

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:09,600

Down here is where the bones of Christopher Columbus were kept for centuries.

2

00:00:09,600 --> 00:00:12,360

You feel 100% confident that he's here.

3

00:00:12,360 --> 00:00:13,360

I don't believe it.

4

00:00:13,360 --> 00:00:14,360

I know it.

5

00:00:14,360 --> 00:00:15,360

This could be Christopher Columbus.

6

00:00:15,360 --> 00:00:16,360

Come on!

7

00:00:16,360 --> 00:00:17,360

Let's get out of here!

8

00:00:17,360 --> 00:00:18,360

We're just getting knocked down.

9

00:00:18,360 --> 00:00:39,720

Hey guys, come here!

10

00:00:39,720 --> 00:00:41,720

My name is Josh Gates.

11

00:00:41,720 --> 00:00:47,520

With a degree in archaeology and a passion for exploration.

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00:00:47,520 --> 00:00:50,880

I have a tendency to end up in some very strange situations.

13

00:00:50,880 --> 00:00:59,480

My travels have taken me to the ends of the earth as I investigate the greatest legends

14

00:00:59,480 --> 00:01:00,480

in history.

15

00:01:00,480 --> 00:01:01,480

We're good to try.

16

00:01:01,480 --> 00:01:02,480

Let's go.

17

00:01:02,480 --> 00:01:07,560

This is Expedition Unknown.

18

00:01:07,560 --> 00:01:12,040

My search for the true story of Christopher Columbus, much like the man himself, has already

19

00:01:12,040 --> 00:01:14,000

spanned two continents.

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00:01:14,000 --> 00:01:18,880

I've been to the Portuguese island of Madeira to sail in a replica of Columbus' flagship,

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00:01:18,880 --> 00:01:20,560

the Santa Maria.

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00:01:20,560 --> 00:01:25,400

And then cross the Atlantic to Haiti, where the real version was said to have run aground.

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00:01:25,400 --> 00:01:29,560

To find the legendary lost ship, I've been under the waves off the northern coast where

24

00:01:29,560 --> 00:01:31,560

we documented incredible wrecks.

25

00:01:31,560 --> 00:01:33,360

Oh my god!

26

00:01:33,360 --> 00:01:37,240

And even discovered a historic cannon along the shore.

27

00:01:37,240 --> 00:01:42,240

Now, archaeologist Elaine Norristin and I are on the coast of northern Haiti, trying

28

00:01:42,240 --> 00:01:50,680

to confirm the theory that Christopher Columbus' wrecked flagship may be trapped on land.

29

00:01:50,680 --> 00:01:55,800

We know that at least part of the boat was taken off the reef where it crashed in 1492,

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00:01:55,800 --> 00:02:01,800

and that Columbus hauled timbers onto land to form a fort called La Navidad.

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00:02:01,800 --> 00:02:06,440

What many people don't know is that not only did the Santa Maria crash, but Columbus left

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00:02:06,440 --> 00:02:11,920

39 of his men here while he sailed back to Spain for reinforcements.

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00:02:11,920 --> 00:02:16,280

The fortress of La Navidad was designed to protect them, though the local Taíano people

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00:02:16,280 --> 00:02:22,840

had been nothing but friendly to Columbus and his men.

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00:02:22,840 --> 00:02:28,720

The fort has never been found, but this area is turning out to be an archaeological hotspot.

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00:02:28,720 --> 00:02:32,560

Everywhere we put a shovel, we get something.

37

00:02:32,560 --> 00:02:36,480

Oh, oh, oh, oh!

38

00:02:36,480 --> 00:02:37,480

Right there.

39

00:02:37,480 --> 00:02:39,480

What is that?

40

00:02:39,480 --> 00:02:41,480

Is that ceramic?

41

00:02:42,040 --> 00:02:44,040

Look at that.

42

00:02:44,040 --> 00:02:46,040

Look at that.

43

00:02:46,040 --> 00:02:48,040

Wow.

44

00:02:48,040 --> 00:02:52,040

Oh, oh, oh my God.

45

00:02:52,040 --> 00:02:57,040

This is amazing.

46

00:02:57,040 --> 00:02:59,040

Unbelievable.

47

00:02:59,040 --> 00:03:01,040

Look at that!

48

00:03:01,040 --> 00:03:06,320

This museum quality ceramic was made by the indigenous Taíano people and likely depicts

49

00:03:06,320 --> 00:03:10,000

a leader, perhaps even the local king who met Columbus.

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00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:16,520

This is a significant piece and also that's a proof that the Taíano village was there.

51

00:03:16,520 --> 00:03:17,520

Right.

52

00:03:17,520 --> 00:03:19,040

How old do you think this is?

53

00:03:19,040 --> 00:03:22,840

Maybe seven or eight hundred years.

54

00:03:22,840 --> 00:03:27,600

What Alen and other historians are discovering here paints a grim picture of Columbus and

55

00:03:27,600 --> 00:03:28,960

his crew.

56

00:03:28,960 --> 00:03:32,400

According to historic documents, Columbus grew impatient when he couldn't find the

57

00:03:32,400 --> 00:03:35,560

riches he promised to bring back to the court of Spain.

58

00:03:35,560 --> 00:03:43,080

Soon, the friendly Taíano were being abused, forced to hunt for gold that didn't exist.

59

00:03:43,080 --> 00:03:47,800

The mistreatment was so bad that after Columbus left a part of his crew behind, the natives

60

00:03:47,800 --> 00:03:51,400

murdered them and burned the fort.

