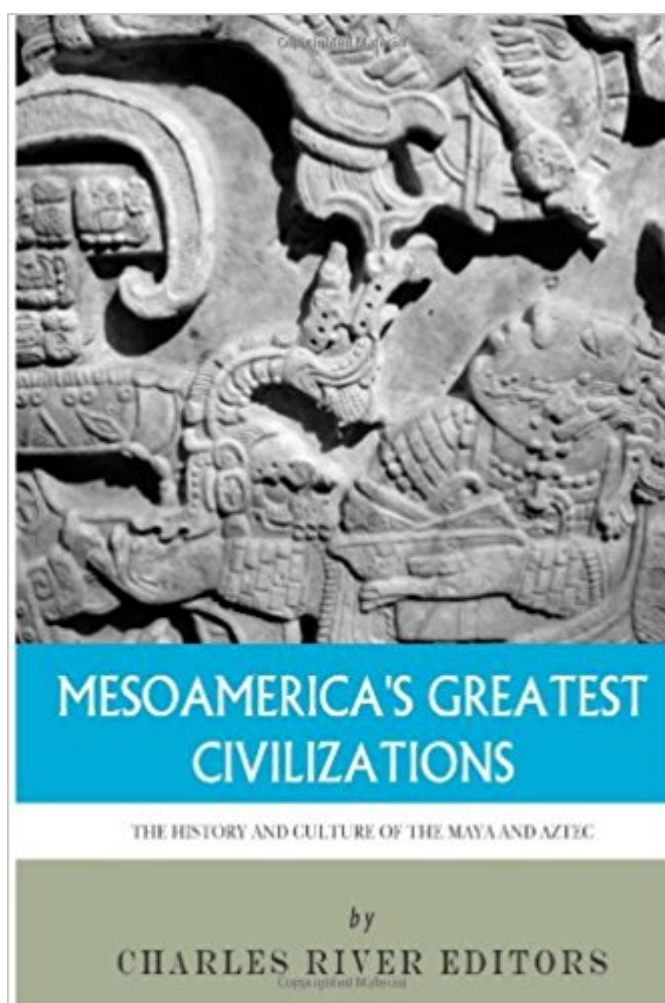


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Mesoamerica's Greatest Civilizations: The History And Culture Of The Maya And Aztec



Synopsis

*Includes over 25 pictures of both civilizations' art, ruins, architecture, and more. *Describes everyday life for the Maya and Aztecs, from language to religion. *Comprehensively covers the civilizations' most famous characteristics, including Mayan astronomy and the Aztecs' infamous human sacrifice rituals. When the Spanish arrived in the New World, men like Columbus, Cortes, and Pizarro came into contact with a vast array of different Native American settlements. Though the Spanish mercilessly conquered their way through the Americas and aimed to convert the peoples they considered savages, the unique culture, architecture and aspects of the indigenous tribes fascinated even the conquistadors, who brought the accounts back to Europe and fascinated millions across the Atlantic. 500 years later, the world is more fascinated than ever by the American civilizations, particularly the Aztecs and Maya. Of all the world's civilizations, none have intrigued people more than the Mayans, whose culture, astronomy, language, and mysterious disappearance all continue to captivate people. In 2012 especially, there has been a renewed focus on the Mayans, whose advanced calendar has led many to speculate the world will end on the same date the Mayan calendar ends. The focus on the "doomsday" scenario, however, has overshadowed the Mayans' true contribution to astronomy, language, sports, and art. From the moment Spanish conquistador Hernan Cortes first found and confronted them, the Aztecs have fascinated the world, and they continue to hold a unique place both culturally and in pop culture. Nearly 500 years after the Spanish conquered their mighty empire, the Aztecs are often remembered today for their major capital, Tenochtitlan, as well as being fierce conquerors of the Valley of Mexico who often engaged in human sacrifice rituals. Ironically, and unlike the Mayans, the Aztecs are not widely viewed or remembered with nuance, in part because their own leader burned extant Aztec writings and rewrote a mythologized history explaining his empire's dominance less than a century before the Spanish arrived. Naturally, Cortes and other Spaniards depicted the Aztecs as savages greatly in need of conversion to Catholicism. While the Mayans are remembered for their astronomy, numeral system, and calendar, the Aztecs have primarily been remembered in a far narrower way, despite continuing to be a source of pride to Mexicans through the centuries. Mesoamerica's Greatest Civilizations gives a comprehensive and entertaining overview of the cultures and empires of these two amazing civilizations, describing everyday life, architecture, their capital cities and more. Along with dozens of pictures of important people, places, events, art, and ruins, you will learn about the Maya and Aztec like you never have before.

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Customer Reviews

Photographs are beautiful and analysis of Mayan and Aztecan history and culture decent -- not too short, but not too deep either (although, Mayan culture isn't tackled so widely as Aztecan). I wouldn't take all said for granted, as the study elaborates some hypotheses about Mayas and Aztecs not yet proven, that contradict some other studies, and books I've read too. BUT it is still nice booklet worth reading, especially if you have already been in Mexico.

A nice intro to the Maya and the Aztecs. Those curious about the two won't be disappointed.

Unfortunately the editing leaves one stopping on occasion to decode a sentence.

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