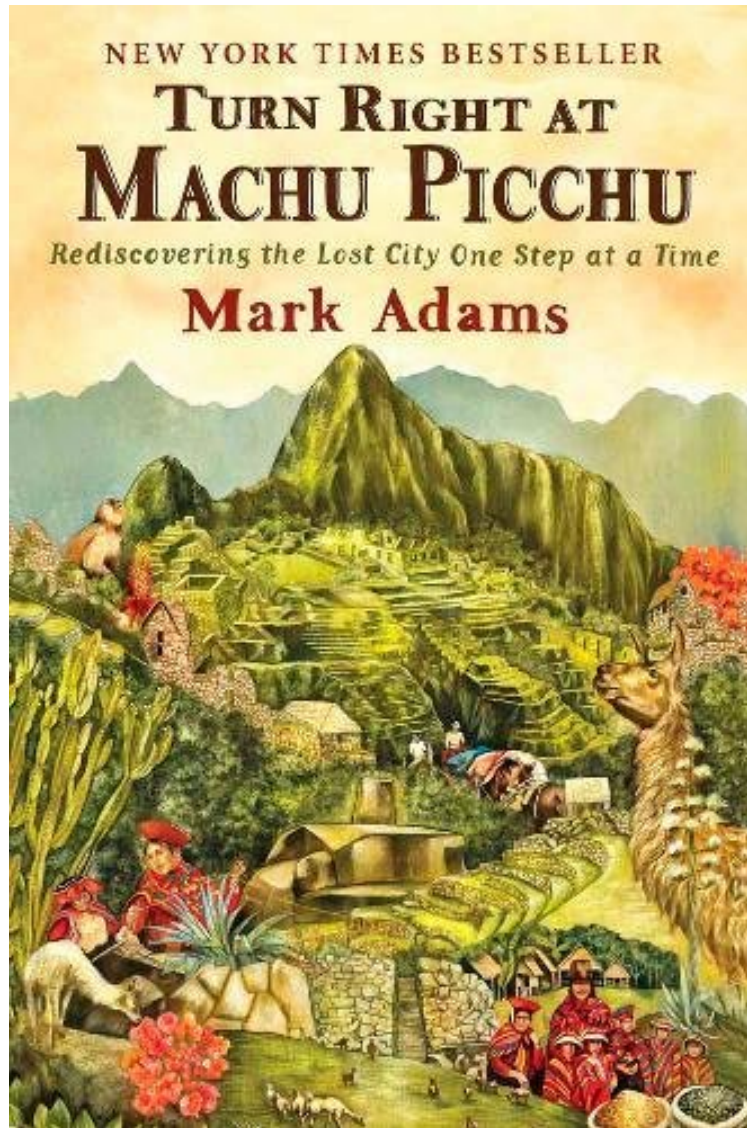


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## Turn Right at Machu Picchu: Rediscovering the Lost City One Step at a Time

Mark Adams

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**Mark Adams : Turn Right at Machu Picchu: Rediscovering the Lost City One Step at a Time** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Turn Right at Machu Picchu: Rediscovering the Lost City One Step at a Time:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Tally Ho! FInd the Truth vs. What People Have Been Saying  
WritingBy CustomerThis very entertaining tale shares with the reader the author's initial visit to Peru to find the reality