61

00:03:51,400 --> 00:03:56,360

This artifact is proof that a significant settlement was located right under our feet,

62

00:03:56,360 --> 00:04:01,600

perhaps even the fort of La Navidad itself and the remains of Columbus' flagship could

63

00:04:01,600 --> 00:04:02,600

be next.

64

00:04:02,600 --> 00:04:06,080

I think there's no question that you're in the right spot, so it's just going to take

65

00:04:06,080 --> 00:04:07,600

some time to find it.

66

00:04:07,600 --> 00:04:08,600

Absolutely.

67

00:04:08,600 --> 00:04:09,600

Wow.

68

00:04:09,600 --> 00:04:12,880

But the story of Columbus doesn't end here.

69

00:04:12,880 --> 00:04:17,740

After losing his flagship, Columbus limps back to Spain on a grueling two-month voyage.

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00:04:17,740 --> 00:04:22,680

He's declared a hero and named the Admiral of the Ocean Sea and governor of everything

71

00:04:22,680 --> 00:04:23,920

he's found.

72

00:04:23,920 --> 00:04:29,360

But Columbus was blinded by a dangerous obsession to reach China and he was convinced that his

73

00:04:29,360 --> 00:04:34,800

first voyage had almost made it, so he sailed again.

74

00:04:34,800 --> 00:04:39,720

His second voyage brings him back across the Atlantic and past Dominica, Guadalupe, St.

75

00:04:39,720 --> 00:04:42,600

Croix, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

76

00:04:42,600 --> 00:04:48,800

On the northern coast of Haiti, he discovers his men are dead and his fort destroyed.

77

00:04:48,800 --> 00:04:53,240

A third voyage brings him to the very edge of South America and back to Europe.

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00:04:53,240 --> 00:04:57,680

And his fourth voyage takes him along the edge of Central America and along Honduras,

79

00:04:57,680 --> 00:04:59,960

Costa Rica and Panama.

80

00:04:59,960 --> 00:05:06,120

All told, he sails nearly 50,000 miles, ping-ponging his way through the Caribbean, never once

81

00:05:06,120 --> 00:05:11,160

setting foot on North America, and driven mad by his inability to understand where he

82

00:05:11,160 --> 00:05:12,160

is.

83

00:05:12,160 --> 00:05:17,920

It is a misguided but epic journey and the flagship that started it all may one day soon

84

00:05:17,920 --> 00:05:19,920

be found.

85

00:05:19,920 --> 00:05:25,760

So for today, the hunt for the Santa Maria continues.

86

00:05:26,120 --> 00:05:27,680

That's not the end of the story.

87

00:05:27,680 --> 00:05:32,560

Because maybe the greatest mystery associated with Columbus isn't the location of his flagship,

88

00:05:32,560 --> 00:05:36,360

but the location of the explorer himself.

89

00:05:36,360 --> 00:05:40,240

Though he died in 1506, that didn't stop his travels.

90

00:05:40,240 --> 00:05:45,260

In death, his bones undertook a bizarre journey, jumping from continent to continent until

91

00:05:45,260 --> 00:05:50,120

finally two different countries laid claim to be his final resting place.

92

00:05:50,120 --> 00:05:52,640

One of those countries is on this very island.

93

00:05:52,640 --> 00:05:56,480

And so to get to the bottom of this mystery, I'm going to have to cross borders and oceans

94

00:05:56,480 --> 00:06:01,320

and risk the scorn of two different nations to answer one very big question.

95

00:06:01,320 --> 00:06:07,160

Where is Christopher Columbus?

96

00:06:07,160 --> 00:06:11,480

The first possible location of Columbus' bones is in the Dominican Republic, which shares

97

00:06:11,480 --> 00:06:12,960

a border with Haiti.

98

00:06:12,960 --> 00:06:15,520

And it's not the friendly kind of sharing.

99

00:06:15,520 --> 00:06:19,240

You guys have to go to La Dona and get your passport.

100

00:06:19,240 --> 00:06:23,320

The remote border town of Malpas is a no man's land between the two nations.

101

00:06:23,320 --> 00:06:26,280

And it's not the kind of place you want to spend too much time.

102

00:06:26,280 --> 00:06:36,040

I get my passport stamped, and get the hell out of dodge.

103

00:06:36,040 --> 00:06:40,640

Unlike Haiti and its French influences, the Dominican Republic was a Spanish colony.

104

00:06:40,640 --> 00:06:44,000

So it's Arovoir Creole, Ola Español.

105

00:06:44,000 --> 00:06:49,080

Just over the border and already a very different feeling from the streets of border prints,

106

00:06:49,080 --> 00:06:52,960

roads are wide and well paved, generally feels a lot more orderly.

107

00:06:52,960 --> 00:06:58,280

It's a lot less chaotic.

108

00:06:58,280 --> 00:07:02,880

It's 168 miles from the Haitian border to the Dominican capital of Santa Domingo, where

109

00:07:02,880 --> 00:07:06,800

Columbus' bones may be hiding.

110

00:07:06,800 --> 00:07:10,800

On the way though, I pull off to see something that's been here since well before Columbus

111

00:07:10,800 --> 00:07:11,800

arrived.

112

00:07:11,800 --> 00:07:17,280

Up a dirt road and through the overgrown jungle is a network of massive caves, with a very

113

00:07:17,280 --> 00:07:19,600

big secret.

114

00:07:19,600 --> 00:07:24,200

In more than 55 chambers, one of the largest collections of pre-Columbian art in the new

115

00:07:24,200 --> 00:07:26,120

world is concealed.

116

00:07:26,120 --> 00:07:30,800

It was left here by the Taíno people who once thrived on these islands.

117

00:07:30,800 --> 00:07:38,520

This is a shaman, animals, some kind of ceremonial dance.

