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## Bandurria

Bandurria is a monumental archaeological site located south of the Peruvian town of Huacho. With a length of around 5,000 years, corresponding chronologically to the period known as Late Late Archaic or Preceramic covering the years from about 4,000 to 2,000 BC.

### Location:

The archaeological site of Bandurria is located in the Huacho district, province of Huaura, Lima in Peru, in the area called Playa Chica, kilometer 141 of the Panamericana Norte. The archaeological site covers an area of 54 hectares and is being studied by a team led by archaeologist Alejandro Chu graduated from the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in Lima.

### Environment and surrounding landscape:

Due to leakage of Irrigation Santa Rosa, (which are also responsible for the destruction of part of the archaeological site of Bandurria) the area has a coastal wetland environment, rich in biodiversity that is known as the Wetland of Paradise or Playa Chica. The maximum length of the wetland is 8 km with a width varying between 100 m and 2 km (total area: 440 ha) divided into two lakes, ponds or lagoons (North and South) with a maximum depth of 1, 5 m. They have identified 19 plant species (11 terrestrial and aquatic 8), although the inventory is incomplete. Birds are the most representative of the fauna of this wetland have been identified to 125 species of birds, among which flamingos, herons, ducks, grebes and sea birds.

There are two species of fish and a reptile. The wetland is an important resting and feeding area for migratory birds.

Near the wetland is the area known as Playa Chica is a large bay located 10 kilometers south of the city of Huacho. Chica beach area comprises two distinct sections, the first is the corresponding beach Paradise on the south side of the bay, and the Playa Chica itself occupying the rest of the bay. In the south of this area stands the hill of 282 meters Sanu rising in the desert southwest coast to the site by creating a series of elevations and coastal streams contain abundant remains of prehispanic occupations.

### Origin of the name Bandurria:

Before the flood of 1973, the Playa Chica where the archaeological site was a vast desert plain which was known as the Pampas Bandurrias. The name refers to the bird Bandurria (*Theristicus caudatus*) which is a big and heavy ibis in various colors. The Bandurria bird has been described in detail by Hans and Maria Koepcke Koepcke, as follows: "A big, heavy ibis in various colors. Head and neck has white-ocrácreos, ocher brown crown and back, flanks and tail and black subcaudals. The wing is blackish with large gray-white spot, the breast is ocher-brown with gray stripe. Bare parts of the throat and around the eye are blackish, the peak is green with black tip, the eyes and legs are red. Emits loud and repeated cries something metal (1967: 54). "About its ecology, the Koepcke say: "The Bandurria is presented in a variety of vital areas of





semidesert appearance or low or sparse vegetation, as the banks of lakes and rivers, muddy beaches, marshes, meadows and wet grasslands, sandy hills with vegetation of flowering plants, cultivated and fallow fields. Often rests on hillsides or desert canyons. During the months of September nest in colonies on steep rocky slopes. It's a game bird. As a large dam and edible meat hunters are chasing a lot in some areas, requiring the regulation of hunting (1967: 54).

### General background of the site:

The archaeological site was discovered in 1973 Bandurria by Mr. Domingo Torero when the site was partially destroyed by the waters of Santa Rosa irrigation. The Torero Ing was the person who drew the attention of the authorities at the time of the irruption of the waters and rescued disturbed archaeological material. Subsequently, the site was investigated by Dr. Rosa Fung, in 1973 and 1977. These investigations allowed Bandurria dating as a site for the Late Archaic period (4th to 3rd millennium BC) were able to obtain dated from 4.500 to 4.300 years before present. From this research work could be defined as a village to Bandurria early coastal fishermen who presented the first evidence of a ceremonial stone architecture with reference to a small stone structure located in the southwest corner of the archaeological site. Until then, the archaeological sites of the Late Archaic period to the north-central coast, such as Bandurria, were known for several decades. However, many of them for their length, complexity architecture, and monuments had been placed chronologically at a later time, ie in the Formative period (2nd millennium BC).

In 1994, excavations began at Caral by Dr. Ruth Shady, this investigation allowed to date and define these monumental sites corresponded to the Late Archaic period, representing the origins of civilization in the Andes, as well as the oldest civilization the Americas. This work has revolutionized the concept that was about the rise of civilization in Peru and America, and have identified the Late Archaic period as a key to studying the past of Peru.

In August 2005, restarted the research on the site after more than 30 years of its discovery. Excavations at the site area by Archaeological Project have uncovered Bandurria a sector of monumental architecture built with boulders and mortar. This research was initially funded by financial support from the National Science Foundation of the United States, as part of the doctoral thesis of Alejandro Chu at the University of Pittsburgh. Subsequently, the Provincial Municipality of Huaura - Huacho in 2006 spent S / . 150,000 new soles for the continuation of the research.

These recent works have changed the previous concept that had the archaeological site of a village, as the evidence of monumental architecture makes it an urban center that was probably articulated the remaining monumental sites of the north central coast and reflect the pristine appearance of urbanism and civilization in the area. The site is divided into two distinct sectors:

### Domestic occupation sector:

The home area (Sector I) was the first area identified archaeological site and its investigation was what defined the character Bandurria villager. Corresponds to a dense domestic occupation up to 5 meters deep containing residential structures and remains of food and daily activities that have accumulated over time. Santa Rosa Irrigation destroyed 2/3 parts of this area.

### Monumental architecture sector:

At first glance, the monumental area Bandurria (Sector II) seemed a natural conformation composed of low-lying rocky hills. However, a thorough review of the surface and environment of these same elevations did show a character of artificial creation, which include at least 4 mounds greater, which is in turn associated with other smaller mounds.

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The principal mounds have a fairly pronounced relief, with average heights of 10 to 15 meters. The sides of several of these mounds are fairly regular, denoting the presence of underlying structures. The slope of several of these mounds have, in most cases, a regular and constant gradient, alternating with breaks in some cases by way of terraces and projected platforms. It is therefore likely that several sides of these mounds present stepped gables, and that these projections constitute platforms attached to the mounds. In addition to the mounds mentioned, there are several outcrops of ashpits and middens located in flat, open spaces that surround them, associated with small alignments of stones must also correspond to outcropping walls, indicating the connection of housing areas (perhaps elite residences) with the pyramids and other monumental buildings in the area.

### **Condition and state of the archaeological site Bandurria:**

Unfortunately Bandurria has been under a systematic destruction that began with the flood in 1973. Since we visited in 2002 for the first time the archaeological site was under observation due to the reason that it was invaded and destroyed by people which conform the Handicraft Cooperative "Jose Olaya" who have occupied the south side of the site with substandard housing structures. These people are dedicated to the extraction of reeds, bulrushes and reeds. Following a complaint submitted to the National Institute of Culture, October 29, 2002, issues the National Directorial Resolution No.1030 declaring the National Cultural Heritage of the Archaeological Zone Bandurria Monumental.

Later, in coordination with the Directorate General of the Archaeological Heritage of the National Institute of Culture, the delimitation of the archaeological site. On the other hand also the regional government has decided on the archaeological site of regional interest stating the archaeological work that are taking place in the archaeological monuments of the agreement Bandurria Regional Council No. 027-2005-CR/GRL.

With the support of various companies and institutions Huacho, has surrounded the archaeological site and have built two signs, one next to the Panamerican highway and the other (INC official sign) at the start of the archaeological zone.

*Any further information you wish to obtain such as pictures of high resolution you can contact us. Contact person for expeditions within Peru and guided tours in 4x4 expeditions please write to us under: mharbaum@mac.com / mharbaum@domiruth.com. Information on tours are available in following web sites: domiruthperutravel.com / peru4x4adventures.com*



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