that he only observed vicariously as editor of Outdoor Magazine before taking his trip.. He had never explored anyplace before and learned to trek as he went along with a very skilled professional guide. The adventure gets more interesting as he learns of the difference between what is written about Inca history versus what on the ground knowledge of experts such as a native guide who speaks English like he is from Orange County, CA, even though he has never visited the US; and, a retired Alaskan pipeline laborer who has become a major player in the debate about discovering historical Inca cities and holy places after writing an article that set many points straight. Toss in the wife of Peru's former President Toledo, and you have a tasty read that teaches the reader who has not been there a lot about the Peruvian view of history and South American religion. Read this and you will feel like you took a trip during your reading. 266 of 276 people found the following review helpful. Seriously Funny and Seriously Good By Jason Golomb Mark Adams' "Turn Right at Machu Picchu: Rediscovering the Lost City One Step at a Time" is a book that's a bit hard to classify. All at once, it's a serious (and seriously funny) travelogue; a smart and tightly written history; and an investigative report into the greatest archaeological discovery of the last century. Author Adams spent time writing and editing for the now defunct National Geographic Adventurer magazine and despite working with and alongside some of the world's hardest core adventure travelers, he admits to not being much of one himself. He'd visited Machu Picchu with his son, but he'd done it the tourist way. He wanted to REdiscover Machu Picchu - the way its' original discoverer, Hiram Bingham, had 100 years ago this July. He wanted to hike, climb, slog, tent and explore his way through the Vilcabamba region of Peru and finish at the site that was recently named one of the new Seven Wonders of the World. Adams doesn't camp and hadn't been in a tent for years leading up to his Peruvian excursion. His preparation for the trip was extensive, including dressing the part of adventurer. "Have you ever seen Mr. Travel Guy? He's the fellow who strides through international airports dressed like he's flying off to hunt wildebeests - shirt with dozens of pockets, drip-dry pants that zip off into shorts, floppy hat with a cord pulled tight under the chin in case a twister blows through the baggage claim area. All of this describes exactly what I was wearing. I could have been trick-or-treating as Hemingway." Make no mistake. Adams trip was an uncompromising adventure. There were no soft train rides, or helicopter drops into the jungle. Adams hiked, slept in tents, climbed miles of off-the-beaten-path terrain, and used the same bathroom facilities as Bingham had almost 100 years earlier - nature. His only chance at being successful in this endeavor was to surround himself with quality guides and support. He emphasized when he hired his guide, experienced explorer and discoverer in his own right John Leivers, that he wanted his trip to be about walking in Bingham's footsteps. The real joy in reading "Turn Right at Machu Picchu" is the frank and insightful humor Adams embeds within his adventurous tales. While Leivers was his primary guide, Adams was surrounded by a colorful and interesting crowd, some of which speak only the ancient language of the Inca - quechua. One guide genuinely feared a man-eating devil goat that guarded the entrance to a farm used as a campsite. Adams points out that rumors and ghosts are abound in Peru and particularly in the Andes where "the mischievous twins of Superstition and Legend tend to thrive." Adams also struggled to communicate with Leivers because they come from such different worlds and experiences. Adams finally strikes a note of commonality when a fairly severe bout of bowel issues made his adventurer guide reminisce about his own time with the same problem. He takes seemingly meaningless interactions and with only a few words turns them into something substantive, funny and culturally eye-opening. "One of the things about Peru that I'd found it hardest to adjust to - even more so than the popularity of Nescafe in a country that grew some of the finest coffee beans in the world -- was la hora perunana, Peruvian Time. This is the code, indecipherable to North Americans, by which Peruvians determine the latest possible moment that it is acceptable to arrive for an appointment. The statement "I'll be right back" can mean just that, or it can mean that the speaker is about to depart via steamship for Cairo. The habit drove Bingham bananas and hasn't improved over time, despite a widespread government campaign to combat tardiness a few years ago." Mark's narrative parallels the expeditions of Hiram Bingham as documented in his books "Inca Land" and "Lost City of the Incas". Where Bingham went, so went Adams. What Adams sees, so wrote the famed explorer. Throughout the book, Adams provides a very smartly written and readable examination of Bingham's extensive and dramatic expeditions. His chapters are short and each thread of his story - his own travel, the history of the Inca Conquest and Bingham's parallel journeys - are woven as seamlessly, intricately and colorfully as a prototypical Andean poncho. In Adams' parallels with Inca history, he points out the difficulty in separating fact from fiction "because virtually all the sources available are Spanish accounts of stories that had already been vetted by the Inca emperors to highlight their own heroic roles. Imagine a history of modern Iraq, written by Dick Cheney and based on authorized biographies of Saddam Hussein published in Arabic, and you'll get some idea of the problem historians face." Still Adams deftly pulls together multiple resources and his own independent research to trace the earliest beginnings of the Spanish Conquest until they finally subdued the last Inca Emperors. It was the last Inca holdout that Bingham was seeking. The historical record is confusing, but consistently pointed to a location called Vilcabamba. It was unclear whether Vilcabamba was a town, city, or region, and Bingham's search was further muddied by the historical record pointing to several "final" Inca strongholds. But search he did, and Adams followed. The first major site on Adams' agenda was Choquequiru, known as the "Cradle of Gold". The site is far less accessible than Machu Picchu despite stop-and-start initiatives by the Peruvian government to create easier tourist access through the Peruvian jungle. It's estimated that only 20-30 percent of the site has been

