg-based [Emporis](#), which tracks building and construction data.

Only one building in North America, the 344-metre-high John Hancock Center in Chicago, broke into the top five.

Canada did not crop up in the research for the fastest elevators.

The "Ferrari" of elevators is located in Taipei, Taiwan, inside the Taipei 101 building.

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The 509-metre-high Taipei 101 zooms passengers from the fifth floor to the 89th floor in only 37 seconds, travelling at 60.6 km/h or 1,010 metres per minute.

Each of these two high-speed elevators cost more than \$2 million (U.S.).

China, Japan and Taiwan dominate the top rankings, with the UAE the only other country among the top echelon of elevators.

Eight buildings were included in the top-five list because of ties for third place.

- In second place, taking passengers at a speed of “only” 45 km/h, are the Mitsubishi-built elevators at the 296-metre-high Yokohama Landmark Tower in Yokohama, Japan.
- In third place are the elevators in the world’s tallest building, the 828-metre-high Burj Khalifa building in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Its Otis-made elevators have a maximum speed of 36 km/h.

Three other buildings’ elevators were in a tie for third:

- The Sunshine 60 Building in Tokyo (Mitsubishi); 36/km/h.
- The Shanghai World Financial Center (ThyssenKrupp); 36 km/h
- The China World Trade Center Tower III in Beijing (Schindler). 36 km/h
- In fourth place were the Otis-built John Hancock Center elevators; 33 km/h
- In fifth were Mitsubishi-made elevators at the Jin Mao Tower in Shanghai, China, 32.8 km/h.

The CN Tower says its elevators travel up to 22 km/h, taking passengers to the top in 58 seconds. Although it doesn’t own a speed record, the CN Tower does have one world elevator record: It has the world’s highest elevators with [glass floor panels](#).

“This is the first time we’ve ranked elevators speeds,” Matthew Keutenius, senior data analyst for Emporis, told the Toronto Star. “It’s one of the fascinating aspects of high rises.”

Customer satisfaction was not part of the research, but Keutenius said it’s an inescapable fact that people will want faster elevators to cut down on travel to higher floors as buildings get taller.

“It makes sense to want to travel 200 or 300 metres as rapidly as possible,” Keutenius said.

The race is already on to top the 60.6 km/h speed of the elevators in Taipei 101 built by Toshiba.

Mitsubishi is expected to install elevators in the Shanghai Tower that will take over as the fastest in 2014 with a top speed of 64.8 km/h.

The tower itself will become the second-tallest building in the world.

“The Shanghai Tower now under construction has brought in technology so you don’t notice the change in pressure as you got up that distance,” Keutenius told the Star. “And you don’t get a bumpy ride.”

World’s five fastest skyscraper elevators