

# Archeologists in Brazil find imperial objects (Update)

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An intact water bottle with the engraving, "To the royal family," is one of many pieces excavated from a site now being used for the extension of the city's Metro lines, in Rio de Janeiro, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. Archeologists have unearthed more than 200,000 pieces dating from the 17th through the 19th centuries. The plot, which was once the site of a slaughterhouse, is near the former imperial palace and is thought to have once been used as a landfill by the imperial family and others. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)

An ivory toothbrush thought to have belonged to Brazil's Emperor Pedro

II and a minty toothpaste made by a European chemist for the Portuguese queen are among more than 200,000 pieces dating from the 17th through 19th centuries that archeologists have unearthed from a site in Rio de Janeiro being used for an extension the city's subway lines.

A team of more than two dozen archeologists, historians and others began excavating the plot in northern Rio last March. The plot, once the site of a slaughterhouse, is near the former imperial palace and thought to have once been used as a landfill by the imperial family and others, team members said Wednesday.

The area, now a construction site for Rio's massive subway expansion projects, has not only yielded an impressive number of objects but also pieces in remarkably good condition, team leader Claudio Prado de Mello said.

"What is the most impressive is the intact state" of many objects, said Mello. "In archeology we usually find very fragmented pieces, but this time we're finding whole objects."

The ivory toothbrush thought to have belonged to Dom Pedro II, who ruled over Brazil from 1831-1889, has turned brown with age. Its boar bristles are long gone, but the inscription remains legible: "His Majesty the Emperor of Brazil." A round white porcelain pot emblazoned with "to the Queen of Portugal Maria of Saboia" is thought to have contained mint-flavored tooth paste made specially for the queen by a chemist with offices in London and Paris.



Archeologist and team leader Claudio Prado de Mello cleans a partially recovered porcelain plate in a subway expansion area in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. The area, which is now being used as a construction site for Rio's massive subway expansion projects, has not only yielded an impressive number of objects but also pieces in remarkably good condition dating from the 17th through the 19th centuries. "What is the most impressive is the intact state in which the objects are coming out of the ground in," said Mello. "In archeology we usually find very fragmented pieces, but this time we're finding whole objects." (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)

The site has also yielded dozens of intact glass and ceramic bottles thought to have once contained water imported from Europe for the imperial family. Six sealed bottles still contain unidentified liquids that the team plans to send to a laboratory for analysis. Dozens of coins and pipes were also found, along with a golden ring and a tie tack.

The excavation area has been covered up pending the subway expansion

project, which is scheduled to be ready ahead of the 2016 Olympic games that Rio is hosting. After project's completion, the excavations are to resume, Mello said.



Tarnished silver spoons are among the many pieces excavated from a site now being used for the extension of the city's Metro lines, in Rio de Janeiro, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. Archeologists have unearthed more than 200,000 pieces dating from the 17th through the 19th centuries. The plot, which was once the site of a slaughterhouse, is near the former imperial palace and is thought to have once been used as a landfill by the imperial family and others. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)



Archeologist and team leader Claudio Prado de Mello shows two sealed bottles containing unidentified liquids, in a subway expansion area in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. Archeologists have unearthed more than 200,000 pieces dating from the 17th through the 19th centuries. The excavation area has been covered up pending the subway expansion project, which is slated to be ready ahead of the 2016 Olympic games that Rio is hosting. After project's completion, excavations are slated to resume, Mello said. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)





Excavated bottles sit on a table in a subway expansion area in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. Archeologists have unearthed more than 200,000 pieces dating from the 17th through the 19th centuries. The plot, which was once the site of a slaughterhouse, is near the former imperial palace and is thought to have once been used as a landfill by the imperial family and others. The site has also yielded dozens of intact glass and ceramic bottles thought to have once contained water imported from Europe for the imperial family. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)



Spittoons are stored next to other unearthed ceramics in a subway expansion area in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. The area, which is now being used as a construction site for Rio's massive subway expansion projects, has not only yielded an impressive number of objects but also pieces in remarkably good condition dating from the 17th through the 19th centuries. The plot, which was once the site of a slaughterhouse, is near the former imperial palace and is thought to have once been used as a landfill by the imperial family and others, team members said. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)



Tooth paste porcelain pots are among the pieces excavated from a site now being used for the extension of the city's Metro lines, in Rio de Janeiro, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. Archeologists have unearthed more than 200,000 pieces dating from the 17th through the 19th centuries. The plot, which was once the site of a slaughterhouse, is near the former imperial palace and is thought to have once been used as a landfill by the imperial family and others. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)





Contained in a plastic covering is the lid to a round pot in white porcelain emblazoned, "to the Queen of Portugal Maria of Saboia" at a site now being used for the extension of the city's Metro lines, in Rio de Janeiro, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. The pot is thought to have contained mint-flavored tooth paste made specially for the queen by a chemist with offices in London and Paris. A team of more than two dozen archeologists, historians and others began excavating the plot in northern Rio last March. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)



An ivory toothbrush thought to have belonged to Brazil's Emperor Pedro II, is one of many items excavated from a site now being used for the extension of the city's Metro lines, in Rio de Janeiro, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2013. The toothbrush thought to have belonged to Dom Pedro II, who ruled over Brazil from 1831-1889, has turned brown with age, and its boar bristles are long gone, but its inscription remains legible. "His Majesty the Emperor of Brazil," it reads. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)

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