

# PERUVIAN TREASURES: A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME



One of the must-see ancient sites in the Americas is the once great city of Caral in Peru. It was dated back to 2627 B.C. according to contemporary research. Caral is one of the 20 ancient grounds that are attributed to the Caral-Supe culture, which existed simultaneously with great cultures of Mesopotamia and Egypt. This 163-acre city was an administrative and trade centre. The culture was agricultural with developed social structures.

Since its discovery in 1994, Caral has become an attractive tourist destination, with some 21 000 visitors in 2005. Archaeologists and locals provide guided tours around the city grounds, presenting its pyramid temples, sunken plazas, housing complexes and even an amphitheatre, while the excavation works are still in process. Ruth Shady, a Peruvian archaeologist who discovered Caral, believes that excavations promise new findings about the social system, economic and political system, and the ideology of the oldest civilization in Americas.

Caral, on the other hand, is not the only lure for visitors in Peru. In 2005, Senora de Cao, the mummy of a 20-25 year old woman was discovered. In spring 2007 in the El Brujo complex near the city of Trujillo an exhibition dedicated solely to her is going to be opened. The exhibit will offer a great variety of Senora's possessions and emblematic objects. However, the most striking article it surely the very well preserved mummy itself.

It is believed that Senora de Cao was the ruler of Chicama Valley 1.700 years ago. In Mochica culture to have a female leader was extremely surprising. In similar Moro culture, for example, there were priestesses, however it is believed they played an inferior role within the society. The discovery of Senora de Cao confirms, that in the Mochican world the role of women was different.

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