118

00:07:38,520 --> 00:07:43,400

In terms of unlocking the mystery of Columbus, so much of what we know about the arrival

119

00:07:43,400 --> 00:07:46,120

in the new world comes from the European side.

120

00:07:46,120 --> 00:07:50,520

It comes from Columbus' journals and it comes from other European historians.

121

00:07:50,520 --> 00:07:55,920

This idea that there was no writing in the new world is not entirely true.

122

00:07:55,920 --> 00:08:01,320

We have these written clues that exist here in these caves that actually can tell us about

123

00:08:01,320 --> 00:08:05,520

the people that were here before Columbus arrived.

124

00:08:05,520 --> 00:08:09,560

There were no horses on these islands until European explorers brought them.

125

00:08:09,720 --> 00:08:14,040

This symbol marks the moment after Columbus arrived and the beginning of the end for the

126

00:08:14,040 --> 00:08:15,840

Taíno.

127

00:08:15,840 --> 00:08:21,680

When Columbus came ashore in 1492, there were over one million Taíno throughout the Caribbean.

128

00:08:21,680 --> 00:08:26,240

By 1528, the population was barely 500 people.

129

00:08:26,240 --> 00:08:35,440

Mis-treatment, starvation, and disease killed off an entire civilization in 50 years.

130

00:08:35,440 --> 00:08:40,320

Further into the caves, the art is gone, but there appears to be something else.

131

00:08:40,320 --> 00:08:46,960

It's moments like this where an adventurer needs to stay calm, cool, and collected.

132

00:08:46,960 --> 00:08:47,960

Holy f***!

133

00:08:47,960 --> 00:08:48,960

They're touching me!

134

00:08:48,960 --> 00:08:49,960

I'm fine.

135

00:08:49,960 --> 00:08:50,960

Everything's fine.

136

00:08:50,960 --> 00:09:08,760

After recomposing myself, I continue my drive to Santa Domingo and am making great time

137

00:09:08,760 --> 00:09:09,760

toward the capital.

138

00:09:09,760 --> 00:09:10,760

Oh, perfect.

139

00:09:10,760 --> 00:09:11,760

That looks good.

140

00:09:11,760 --> 00:09:14,760

I guess I'll get the old AAA card out.

141

00:09:14,760 --> 00:09:16,760

I'm pretty sure I do have free towing.

142

00:09:17,760 --> 00:09:19,760

I'm changing a tire.

143

00:09:19,760 --> 00:09:24,760

What am I doing?

144

00:09:24,760 --> 00:09:27,760

F*** you.

145

00:09:27,760 --> 00:09:29,760

Columbus had it easy.

146

00:09:29,760 --> 00:09:32,760

No tires to change.

147

00:09:32,760 --> 00:09:33,760

Hold on.

148

00:09:33,760 --> 00:09:37,760

Back on the road, I finally roll into Santa Domingo.

149

00:09:37,760 --> 00:09:40,760

I'm going to go back to the city.

150

00:09:40,760 --> 00:09:44,760

I'm going to go back to the city.

151

00:09:45,760 --> 00:09:55,760

The capital was founded by Christopher Columbus' brother Bartholomew in 1496, making it the

152

00:09:55,760 --> 00:09:58,760

oldest European settlement in the Americas.

153

00:09:58,760 --> 00:10:04,760

This city is a laid-back colonial time capsule, cobbled together from an age when explorers

154

00:10:04,760 --> 00:10:13,760

like Ponce de Leon and Francis Drake called Santa Domingo home.

155

00:10:13,760 --> 00:10:19,360

Just above the city, though, is another worldly structure, a massive 700-foot-long concrete

156

00:10:19,360 --> 00:10:26,260

edifice in the shape of a cross.

157

00:10:26,260 --> 00:10:29,960

This is the Faro A Calón, or the Columbus Lighthouse.

158

00:10:29,960 --> 00:10:36,760

It was built in 1992 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the new world.

159

00:10:36,760 --> 00:10:42,160

It is an incredibly impressive building, but it is not without its detractors.

160

00:10:42,160 --> 00:10:45,860

After all, it cost a fortune and took six years to build.

161

00:10:45,860 --> 00:10:50,560

The Lighthouse portion, which used to shine up and could be seen from as far away as Puerto Rico,

162

00:10:50,560 --> 00:10:55,560

well, that hasn't worked in years because every time they turn it on, the entire city blacks out.

163

00:10:55,560 --> 00:11:01,760

And to many people, this building looks less like a monument to an explorer and more like

164

00:11:01,760 --> 00:11:04,560

a temple to a Catholic demigod.

165

00:11:04,960 --> 00:11:14,960

Leo Perez is a historian who's been studying Columbus for decades.

166

00:11:14,960 --> 00:11:19,960

Along with his assistant, he's agreed to show me the Lighthouse and its controversial prize possession.

167

00:11:19,960 --> 00:11:23,460

This is a really incredible building.

168

00:11:23,460 --> 00:11:25,460

Absolutely. Absolutely.

169

00:11:25,460 --> 00:11:31,460

And this particular structure in the middle here, this mausoleum, what's inside this box?

170

00:11:31,460 --> 00:11:34,460

The real remains of Christopher Columbus.

171

00:11:34,860 --> 00:11:36,860

Right here.

172

00:11:42,860 --> 00:11:45,360

Afternoon in the Dominican Republic.

173

00:11:45,360 --> 00:11:50,860

I'm on a quest to uncover the true nature of Christopher Columbus and his true final resting place.

174

00:11:50,860 --> 00:11:55,860

Here in the Columbus Lighthouse, historian Leo Perez has a simple answer.

