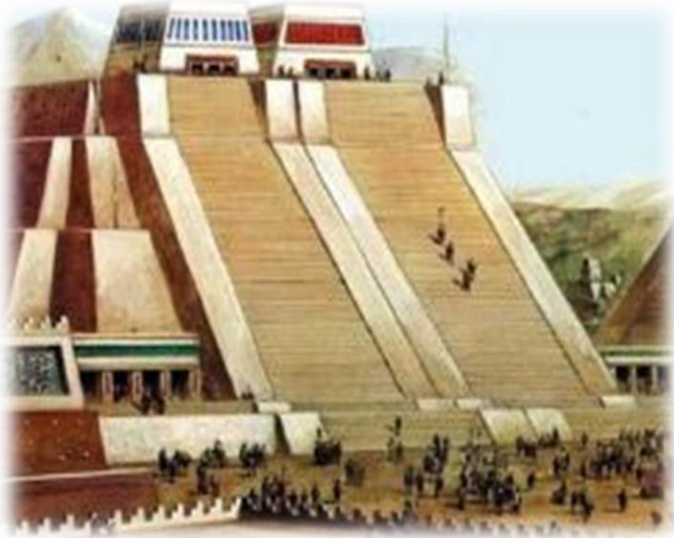




The Aztec Empire

By Nicole McDermott



- The Aztecs originated as a nomadic tribe in Northern Mexico
- When they saw an eagle perched on marshy land they took it as a sign to settle there.
- Their arrival followed the fall of the last dominant tribe, The Toltec's
- The Aztec empire thrived from 1345-1521
- In 1438 the Aztecs formed a three-way alliance with the Texcocans and the Tacubans to defeat the Tepanecs
- Their capital city was Tenochtitlan which means 'Place of Prickly Pear'
- The Aztecs lived in the Valley of Mexico
- They originated from Aztlan or White Bunny
- The Aztecs Spoke Nahuatl
- By the 16th century they ruled over 500 states and 5-6 million people

Religion and Beliefs

- The Aztecs believed in many different gods and goddesses. They had many ceremonies to worship these gods. The New Fire Ceremony took place every 52 years in November. It was to renew the sun and get another 52 years of it.
- They also believed that the sun died at night and needed human blood to rise again. Victims chest would be cut open, they took their heart and then wrapped their body up. People think over 2,000 people were sacrificed.
- The most important god was Huitzilopochtli, the god of war, sacrifice and the sun. He was the patron god of Tenochtitlan. Two other gods were Tlaloc and Quetzalcoatl.



Food and Farming

- The Aztecs grew crops such as maize, fruits, vegetables, cocoa beans and more. Maize was the most used crop. It was used to make many meals such as tortilla's.
- They also grew maguey cactus whose fibres were woven to make cloth, bags, ropes and mats. The sap was also used to sweeten food and beer.
- They fished and hunted ducks, turkey, fish and other animals.
- In Aztec gardens and chinampa (rectangular areas of land on a lake) they grew large amounts of beautiful flowers! Many chinampas floated on Lake Texcoco.



Their Social Structure

- The Aztecs were made up of the rulers, warriors, nobility, priests, slaves, servants and middle class. The most important were the warriors, rulers, nobility and priests. They had many jobs such as farmers or builders.
- Warriors were respected and skilled because they were at war a lot. They would be very wealthy at retirement.
- Traders had an easy job because other tribes were afraid of them. In the capital there could be up to 60,000 people in the market place. They didn't use money, instead they bartered goods.
- Every Aztec child went to school.





Aztec Houses



- Common Aztec houses were made from adobe. They had one room that was split into four sections. One was a family shrine, one was for sleeping, one was where meals were prepared and one was for eating. They had either thatched roofs or terrace roofs.
- Nobles had similar houses but they were made of stone. Their houses were also bigger and more elaborate.
- Aztecs at the top of society had multi-roomed houses. Montezuma's palace had beautiful gardens and a zoo!
- The Aztecs had large, gorgeous gardens. Every house in Tenochtitlan had a steam bath.

Aztec Clothing



- Aztec men wore loincloths and long capes. Women wore long skirts and blouses.
- Poor people made their own clothes. Clothes were made from cotton or ayate fibre. Their clothes covered very little.
- The upper class wore more elaborate clothes. They had jewellery feathers and coloured dyes.
- Merchants had even more fancy clothing.
- The military had their own clothing based on their group(e.g. jaguars) War heroes got more jewels.
- Aztec priests clothing was called xicolli. It was a sleeveless jacket with many openings for accessories

Aztec Inventions

- The Aztecs made many herbal remedies. One of these that we still use today is passion flower, it is used to fight insomnia and agitation.
- They also played a game called ollama, played on a field called a tlachtli. The aim of the game was to knock a small, rubber ball through a hoop with your hips, knees and elbows. This game could get very violent.
- In the Aztec Society every child had education. The first stage was at home. The girls would learn chores while the boys would learn their fathers trade and develop a yolteotl (heart of stone). From 12-15 they went to cuicacalli or house of song. Most girls education was over after this. Boys from 15-20 who were commoners went to telpochcalli. The study here was primarily military in nature. Sons of nobility went to calmecac.
- The Aztecs also used chinampas or floating gardens. Rectangular pieces of land were staked out in the lake, joined by reeds, twigs and branches. Then they filled it with mud and decaying plant matter to raise it above the surface of the lake.
- The Aztecs spoke Nahuatl which is now spoken by 1 million

The End of the Aztecs

- In April 1519 Spanish conquistadors led by Hernan Cortes arrived at Tenochtitlan. The emperor, Montezuma II let them in as guests. He thought Cortes was Quetzalcoatl because they arrived on his birthday. The Spanish had come before and the Aztecs had sent them gifts. After being let in Cortes took Montezuma II captive. After Montezuma died the Spanish tried to flee but the Aztecs attacked them. They killed 2/3's of their soldiers. After that Cortes formed alliances with other native tribes. He also burnt the ships so his soldiers couldn't sail away! The Spanish had 500 soldiers, 100 sailors, 11 ships, killer dogs, horses, guns and cannons! In 1521 after months of fighting the Spanish took control.

Hernan
Cortes



Montezuma
II

Facts



- The coat of arms on the Mexican flag is inspired from the Aztecs seeing an eagle perched on a cactus.
- Tenochtitlan's population was 200,000-300,000 making it around five times the size of London.
- The Aztecs had never seen horses before the Spanish arrived so at first they thought they were half horse/half human!
- They thought chocolate was a gift from Quetzalcoatl.
- Most of the Aztecs died from the diseases the Spanish brought not from the fighting.
- The Aztecs were actually called the Mexica.
- The Aztecs sometimes buried people with diseases under their house alive .They sometimes buried their dogs with them because they thought it would them get to the after life



The End