

The Seven Wonders of the World

Christ the Redeemer (1931) Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

This statue of Jesus stands some 105 feet tall, atop the Corcovado mountain overlooking Rio de Janeiro. Designed by Brazilian, Heitor da Silva Costa and created by the French sculptor Paul Landowski, it is one of the world's best-known monuments. The statue took five years to construct and was inaugurated on October 12, 1931. It has become a symbol of the city and of the warmth of the Brazilian people, who receive visitors with open arms.

The Roman Colosseum (70 - 82 A.D.) Rome, Italy

This great amphitheatre in the centre of Rome was built to give favours to successful legionnaires and to celebrate the glory of the Roman Empire. Its design concept still stands to this very day, and virtually every modern sports stadium some 2,000 years later still bears the irresistible imprint of the Colosseum's original design. Today, through films and history books, we are even more aware of the cruel fights and games that took place in this arena, all for the joy of the spectators.

The Great Wall of China (220 B.C and 1368 - 1644 A.D.) China

The Great Wall of China was built to link existing fortifications into a united defence system and better keep invading Mongol tribes out of China. It is the largest man-made monument ever to have been built and it is disputed that it is the only one visible from space. Many thousands of people must have given their lives to build this colossal construction.

Machu Picchu (1460-1470), Peru

In the 15th century, the Incan Emperor Pachacútec built a city in the clouds on the mountain known as Machu Picchu ("old mountain"). This extraordinary settlement lies halfway up the Andes Plateau, deep in the Amazon jungle and above the Urubamba River. It was probably abandoned by the Incas because of a smallpox outbreak and, after the Spanish defeated the Incan Empire, the city remained 'lost' for over three centuries. It was rediscovered by Hiram Bingham in 1911.

Petra (9 B.C. - 40 A.D.), Jordan

On the edge of the Arabian Desert, Petra was the glittering capital of the Nabataean empire of King Aretas IV (9 B.C. to 40 A.D.). Masters

of water technology, the Nabataeans provided their city with great tunnel constructions and water chambers. A theatre, modelled on Greek-Roman prototypes, had space for an audience of 4,000. Today, the Palace Tombs of Petra, with the 42-meter-high Hellenistic temple facade on the El-Deir Monastery, are impressive examples of Middle Eastern culture.

The Pyramid at Chichén Itzá (before 800 A.D.) Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico

Chichén Itzá, the most famous Mayan temple city, served as the political and economic centre of the Mayan civilization. Its various structures - the pyramid of Kukulcan, the Temple of Chac Mool, the Hall of the Thousand Pillars, and the Playing Field of the Prisoners — can still be seen today and are demonstrative of an extraordinary commitment to architectural space and composition. The pyramid itself was the last, and arguably the greatest, of all Mayan temples.