

# THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

**T**HE HIGHEST mountain in the world, Mount Everest, dwarfs anything ever built by people. It lies on the Nepal-Tibet border in the Himalaya-Karakoram range, the greatest continental mountain range. The world's top 10 summits, as well as around 90 of its 100 highest peaks, are found here.

The Himalayas form part of a long chain of mountains extending through the Middle East to Europe. The Alps form part of this chain, with the Matterhorn one of its most distinctive peaks.

The other two mountains shown in this scale illustration are both volcanoes. Kilimanjaro is Africa's highest peak. Although it lies in the tropics, its summit is snow-covered all year round. Vesuvius lost much of its original height—around 1900 metres—in the violent eruption of AD 79, during which the Roman city of Pompeii was destroyed.

## MARTIAN COLOSSUS

Measured from base to summit, the highest mountain on Earth is not Everest, but Mauna Kea, one of the Hawaiian islands. It is 10,205 metres high, although about 6000 metres of its height lies beneath ocean waters. Mauna Kea is made to look tiny by Olympus Mons, at 26,400 metres the highest point on Mars, and the highest mountain in all the Solar System.



OLYMPUS MONS

MAUNA KEA

EVEREST  
8848 m

### MOUNTAIN BUILDING

Over time, the Himalayas have been gradually pushed up by movements in the Earth's crust. India is slowly ramming into Asia, forcing the rock layers to buckle. As the mountains rise higher and higher, they are attacked by wind, rain, frost and ice, creating jagged peaks. Perhaps millions of years into the future, another peak will take Everest's place as the world's highest. ...



### DEEPEST POINT

The floor of the Pacific Ocean lies at an average depth of 4188 metres, but in the Marianas Trench, the bottom plunges to a depth of 11,032 metres, the deepest point on Earth. Ocean trenches like this form in places where the ocean floor gradually slides down into the Earth.

*The illustrations are approximately to scale*

KILIMANJARO  
5896 m

MATTERHORN  
4478 m

BURJ DUBAI (2009)  
Tallest structure  
(under construction)  
808 m

CN TOWER  
553 m

VESUVIUS  
1277 m