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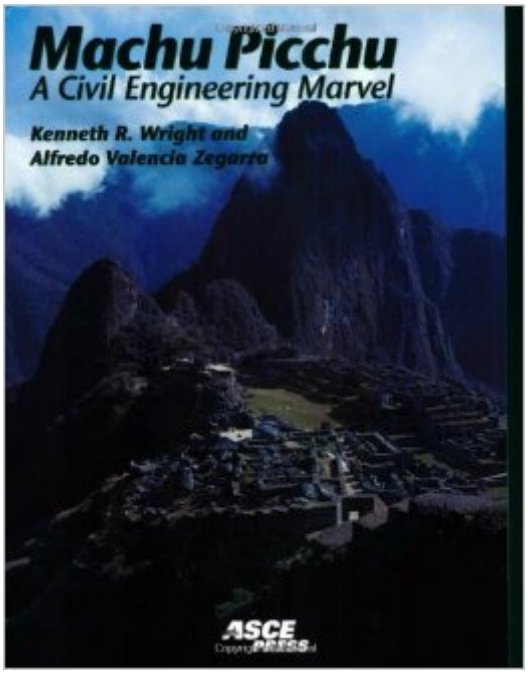
Machu Picchu: A Civil Engineering Marvel



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Synopsis

"Machu Picchu: A Civil Engineering Marvel" takes readers inside the Lost City of the Incas for a groundbreaking perspective never before seen by tourists or archeologists. Built high in the Andes on a seemingly impossible site, Machu Picchu stands as a testament to Early Native Americans and their ability to plan and build. How was it possible to create a mountain-top city complete with running water, drainage systems, food production, and stone structures so advanced they have endured for over 500 years? Authors Kenneth R. Wright and Alfredo Valencia Zegarra explain these and other mysteries, based on their original engineering and scientific research. A fascinating book, "Machu Picchu: A Civil Engineering Marvel" is a must-have for civil engineers, archeologists, armchair travelers, and tourists alike. An illustrated walking guide and detailed map allow readers to become familiar with each building and pathway, and numerous photographs take readers on a breathtaking pictorial adventure.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The story of Machu Picchu is a tribute to the prehistoric Native Americans who planned and built this mystical mountaintop royal estate for Emperor Pachacuti between AD 1450 and 1540. The authors have, at last, defined for scientists and layman alike what makes Machu Picchu such a beautiful and special place: the innumerable details of Machu Picchu, when combined into a whole, create a visual and spiritual experience that is unparalleled in the New World.Properly, this book is dedicated to the young Yale explorer Hiram Bingham, John Rowe and Pat Lyons of the University of

California/Berkeley, Richard Burger and Lucy Salazar of Yale University, and several others who had a hand in supporting the research work in both the United States and Peru.Ten chapters, 160 photographs, many sketches and maps, in conjunction with a detailed index, provide both the scholar and casual tourist with a description of Machu Picchu that is a must-read before leaving Cusco for the trip down the Urubamba River to see this most important archaeological ruin of the Western Hemisphere. The book is designed so that much of the story can be appreciated even if one only looks at the photographs and reads the captions; much like a National Geographic magazine.Chapter 1 explains the when, where and why of Machu Picchu along with it ancient climate. Site selection reasons are described; here you will learn why the Inca chose such a difficult site for construction and how the mountain and water played a major role in its choice. In Chapter 2, you will learn about the Inca-period planning that went into the royal estate so that it would function.

For the University of Denver Water Law Review,Vol. 6, Issue 1, Fall 2002Coloradans Ken and Ruth Wright have teamed with Peruvian archeologist Alfredo Valencia to place back in working order the sixteen fountains of Machu Picchu. You can see for yourself.The Inca were master water handlers. They chose Machu Picchu as a ceremonial center because the mountains and the river spoke to them of life-giving power. The Urubamba River far below snakes triangular around the base of Machu Picchu and Huayna Picchu mountains. A saddle between these peaks cradles the temples, rock shrines, dwelling places, and agricultural terraces that dance between the clouds in early morning and emerge to sunlight by Noon.Water at the center of it all. The paleo-hydrologic studies of the Wrights and Valencia reveal how the Inca predicated the design and construction of Machu Picchu upon the flow of a spring. From high on the side of Machu Picchu Mountain, a canal brings water across an agricultural terrace to the first fountain just above the Temple of the Sun. From there, sixteen fountains splash, spout, and sing down a staircase to the Temple of the Condor.The May 2002, issue of National Geographic Magazine contains yet another map of Machu Picchu deriving from the Wright-Valencia partnership. This map shows how magnificent Machu Picchu must have looked with its thatched roofs uplifted to the condor sky.Underneath your feet at every turn is the invisible sixty-percent of Machu Picchu. In their Civil Engineering book, Ken and Alfredo describe the genius of Machu Picchu's foundational structure. The Inca edifices and agricultural terraces stand the test of time because of careful drainage and methodical trenchwork.

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