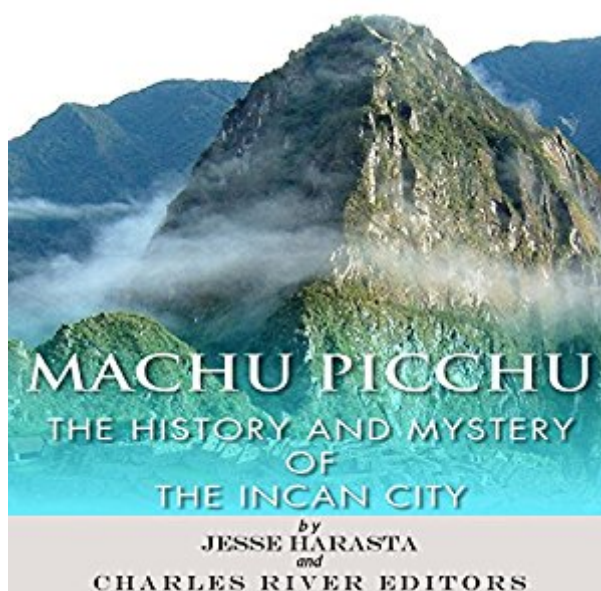


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Machu Picchu: The History And Mystery Of The Incan City



Synopsis

In 1911, American historian Hiram Bingham publicized the finding of what at the time was considered a "lost city" of the Inca. Though local inhabitants had known about it for century, Bingham documented and photographed the ruins of a 15th century settlement nestled along a mountain ridge above the Urubamba Valley in Peru, placed so perfectly from a defensive standpoint that it's believed the Spanish never conquered it and may have never known about it. Today, of course, Machu Picchu is one of South America's best tourist spots, and the ruins have even been voted one of the Seven New Wonders of the World. But even though Machu Picchu is now the best known of all Incan ruins, its function in Incan civilization is still not clear. Some have speculated that it was an outpost or a frontier citadel, while others believe it to be a sanctuary or a work center for women. Still others suggest that it was a ceremonial center or perhaps even the last refuge of the Incas after the Spanish conquest. One of the most theories to take hold is that Machu Picchu was the summer dwelling of the Inca's royal court, the Inca's version of Versailles. As was the case with the renaming of Mayan and Aztec ruins, the names given to various structures by archaeologists are purely imaginary and thus not very helpful; for example, the mausoleum, palace or watchtower at Machu Picchu may have been nothing of the sort. What is clear at Machu Picchu is that the urban plan and the building techniques employed followed those at other Incan settlements, particularly the capital of Cuzco. The location of plazas and the clever use of the irregularities of the land, along with the highly developed aesthetic involved in masonry work, followed the model of the Inca capital. At Machu Picchu, the typical Incan technique of meticulously assembling ashlar masonry and creating walls of blocks without a binding material is astounding. The blocks are sometimes evenly squared and sometimes are of varying shape. In the latter case, the very tight connection between the blocks of stone seems quite remarkable. Even more astounding than the precise stone cutting of the Incas is the method that they used for the transportation and movement on site of these enormous blocks. The Incas did not have the wheel, so all the work was accomplished using rollers and levers. Machu Picchu: The History and Mystery of the Incan City comprehensively covers the history of the city, as well as the speculation surrounding the purpose of Machu Picchu and the debate over the buildings.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is not at all what I expected. It is more like a pamphlet. The pictures are not even in color! I bought it for a gift but I am too embarrassed to give it to the intended recipient.

A fascinating account of the building techniques used by the ancients that still defy our own knowledge yet today. Just reinforces the growing view that the Incas were far more advanced than we know. It's been suggested more than once that they, the Egyptians and other ancients had a higher form of mathematics than we have today and/or they had help from, you know - 'out there'.

Machu Picchu This is a good account of the building this city/shrine at the top of the world. The book shows some good photography of the works and gives a brief outline of its history only 58 pages seems a little short for History of this Incan City

Well written brief history. It's loaded with spectacular photography that really enhances the experience. Nice that also included is some of the present preservation issues.

While the reading was historically interesting, it fell short in its classification of pre and post Inca masonry. Which are a dramatic contrast. The theory of an ancient culture was passed over by the omission of the massive Mason work which, by reputable scholars, claim to be claimed to BC by thousands of years. And that technology today could not duplicate such perfection. There are reputable studies that claim not just a hammer, sand and primitive methods could possibly produce such exceptional, unexplainable, perfectly fitting, massive size stone walls.

Machu Picchu is one of the grandest and most mysterious place on Earth. Located in South

America it once served as the capital of the Incan Empire. The entire history is contained in this book along with maps and photos to give you the sense grandeur.

If you've watched any documentary about Machu Picchu on National Geographic or Discover/History channels, then you already know most of what this book says. It's not a bad book, but it didn't tell me anything new. I had hoped for a more in-depth analysis.

The book covered the topic well, but seems more geared to an academic audience (tons of footnotes) rather than a general audience. It covers the history pretty well does not go into a great deal of detail. I got it as a Kindle book so I don't know how many pages it is but I would guess 75 or less.

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