

Looking for the Lost City of Atlantis

13 March 2011, by David Isgur

Could the fabled lost city of Atlantis have been located? Using satellite photography, ground-penetrating radar and underwater technology, a team of experts (led by University of Hartford professor and archaeologist Richard Freund) has been surveying marshlands in Spain to look for proof of the ancient city. If the team can match geological formations to Plato's descriptions and date artifacts back to the time of Atlantis, we may be closer to solving one of the world's greatest mysteries.

A new National Geographic Channel documentary, *Finding Atlantis*, which will be broadcast nationally on Sunday, March 13, at 9 p.m. ET/PT, follows a team of American, Canadian, and Spanish scientists as they employ satellite space photography, ground penetrating radar, underwater archaeology, and historical sleuthing in an effort to find a lost civilization.

When a space satellite photograph identified what looked like a submerged city in the midst of one of the largest swamps in Europe, the Doña Ana Park in southern Spain, Freund was contacted to see if he could assemble his team to apply their cutting-edge technology (electrical resistivity tomography, which is a virtual MRI for the ground, ground penetrating radar, and digital mapping that quickly and efficiently maps the subsurface of a site and provides instantaneous results for excavators to follow) to this project. In 2009 and 2010, they worked with Spanish [archaeologists](#) and geologists to explore the remains of an ancient city that goes back some 4,000 years.

However, the ultimate solution to what happened to Atlantis was not resolved in the south of Spain but in Freund's discovery of a series of mysterious memorial cities built in the image of Atlantis in central Spain. Following Freund and his team, headed by geophysicist Paul Bauman from WorleyParsons in Calgary, Canada and geographer Philip Reeder from the University of South Florida, the documentary tracks the search for one of the great cultural icons of all time:

Atlantis.

The lost city of Atlantis is one of the world's most famous mysteries. According to Plato who wrote about it almost 2,600 years ago, Atlantis was "an island situated in front of the straits which are by you called the Pillars of Hercules" (The Straits of Gibraltar were known as the Pillars of Hercules in antiquity.), Using Plato's detailed account of the mysterious city as a map, *Finding Atlantis* searches the Mediterranean and Atlantic for the best possible location for Atlantis.

The film journeys to Turkey and the Greek islands of Crete and Santorini before heading to southern Spain, beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Plato says that Atlantis once faced a city called "Gadara," which is the ancient name for modern Cadiz. Here, catamarans and dive boats take the viewer deep into the ocean off the coast of Spain, as a crack team of marine archaeologists and geologists employ sonar and scuba in search of sub-surface man-made structures dating back to the Bronze Age.

And in the vast mudflats of the Guadalquivir river delta, scientists examine strange geometric shadows of what look to be the remains of a ringed city. Here, geophysicists and archaeologists employ the most advanced imaging technologies in the world to determine whether or not an ancient cataclysm suddenly buried a thriving civilization under meters and meters of ocean and mud.

Finally, *Finding Atlantis* presents the viewer with what is quite possibly the most intriguing piece of archaeology ever associated with Atlantis. Recently discovered 2,800-year-old ruins display an image carved in stone of what looks to be an Atlantean warrior - guarding the entrance to the lost, multi-ringed city!

Provided by University of Hartford

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