175

00:11:55,860 --> 00:11:57,860

What's inside this box?

176

00:11:57,860 --> 00:11:59,860

The real remains of Christopher Columbus.

177

00:11:59,860 --> 00:12:01,860

He's right here.

178

00:12:01,860 --> 00:12:03,860

Right inside there.

179

00:12:04,260 --> 00:12:09,260

It's quite a feeling to be just a few feet away from the most famous explorer in the world.

180

00:12:09,260 --> 00:12:11,260

He got reds.

181

00:12:11,260 --> 00:12:14,260

But is this really the Admiral's final resting place?

182

00:12:14,260 --> 00:12:16,260

It's a question that has divided two nations.

183

00:12:16,260 --> 00:12:19,260

I've heard some people say that they think he's in Spain.

184

00:12:19,260 --> 00:12:23,260

Christopher Columbus died in May 2015, 2006 in Spain.

185

00:12:23,260 --> 00:12:31,260

Before he died, he wrote that he wanted to be buried in San Antonio.

186

00:12:32,160 --> 00:12:35,160

That Columbus wished to be buried here at all is curious.

187

00:12:35,160 --> 00:12:38,660

He had a love-hate relationship with the territory that he'd discovered.

188

00:12:38,660 --> 00:12:40,660

So why would he want to spend eternity here?

189

00:12:42,660 --> 00:12:46,160

You feel 100% confident that he's here?

190

00:12:46,160 --> 00:12:50,160

Nobody has proof otherwise.

191

00:12:50,160 --> 00:12:51,160

Right, they're here.

192

00:12:51,160 --> 00:12:53,160

I don't believe it. I know it.

193

00:12:53,160 --> 00:12:54,160

You know it.

194

00:12:54,160 --> 00:12:59,160

The Dominicans submitted their bones for carbon dating, and while they do appear to be from the correct time period,

195

00:12:59,560 --> 00:13:03,560

they refuse to submit the DNA within the bones for genetic identification.

196

00:13:03,560 --> 00:13:06,560

Why not DNA test these bones?

197

00:13:06,560 --> 00:13:12,560

Because we are sure, absolutely sure that we really have the remains of Christopher Columbus.

198

00:13:12,560 --> 00:13:14,560

We don't have to show to anybody.

199

00:13:14,560 --> 00:13:16,560

We have nothing to prove.

200

00:13:18,560 --> 00:13:20,560

Leo's opinion is rock solid.

201

00:13:20,560 --> 00:13:22,560

He's as sure about this as gravity.

202

00:13:22,560 --> 00:13:26,560

But the Dominicans' refusal to test the bones raises a lot of questions.

203

00:13:26,960 --> 00:13:31,960

So the only way to prove that Columbus is here is to get another sample of his DNA.

204

00:13:31,960 --> 00:13:38,960

In order to find one, I'll need to go to the place where the explorer's remains were held before they were moved to the lighthouse.

205

00:13:42,960 --> 00:13:48,960

I'm on my way to the nearby Cathedral of Santa Maria la Menor, when I realize that half the town is coming with me.

206

00:13:48,960 --> 00:13:53,960

I'm here during the Holy Catholic Feast of Corpus Christi, which celebrates the Eucharist,

207

00:13:54,360 --> 00:13:58,360

the belief in the power of the blood and body of Jesus Christ.

208

00:14:00,360 --> 00:14:05,360

As we snake through the narrow streets, I'm struck by the fact that Columbus not only claimed this island,

209

00:14:05,360 --> 00:14:09,360

but he and his followers infused it with religion.

210

00:14:10,360 --> 00:14:15,360

Today, nearly 70% of the Dominican Republic is still Catholic.

211

00:14:18,360 --> 00:14:20,360

I break away here at the Cathedral.

212

00:14:20,760 --> 00:14:27,760

Columbus' bones, along with those of his son Diego, arrived here in 1541 and were placed in an altar beside the congregation.

213

00:14:28,760 --> 00:14:33,760

Inside the Cathedral, I'm met by José Rodríguez, who works with the Archdiocese of Santo Domingo.

214

00:14:33,760 --> 00:14:36,760

He's agreed to tell me the rest of the story.

215

00:14:37,760 --> 00:14:40,760

This is an incredible building. How old is it?

216

00:14:41,760 --> 00:14:49,760

It's 504 years old. A lot of history. There's even a cannonball from Sir Francis Drake lodged in the roof.

217

00:14:50,160 --> 00:14:54,160

Amazing to think that something that's half a millennium old is still standing.

218

00:14:54,160 --> 00:14:59,160

This cathedral is very closely associated with the story of Columbus.

219

00:14:59,160 --> 00:15:01,160

Tell me what was discovered here.

220

00:15:01,160 --> 00:15:07,160

It was really an incredible thing. They found a box that contained the actual remains of Christopher Columbus.

221

00:15:07,160 --> 00:15:10,160

They weren't supposed to be there, but there they were.

222

00:15:11,160 --> 00:15:17,160

Originally, two boxes of bones were shipped here, one containing Columbus and the other his son Diego.

223

00:15:17,160 --> 00:15:19,160

Here's how it went down.

224

00:15:19,560 --> 00:15:26,560

Columbus dies in Viadolid and his body goes to Seville and then across the Atlantic to this church in 1541.

225

00:15:26,560 --> 00:15:35,560

Then, when it looks like the French are going to conquer Santo Domingo, the Spanish move the box containing the explorer's bones to Havana and then back to Spain for safekeeping.

226

00:15:36,560 --> 00:15:44,560

But during church renovations here in 1877, another box is found with the inscription Columbus Admiral of the Sea.

