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Unidad 7, Sucesos

Las culturas andinas prehispánicas

CARAL, the ancient city in Peru

00:00

Presenter: Caral, an ancient city in Peru, is becoming popular with tourists. The city

dates back about five thousand years and 1,500 years ahead of other populations on the American continent.

00:15

Reporter: Caral is a desert city built by the first civilization in the Americas. Archaeologists at the ancient, wind-swept ruins are pressing to make it one of Peru's top tourist attractions. Located about a three-hour car ride north of Lima, they hope to make it the second largest tourist attraction in the country, following Machu Picchu. The world-famous Machu Picchu draws half a million visitors a year. Crews have made scores of discoveries in 14 years. They have unearthed pyramids, an amphitheater and plazas, some of which date back 5,000 years.

00:53

Ruth Shady (archaeologist): Whoever constructed the building had a plan with a design for the craftwork. While constructing it they were able to decorate the walls of the building, which demonstrates more complexity in the engineering.

01:09

Reporter: Shady recently petitioned for the project to be added to UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites, like Machu Picchu.

01:17

Ruth Shady: Caral was 1,500 years ahead of other populations on the American continent. It was alone and this is interesting as a laboratory of comparison because we can see what we have in common with the old continent, and how we are different.

01:35

Reporter: Caral does not have the five-star hotels and gourmet restaurants that Machu Picchu has. It costs just a few dollars to visit Caral and there aren't any big crowds yet. About 44,000 people visited last year.

01:49

Edmund Sheehey (tourist): The archaeological site is special; this is much more interesting. The tremendous sense of history, beautifully prepared, and the wonderful mountainous setting.

02:00

Reporter: Recently, the town nearest the ruins opened its first hotel. It has only 10 rooms, but it is a start to accommodating more tourists as excitement grows over Caral.

02:13

Graciela Signori (tourist): Our ancestors must have lived in a marvelous time and the truth is I am very interested in the mysteries and all who lived here.

02:20

Reporter: The project receives funding from the government. This will aid in construction of basic infrastructure, like roads.

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