

HISTORY

SECRETS OF ANCIENT STRUCTURES

6 × 52' (ENG, GER)

Ancient civilizations erected structures that continue to inspire awe and wonder. But how did they do it? And what secrets lie hidden within the walls of these incredible monuments?

Archaeological finds and new technologies reveal clues to long-enduring mysteries. How did the Celts build Newgrange to last, even through cataclysmic flooding? And how do Mayan pyramids like those found at El Castillo hold clues to an ancient civilization's advanced understanding of the cosmos? As ancient edifices reveal design almost beyond comprehension, does captivating geometry like that found at the Chand Baori stepwell hint at otherworldly interference? From the iconic arches of Rome's Colosseum, to a fortress perched atop a remote volcano in Sri Lanka; from the colossal stone sculptures that dot an island in the Pacific, to an iconic wall that spans a whole continent, and the glimmering pools of Angkor Wat, what ancient secrets can be revealed about the structures that have shaped our world?

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1. Secrets of the Shrines

From the Pantheon and its seemingly perfect dome to the gravity-defying Mont Saint-Michel, and an enduring Roman gate that evolved into a medieval church, the exploration of history's most sacred spaces uncovers how ancient builders channeled faith and ingenuity into architectural marvels.

2. Cosmic Alignment

Around the world, architectural marvels stand as conduits to the cosmos. Angkor Wat is built as a stone replica of the universe, while the ancient Mayan pyramid El Castillo marks a sacred axis connecting earth and sky. Meanwhile, in the hills of Ireland, a neolithic structure known as Newgrange harnesses the transformative power of the solstice sun.

3. Battling Giants

Stretching across immense landscapes and towering above their surroundings, the Colosseum, the Great Wall of China, and Malbork Castle are borne of blood, sweat, and revolutionary engineering. These architectural titans challenge our understanding of what's possible in stone and mortar.

4. Volcanic Origins

In Sri Lanka, a fortress rises majestically from volcanic ashes. Mysterious stone heads dot a remote island in the Pacific. In India, an intricate Hindu temple emerges as one of the most astounding examples of rock-cut architecture in the world. How did ancient builders harness the Earth's fiery legacy to create enduring structures that defy comprehension?

5. Dealing With the Devil

Behind the incredible grandeur of Peru's Sacsayhuamán citadel, India's Chand Baori stepwell, and Paris' Notre Dame Cathedral is incredible architecture that pushes the boundaries of what's possible. Over the centuries, these feats of design have inspired legends of supernatural intervention and diabolical bargains.

6. Beyond the Tomb

Humanity's quest for immortality has birthed awe-inspiring monuments that seemingly transcend death. From the Taj Mahal's luminous marble that embodies eternal love to the crypt of 11th-century Salian emperors in Germany's Speyer Cathedral to majestic Lycian rock-cut tombs in Turkey, these edifices hold clues to how our ancient ancestors faced death and celebrated life.