227

00:15:44,960 --> 00:15:51,960

The Dominicans moved their box to the Columbus lighthouse in 1992, believing that the Spanish took the wrong bones.

228

00:15:51,960 --> 00:15:54,960

And just like that, we have two graves for one man.

229

00:15:55,960 --> 00:16:00,960

So can you show me where the bones that were found here, they were put into a mausoleum.

230

00:16:00,960 --> 00:16:02,960

Where is the mausoleum? A donde?

231

00:16:02,960 --> 00:16:04,960

Here?

232

00:16:04,960 --> 00:16:09,960

Before being moved to the nearby lighthouse, the bones were in this church for nearly 250 years.

233

00:16:10,360 --> 00:16:16,360

We roll back the carpet to find a fixture that marks the location of the old altar where Columbus was interred.

234

00:16:16,360 --> 00:16:18,360

So this is the all that's left?

235

00:16:18,360 --> 00:16:20,360

Is this marker?

236

00:16:20,360 --> 00:16:22,360

The center?

237

00:16:22,360 --> 00:16:24,360

The center of the mausoleum. And the bones. Where was his body?

238

00:16:24,360 --> 00:16:28,360

They told everyone that Columbus was right there, but the truth is different.

239

00:16:28,360 --> 00:16:31,360

To keep the bones safe, they were hidden under the floor.

240

00:16:32,360 --> 00:16:34,360

And when was the last time somebody went down there?

241

00:16:34,360 --> 00:16:36,360

It's been decades.

242

00:16:36,360 --> 00:16:39,360

It was a secret that his bones were kept below.

243

00:16:39,760 --> 00:16:41,760

Is it possible to see what's down there?

244

00:16:41,760 --> 00:16:44,760

It's possible, but I can't be responsible for you.

245

00:16:44,760 --> 00:16:46,760

If you go down there, you go alone.

246

00:16:46,760 --> 00:16:48,760

Okay.

247

00:16:48,760 --> 00:16:50,760

Okay.

248

00:16:52,760 --> 00:16:56,760

I'm not going to pass up the opportunity to explore this venerated tomb.

249

00:16:56,760 --> 00:17:04,760

I slide away the pews, pull back the floor grade, and prepare to descend down into the darkness.

250

00:17:04,760 --> 00:17:06,760

That is one dark crypt.

251

00:17:07,160 --> 00:17:09,160

How cool is this?

252

00:17:18,160 --> 00:17:23,160

I'm getting an incredibly rare look beneath the floor of the Cathedral of Santo Domingo,

253

00:17:23,160 --> 00:17:28,160

where the remains of Christopher Columbus himself were interred for hundreds of years.

254

00:17:30,160 --> 00:17:32,160

How cool is this?

255

00:17:32,560 --> 00:17:36,560

I make my way through the passage, straining to see anything ahead of me.

256

00:17:37,560 --> 00:17:41,560

So, lots of old brickwork down here with newer foundation above.

257

00:17:41,560 --> 00:17:46,560

Perhaps a fragment of bone can still be found to conduct a DNA test.

258

00:17:49,560 --> 00:17:56,560

So, this is it. This is where the sarcophagus probably sat that held the bones of Columbus.

259

00:17:56,560 --> 00:17:59,560

It would have been right here on top of this old brickwork.

260

00:17:59,960 --> 00:18:03,960

This is the exact spot where Columbus once laid.

261

00:18:03,960 --> 00:18:07,960

I scour the platform for any fragments of bone, wood, or cloth.

262

00:18:07,960 --> 00:18:10,960

Looks like some sort of straw, some sort of line.

263

00:18:10,960 --> 00:18:12,960

But that's about it.

264

00:18:12,960 --> 00:18:15,960

Everything major has been moved out, no markings, no inscriptions.

265

00:18:15,960 --> 00:18:19,960

Just this very old platform where those bones would have sat.

266

00:18:19,960 --> 00:18:22,960

So, the hunt continues.

267

00:18:23,960 --> 00:18:28,960

So, if there's no DNA left in the crypt, and since the Dominicans refused to test the bones they've got,

268

00:18:29,360 --> 00:18:31,360

you might think we're at a dead end.

269

00:18:31,360 --> 00:18:33,360

Okay, let's keep moving.

270

00:18:33,360 --> 00:18:38,360

But remember, there's another country in the world that claims to have the bones of Columbus.

271

00:18:38,360 --> 00:18:42,360

To explore their side of the case, and to figure out who Columbus really was,

272

00:18:42,360 --> 00:18:45,360

I'm going to need to see where the great explorer died.

273

00:18:45,360 --> 00:18:48,360

And that means we're going to Spain.

274

00:18:54,360 --> 00:18:58,360

Located on the Iberian Peninsula, Spain is, well, as Hemingway once wrote,

275

00:18:58,760 --> 00:19:00,760

there's no country like it.

276

00:19:00,760 --> 00:19:02,760

And with the obligatory Hemingway reference out of the way,

277

00:19:02,760 --> 00:19:05,760

I can further say that Spain is indeed intoxicating.

278

00:19:05,760 --> 00:19:07,760

This place is outrageous.

279

00:19:07,760 --> 00:19:09,760

Is it possible for me to try?

280

00:19:09,760 --> 00:19:11,760

But of course. Everything is possible in paradise.

281

00:19:11,760 --> 00:19:13,760

This is a meat cone.

282

00:19:13,760 --> 00:19:17,760

It's hot outside, nothing takes the edge off like a big cone of meat.

283

00:19:17,760 --> 00:19:19,760

I mean, forget ice cream.

