

Easter Island

May 2017: Over 1200 miles from the nearest inhabitable Island, 2,000 miles from the coast of South America, an area less than 65 square miles and a population under 7,000 Easter Island is unsurpassed in mystery and isolation.

The famous 700+ year old giant stone statues (Moai) standing over 30 feet and weighing up to 80 tons testify to a once great civilization in a virtual paradise.

The remoteness of the island and an increasing population (up to 20,000) led to devastation of the forest, a decline in food supplies, war and toppling of the Moai.

In the 1700's Dutch explorers found 3,000 inhabitants in constant warfare, living a squalid existence in reed huts and caves, resorting to cannibalism while trying to survive.

In the 1800's Peruvian slave-traders struck the island abducting half of the population. The repatriated slaves and sailors brought smallpox and tuberculosis to the island. By the late 1800's less than 200 people remained.

Chile annexed the island in 1888 and in 1955 the Norwegian explorer Thor Heyerdahl convinced the local Governor to upright some of the toppled Moai. Today a daily flight from Santiago allows a few lucky tourists to visit this unique UNESCO world heritage site.



Ahu Tongariki



Ahu Tongariki



Playa Pea



Akahana



Akahana



Ahu Akivi



Ahu Tahai



Anakena Beach



Rano Raraku



Rano Kau



Bird on a Moai



Main Street Hanga Roa