



History's Greatest Mysteries: The Nazca Lines

Charles River Editors

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*Comprehensively covers the entire history of the Nazca and the Lines.

*Explains the theories and mysteries behind the famous Lines.

*Includes pictures of the Lines, as well as other important people and places.

*Includes a bibliography for further reading.

"The geometric ones could indicate the flow of water or be connected to rituals to summon water. The spiders, birds, and plants could be fertility symbols. Other possible explanations include: irrigation schemes or giant astronomical calendars." – Cynthia Stokes Brown

In 1927, Today, millions of people fly, and everyone who does views the ground thousands of feet below. But in 1927, air traffic was a relatively new phenomenon, especially in the wilds of southern Peru, and when the first planes passed over the sprawling expanse of the Nazca Desert, passengers looking out their windows saw an incredible sight that they could hardly believe. On the baked desert floor, someone had carved broad, perfectly straight Lines that ran for miles. Even more amazingly, some of the Lines twisted together to form the shapes of animals, birds and insects. But when the Lines were investigated further, it was discovered that they were mostly undetectable from ground level. As researcher Viktoria Nikitzki put it, "The Lines themselves are superficial, they are only 10 to 30 cm deep." Since their discovery, these "geoglyphs" (the name for any large carving viewable from the air) have attracted attention from the around the world, and their popularity is matched only by the mystery surrounding them. Why were they created? Who drew the Lines? What technology did they use to fashion them? Their beauty and mystery have, at times, led to farfetched theories that have credited extraterrestrials; as one National Geographic article on the Nazca Lines put it, "At one time or another, they have been explained as Inca roads, irrigation plans, images to be appreciated from primitive hot-air balloons, and, most laughably, landing strips for alien spacecraft." Despite elaborate modern fantasies about aliens and spaceships, the New Age theories have obscured the genius of the Lines' human creators. In fact, the creation of the Lines was actually well within the technology of the purported builders, and the Lines could be drawn without extraterrestrial excavators. Luckily, decades of dedicated archeology have begun to slowly peel back many of these mysteries, even as new discoveries have opened the door for new questions and new puzzles. To this day, anthropologists, archaeologists and other scholars continue to debate whether the Lines had religious importance, astronomical importance, or were made for entirely different reasons.

History's Greatest Mysteries: The Nazca Lines explores these amazing Lines from a number of different angles. This book looks at the physical context of the Lines (including the geology, climate, proximity to population centers, etc) and explains how the unique landscape allowed the Lines to be created in the first place and aided in their preservation over the centuries, only to be discovered anew in the 20th century. It also examines just what the Nazca Lines are, including what forms they take. This book also looks at the culture of the people who lived there, including the other archaeological remains of the Nazca people and what is known about their economy, society, and political structure. Along the way, History's Greatest Mysteries: The Nazca Lines comprehensively covers the facts, mysteries, and theories surrounding the phenomenon. Together with pictures and a bibliography, you will learn about the Nazca Lines like you never have before, in no time at all.

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