284

00:19:19,760 --> 00:19:21,760

Thriving on fiestas and siestas,

285

00:19:21,760 --> 00:19:23,760

it's Gothic cathedrals and Islamic domes

286

00:19:23,760 --> 00:19:26,760

show the fingerprints of every culture that has been here.

287

00:19:28,760 --> 00:19:30,760

Though Columbus wasn't born a Spaniard,

288

00:19:30,760 --> 00:19:33,760

there are few historic figures more revered here.

289

00:19:34,760 --> 00:19:37,760

In 1504, after four voyages to the new world,

290

00:19:37,760 --> 00:19:40,760

Columbus returns to Spain one last time.

291

00:19:40,760 --> 00:19:42,760

And on May 20th, 1506,

292

00:19:42,760 --> 00:19:46,760

he dies of congestive heart failure in the city of Valladolid.

293

00:19:50,760 --> 00:19:52,760

At the center of Valladolid is the Plaza Mayor,

294

00:19:52,760 --> 00:19:55,760

filled with incredible history and striking architecture,

295

00:19:56,160 --> 00:19:58,160

dating back to the 16th century.

296

00:20:00,160 --> 00:20:03,160

It's here where I meet up with professor of history,

297

00:20:03,160 --> 00:20:05,160

Javier Boreza Sanchez,

298

00:20:05,160 --> 00:20:07,160

and archaeologist, Adrian Williams.

299

00:20:07,160 --> 00:20:11,160

So Valladolid is the city where Christopher Columbus dies.

300

00:20:11,160 --> 00:20:12,160

Yes.

301

00:20:12,160 --> 00:20:13,160

And where does that happen?

302

00:20:13,160 --> 00:20:15,160

Well, that happened in the convent of San Francisco,

303

00:20:15,160 --> 00:20:18,160

which occupied this area of the Plaza Mayor.

304

00:20:18,160 --> 00:20:21,160

So I do not see a convent here today.

305

00:20:21,160 --> 00:20:23,160

It does not exist. That's right.

306

00:20:23,160 --> 00:20:24,160

You can't find it anymore.

307

00:20:24,560 --> 00:20:26,560

How does Columbus come to be buried in Valladolid?

308

00:20:26,560 --> 00:20:29,560

Truthfully, Christopher Columbus did not plan

309

00:20:29,560 --> 00:20:31,560

on dying here in Valladolid.

310

00:20:31,560 --> 00:20:33,560

He was here to meet the new king and queen.

311

00:20:33,560 --> 00:20:34,560

Death found him.

312

00:20:34,560 --> 00:20:36,560

But what about the will that I heard about

313

00:20:36,560 --> 00:20:38,560

in the Dominican Republic?

314

00:20:38,560 --> 00:20:40,560

According to that, Columbus explicitly wished

315

00:20:40,560 --> 00:20:42,560

to be buried in the new world.

316

00:20:42,560 --> 00:20:44,560

So why was he buried here first?

317

00:20:44,560 --> 00:20:47,560

He actually has a copy of the last will and testament

318

00:20:47,560 --> 00:20:49,560

for Christopher Columbus,

319

00:20:49,560 --> 00:20:51,560

written the day before he died.

320

00:20:51,560 --> 00:20:53,560

Javier is holding the proof,

321

00:20:53,960 --> 00:20:55,960

the last will Columbus dictated to a notary

322

00:20:55,960 --> 00:20:58,960

right here in Valladolid days before his death.

323

00:20:58,960 --> 00:21:00,960

And what does he write?

324

00:21:00,960 --> 00:21:03,960

No habla de en que lugar quiere ser enterrado.

325

00:21:03,960 --> 00:21:05,960

No habla del convento de San Francisco.

326

00:21:05,960 --> 00:21:08,960

So in this document, there's really no mention at all

327

00:21:08,960 --> 00:21:10,960

of the convent of San Francisco

328

00:21:10,960 --> 00:21:12,960

or where he would like to be buried.

329

00:21:12,960 --> 00:21:15,960

He doesn't really specify where he wants his remains to go.

330

00:21:15,960 --> 00:21:18,960

There is absolutely no mention of where he wanted to be buried.

331

00:21:18,960 --> 00:21:20,960

I know some folks in the Dominican Republic

332

00:21:20,960 --> 00:21:22,960

who would be unhappy to hear that.

333

00:21:23,360 --> 00:21:25,360

Finding a fragment of Columbus's DNA

334

00:21:25,360 --> 00:21:28,360

could not only tell us where the world's most famous explorer

335

00:21:28,360 --> 00:21:30,360

is buried, but it could tell us so much more

336

00:21:30,360 --> 00:21:32,360

about the man himself.

337

00:21:32,360 --> 00:21:36,360

But the fact is, he was 100% buried here first

338

00:21:36,360 --> 00:21:38,360

before his body got moved around.

339

00:21:38,360 --> 00:21:42,360

So is it possible that after almost 500 years,

340

00:21:42,360 --> 00:21:44,360

some of Columbus is still here?

341

00:21:44,360 --> 00:21:49,360

So we believe that his remains were moved to Sevilla in 1509.

342

00:21:49,360 --> 00:21:51,360

Even if they were careful,

343

00:21:51,760 --> 00:21:54,760

with removing the correct remains,

344

00:21:54,760 --> 00:21:56,760

we don't know if they removed all of them.

345

00:21:56,760 --> 00:21:57,760

Right.

346

00:21:57,760 --> 00:21:59,760

Some of them might still be behind.

347

00:21:59,760 --> 00:22:01,760

But in order to pinpoint this spot

348

00:22:01,760 --> 00:22:03,760

where Columbus may have been, seems difficult.