cleared and Adams quotes his guide Leivers suggesting that "When this is all cleared, it'll be one of the most spectacular archaeological sites in the world." Much new modern analysis of Machu Picchu and the entire Vilcabamba region northwest of Cuzco, revolves around archaeoastronomy - the study of archaeological sites in relation to their positions to each other, their environment and the heavens. Leivers and his ever-present handheld GPS would pinpoint locations of buildings and objects throughout the trip and started to pull together the connective thread of the regions' ruins. Upon climbing to the mountain peak that overlooks the Machu Picchu ruins, Adams wrote, "I had to admit when I ... saw how the site aligned with the natural features surrounding it I'd felt a twinge of...something. Awe? Transcendence?" Adams points out that among the various ruins that Bingham discovered, he also brought to the world the famed Inca Trail which thousands of hikers travel each year. Many Inca trails cross the former Empire, but there's only one Inca Trail - the one that leads to Machu Picchu. Adams followed miles of Inca trail throughout his trip, but needed a second trip with Leivers to explore the Inca Trail itself, and discover the trails' relationship with Machu Picchu. The Inca Trail is dotted with ruins of various sizes. Each ruin, whether placed within a terraced valley, or providing a dramatic overlook across jungle and mountains, in its own way, builds dramatically to the point at which it connects with Machu Picchu. Explorer and National Geographic Society Explorer-in-Residence Johan Reinhard succinctly places the Inca Trail in its' proper context, "you can't finish the Inca Trail and NOT know that this was the end point of a pilgrimage." As one might imagine, such a hard core experience would have a significant impact on one's life. As Leivers and Adams started their ascent of Mount Machu Picchu, Leivers starts to make a walking stick for himself, but finds that he's left his large hunting knife at their hotel in Aguas Calientes at the base of Machu Picchu. Adams unzipped his pack, dug around for a moment and then handed his knife to Leivers. The world-wide traveler and adventurer who's led trips across deserts and mountains said "That's good preparation, Mark. Nice sharp blade on it, too." Mark realizes "It was, I'm not ashamed to admit, one of the proudest moments of my life." 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a great story of a journalist re-tracing Hiram Bingham's treks through ...By Customer This is a great story of a journalist re-tracing Hiram Bingham's treks through Peru in the early 1900's. He does a great job weaving the past (Bingham's Journey) with the present (his own travels) providing a great background for the exploration of many of the important Inca sites.

**THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER!** What happens when an unadventurous adventure writer tries to re-create the original expedition to Machu Picchu? In 1911, Hiram Bingham III climbed into the Andes Mountains of Peru and discovered Machu Picchu. While history has recast Bingham as a villain who stole both priceless artifacts and credit for finding the great archeological site, Mark Adams set out to retrace the explorers perilous path in search of the truth except he'd written about adventure far more than he'd actually lived it. In fact, he'd never even slept in a tent. *Turn Right at Machu Picchu* is Adams' fascinating and funny account of his journey through some of the world's most majestic, historic, and remote landscapes guided only by a hard-as-nails Australian survivalist and one nagging question: Just what was Machu Picchu?

[An] engaging and sometimes hilarious book. The New York Times Book A serious (and seriously funny) travelogue, a smart and tightly written history, and an investigative report into perhaps the greatest archaeological discovery in the last century. National Geographic.com An engaging, informative guide to all things Inca. Entertainment Weekly Adams deftly weaves together Inca history, Bingham's story, and his own less heroic escapade.... Those favoring a quirkier retelling [of Bingham's exploits] will relish Mr. Adam's wry, revealing romp through the Andes. The Wall Street Journal Quite funny and unpretentiously well informed... The perfect way to acknowledge the lost city's one hundredth birthday. Christian Science Monitor (Editors Choice) [An] entirely delightful book. The Washington Post With a healthy sense of humor... Adams unearths a fascinating story, transporting his readers back to 1911, when Yale professor Hiram Bingham III hiked the Andes and stumbled upon one of South America's most miraculous and cloistered meccas. NPR.org About the Author Mark Adams is the author of the acclaimed history *Mr. America*, which The Washington Post named a Best Book of 2009, and the New York Times bestsellers *Meet Me in Atlantis* and *Turn Right at Machu Picchu*. A writer for many national magazines, including *GQ*, *Men's Journal*, and *New York*, he lives near New York City with his wife and children. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. John's martini explorer comment had unnerved me a little compared to Bingham, I was a white-wine spritzer explorer so before committing to anything, I thought I should mention that it had been a while since I had slept outdoors. What came out of my mouth instead was I might not be completely up-to-date on the latest tent-erecting methods. That's all right, John said. We'll need mules for a trip like this and the arrieros the muleteers can set up the tents. How do you feel about food? Sorry? You like cooked food? John asked. I admitted that I did, in fact, have a weakness for victuals prepared over heat.