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Meet Moctezuma II

There are many famous rulers from the past. Some of these rulers lived in an area called Mesoamerica (meh-zo-uh-MER-ih-kuh). One great ruler was named Moctezuma II (mawk-tuh-ZOO-muh). He ruled one of the most powerful empires at the time. This empire was in Mexico and his people were the Aztecs (AZ-teks).

The Aztecs had lived there just a short time when Moctezuma II became king. This was in 1502. They built their city in the middle of a lake. It had all the things a major city needed. Their beliefs in the gods ruled their daily actions. To please these gods, they built temples that looked like pyramids.

The Aztecs were expert warriors and knew how to win in battle. Most of central Mexico was under their rule. They won each battle, and it looked as though no one could defeat them. Then, in 1519, some unexpected Spanish guests showed up. And, it all came to an end.

Map of the Aztec empire



Moctezuma II



Mexico today

Aztec Ruins Today

To this day, many of the Aztec sites are hidden. Some still lay under Mexico City. Others are slowly being uncovered.

Two Moctezumas?

Moctezuma II's father was Moctezuma I. Moctezuma I is not very well known. So, Moctezuma II is usually called just Moctezuma.

Aztec Capital

The Aztec capital city was located where Mexico City is today.