349

00:22:03,760 --> 00:22:06,760

Well, yes, I mean, the only way to get a good idea

350

00:22:06,760 --> 00:22:08,760

is from above.

351

00:22:08,760 --> 00:22:10,760

From up there?

352

00:22:10,760 --> 00:22:12,760

From up there, exactly.

353

00:22:18,760 --> 00:22:20,760

Let's do this.

354

00:22:21,760 --> 00:22:24,760

Well, here I have a map of the general area.

355

00:22:24,760 --> 00:22:26,760

The viaduct of today bears little resemblance

356

00:22:26,760 --> 00:22:28,760

to the city that Columbus died in.

357

00:22:28,760 --> 00:22:31,760

Adrienne is using centuries-old maps and GPS scans

358

00:22:31,760 --> 00:22:33,760

to peel back the layers of time.

359

00:22:33,760 --> 00:22:37,760

The plaza is key since it existed in Columbus's era.

360

00:22:37,760 --> 00:22:39,760

So where inside the nearby structures

361

00:22:39,760 --> 00:22:41,760

could he have been interned?

362

00:22:41,760 --> 00:22:44,760

Well, we know he was buried in a chapel inside the convent.

363

00:22:44,760 --> 00:22:46,760

Luckily, we still have these streets

364

00:22:46,760 --> 00:22:48,760

that are still in the middle of the city.

365

00:22:49,160 --> 00:22:51,160

A lot of those are the same streets?

366

00:22:51,160 --> 00:22:53,160

Yes, yes, a lot of these are the same streets.

367

00:22:53,160 --> 00:22:56,160

The exact location is a little difficult to pinpoint,

368

00:22:56,160 --> 00:22:58,160

but it could be located around very close

369

00:22:58,160 --> 00:23:00,160

to where this casino and restaurant are today.

370

00:23:00,160 --> 00:23:02,160

One of the most famous explorers in the world,

371

00:23:02,160 --> 00:23:04,160

he might be under a roulette table.

372

00:23:04,160 --> 00:23:06,160

Well, he did like risk.

373

00:23:06,160 --> 00:23:08,160

That's right, he's dead.

374

00:23:08,160 --> 00:23:11,160

Returning to ground level, we reunite with Javier

375

00:23:11,160 --> 00:23:13,160

and head to the possible site

376

00:23:13,160 --> 00:23:15,160

where the city of Columbus was located.

377

00:23:15,160 --> 00:23:17,160

We're going to go down the road

378

00:23:17,560 --> 00:23:19,560

to Javier and head to the possible site of the convent,

379

00:23:19,560 --> 00:23:21,560

which today is a lovely little bistro.

380

00:23:24,560 --> 00:23:26,560

Can I have a churro?

381

00:23:26,560 --> 00:23:28,560

Fortunately, we don't need reservations

382

00:23:28,560 --> 00:23:30,560

to explore their ancient sub-basement.

383

00:23:30,560 --> 00:23:32,560

In 2005, 17th century crypts

384

00:23:32,560 --> 00:23:34,560

were discovered under the nearby casino.

385

00:23:34,560 --> 00:23:36,560

We're hoping to get lucky

386

00:23:36,560 --> 00:23:38,560

and find even more.

387

00:23:44,560 --> 00:23:46,560

This is spooky down here.

388

00:23:46,960 --> 00:23:48,960

Yeah, look at all the layers here.

389

00:23:48,960 --> 00:23:50,960

You have brick and then plaster over that

390

00:23:50,960 --> 00:23:52,960

and then over this old stone here

391

00:23:52,960 --> 00:23:54,960

and beneath it all this really old wood.

392

00:23:57,960 --> 00:23:59,960

Who knows how old that is.

393

00:23:59,960 --> 00:24:02,960

I hate the idea that this wood is holding anything up.

394

00:24:05,960 --> 00:24:07,960

We searched the deep cellar of the restaurant

395

00:24:07,960 --> 00:24:09,960

for any sign of a burial that could be

396

00:24:09,960 --> 00:24:11,960

from the very beginning of the 19th century.

397

00:24:11,960 --> 00:24:13,960

We found a very large, very large,

398

00:24:14,360 --> 00:24:16,360

restaurant for any sign of a burial

399

00:24:16,360 --> 00:24:18,360

that could be from Columbus's time.

400

00:24:20,360 --> 00:24:22,360

Oh, got something.

401

00:24:22,360 --> 00:24:24,360

Hey, come here, come here, guys, come here.

402

00:24:24,360 --> 00:24:26,360

Hey, how are you? Adrian, come here.

403

00:24:26,360 --> 00:24:28,360

Hey, guys, come here.

404

00:24:36,360 --> 00:24:38,360

Oh, look at this.

405

00:24:38,760 --> 00:24:40,760

Hey, come here, come here, guys, come here.

406

00:24:40,760 --> 00:24:42,760

I'm hot on the trail of Christopher Columbus's bones

407

00:24:42,760 --> 00:24:44,760

in Viadolid, Spain.

408

00:24:44,760 --> 00:24:46,760

Deep underground and close to his first burial spot

409

00:24:46,760 --> 00:24:48,760

in a former convent,

410

00:24:48,760 --> 00:24:50,760

I've just found something that could be a breakthrough.

411

00:24:50,760 --> 00:24:52,760

Very small, but

412

00:24:52,760 --> 00:24:54,760

no question about it, that's a bone.

413

00:24:54,760 --> 00:24:56,760

Wow.

414

00:24:58,760 --> 00:25:00,760

You know, look, his bones moved around so many times.

