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Turin, Italy - Birthplace of the Cupola Window

Final construction of the International Space Station's Cupola window, through which this and all other ISS Image's of the Week are captured, took place in the Italian city of Turin. Turin is the bright spot in the lower right of this image from November of 2017. The larger city to its left is Milan.

The Cupola window has a long and complicated history, and almost didn't happen at all. It was proposed in 1987, cancelled a number of times, and bounced from vendor to vendor. In 1998 the project finally landed in the hands of European Space Agency contractor Thales Alenia Space in Turin, where the design was refined and the window constructed.

Work on the Cupola was completed in 2003, but another 7 years would pass before the window would get a launch date.

These days it's hard to imagine the ISS without the Cupola. This 10' diameter assemblage of steel and glass expanded the station's value to humanity enormously by adding 'World's Best Earth Observation Platform' to its long list of accolades.

