

AUDIO

VIDEO

MUSIC - Nakai 1

1. After centuries of violent desert storms and searing heat,
2. this ancient building still commands respect.
3. Four stories high and 60 feet long,
4. it is the largest structure known to survive from the Hohokam civilization --
5. a Southwest desert culture which began about 200 years before Christ.
6. Early Spanish explorers called it Casa Grande, which means "Great House"...
7. to them it was a mystery.
8. Why was this great structure built and what was it used for?
9. Its walls face the four cardinal points of the compass, and
10. on every June 21st, a beam of light passes through a special opening,
11. marking the summer solstice, - the longest day of the year.

MUSIC - Nakai 2

12. Apparently, the Hohokam builders of the Great House,
13. were people who knew well the ways of the sun.
14. Centuries of observation and experience,

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15. allowed them to use the sun's movements as a calendar
 16. to mark planting time and other important occasions.
 17. They also engineered earth-sheltered buildings,
 18. which used the sun to stay warm in winter and cool in summer.
 19. Throughout the Southwest, there are reminders of their architectural contributions:
 20. astronomical observatories,
 21. south-facing cliff dwellings
 22. and structures built on open plateaus -
 23. most of which display a remarkable sensitivity
 24. to the sun's daily and seasonal movements.
- MUSIC - Nakai 3
25. At Mesa Grande ruins, about 50 miles from Casa Grande,
 26. there is a room which marks the winter solstice...
 27. Not far away, at Hole in the Rock,
 28. archaeologists have found what they believe was a very special place for the Hohokam...
 29. (Ben Mixon off camera)

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"This particular archeological site has a great deal of significance

30. "in as much as it very clearly shows the astronomical studies of the prehistoric people" (10 seconds)

32. (Ben Mixon on camera)

"One of the things that we have discovered of early people in their observations of the sun, the moon and the stars is that not only did they have direct observation in relation to /the horizon, but they had indirect observations where they would watch the shadows and light beams caused by certain rock formations as they traveled across the surface of the ground and they would use those markers, to indicate when certain things would happen at certain times of the year, much as Stonehenge does./ (33 seconds)

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Narrator:

33. Because architecture is one of archaeology's most important sources of data,

34. the wealth of detail from Hole In The Rock, Mesa Grande and Casa Grande

35. is an invaluable resource for archaeologists.

36. All of these sites contain clues,

37. which are unlocking the mysteries

38. behind one of the great prehistoric cultures of North America.

39. It's becoming clear that the Hohokam used great ingenuity

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- 40. and persistent solar observation
- 41. to create a comfortable, productive and safe living environment.
- 42. They were truly Ancient Masters of the Sun.