415

00:25:00,760 --> 00:25:02,760

You never know.

416

00:25:02,760 --> 00:25:04,760

This could be a piece of him or a piece of someone else.

417

00:25:04,760 --> 00:25:06,760

I don't know.

418

00:25:07,160 --> 00:25:09,160

You never know.

419

00:25:09,160 --> 00:25:11,160

Who knows?

420

00:25:11,160 --> 00:25:13,160

We're some other very important figure that was forgotten.

421

00:25:13,160 --> 00:25:15,160

Right?

422

00:25:15,160 --> 00:25:17,160

Ooh, more.

423

00:25:17,160 --> 00:25:19,160

Look at that, more bone.

424

00:25:19,160 --> 00:25:21,160

There's no question that this basement

425

00:25:21,160 --> 00:25:23,160

is filled with remains from centuries past,

426

00:25:23,160 --> 00:25:25,160

but what we've come across here

427

00:25:25,160 --> 00:25:27,160

is not from human history.

428

00:25:27,160 --> 00:25:29,160

I think we've got an animal bone here.

429

00:25:29,160 --> 00:25:31,160

This looks like it could be from a dog.

430

00:25:31,160 --> 00:25:33,160

Could be Columbus's dog.

431

00:25:33,160 --> 00:25:35,160

That's a possibility.

432

00:25:35,560 --> 00:25:37,560

So unless this is the remains of Tin Tin's dog Snowy,

433

00:25:37,560 --> 00:25:39,560

I'm not in the presence of a famous explorer.

434

00:25:43,560 --> 00:25:45,560

But the search isn't over.

435

00:25:45,560 --> 00:25:47,560

I'm going to visit the city which the Spanish believe

436

00:25:47,560 --> 00:25:49,560

is Columbus's final resting place

437

00:25:49,560 --> 00:25:51,560

and where there's actual DNA

438

00:25:51,560 --> 00:25:53,560

that could unlock the mysteries of the man himself.

439

00:25:53,560 --> 00:25:55,560

I head to the train station.

440

00:25:55,560 --> 00:25:57,560

Before I know it, I'm on the move again.

441

00:25:57,960 --> 00:25:59,960

While people in the Dominican Republic

442

00:25:59,960 --> 00:26:01,960

are convinced that they have the bones of Christopher Columbus,

443

00:26:01,960 --> 00:26:03,960

folks here in Spain would disagree.

444

00:26:03,960 --> 00:26:05,960

They believe that his bones are safe and sound

445

00:26:05,960 --> 00:26:07,960

in the historic city of Seville.

446

00:26:11,960 --> 00:26:13,960

Seville is the capital of the Andalusia region

447

00:26:13,960 --> 00:26:15,960

and is the only river port in the country.

448

00:26:15,960 --> 00:26:17,960

Phoenicians, Romans, Moors and Castilians

449

00:26:17,960 --> 00:26:19,960

are the only ones who have the same history.

450

00:26:19,960 --> 00:26:21,960

They're the only ones who have the same history.

451

00:26:21,960 --> 00:26:23,960

They're the only ones who have the same history.

452

00:26:23,960 --> 00:26:25,960

They're the only ones who have the same history.

453

00:26:26,360 --> 00:26:29,360

Romans, Moors and Castilians have all made their marks here,

454

00:26:29,360 --> 00:26:31,360

leaving behind incredibly varied buildings

455

00:26:31,360 --> 00:26:33,360

from the Alcazar Castle,

456

00:26:33,360 --> 00:26:35,360

which moonlights on Game of Thrones,

457

00:26:35,360 --> 00:26:38,360

to the famed bullfighting arena, the Plaza del Toros.

458

00:26:38,360 --> 00:26:40,360

Yes, yes, yes.

459

00:26:40,360 --> 00:26:42,360

Just keep doing that, see.

460

00:26:45,360 --> 00:26:47,360

I'm headed to Seville's archives

461

00:26:47,360 --> 00:26:49,360

to do a bit of digging on Columbus

462

00:26:49,360 --> 00:26:51,360

and to get there, I hail not a taxi,

463

00:26:51,360 --> 00:26:53,360

but a horse.

464

00:26:53,760 --> 00:26:55,760

Seville, what's not to like?

465

00:26:55,760 --> 00:26:57,760

This is the kind of city you fall in love with

466

00:26:57,760 --> 00:26:59,760

in about every 20 minutes.

467

00:26:59,760 --> 00:27:01,760

You know what I mean?

468

00:27:01,760 --> 00:27:03,760

The food, the people, you just think I could live here.

469

00:27:03,760 --> 00:27:05,760

And then you go, oh, no, wait, it's 112 degrees.

470

00:27:05,760 --> 00:27:07,760

I carry on to the archive of the Indies.

471

00:27:07,760 --> 00:27:09,760

After all, the missing bones aren't the only clues

472

00:27:09,760 --> 00:27:11,760

that can unlock the secrets of Columbus.

473

00:27:11,760 --> 00:27:13,760

I carry on to the archive of the Indies.

474

00:27:13,760 --> 00:27:15,760

After all, the missing bones aren't the only clues

475

00:27:15,760 --> 00:27:17,760

that can unlock the secrets of Columbus.

476

00:27:23,760 --> 00:27:25,760

This was the nerve center of the Spanish Empire,

477

00:27:25,760 --> 00:27:27,760

30 miles of bookshelves

478

00:27:27,760 --> 00:27:29,760

filled with all of Spain's most important

479

00:27:29,760 --> 00:27:31,760

and heavily guarded documents.

480

00:27:31,760 --> 00:27:33,760

Pizarro's maps, Cortez's diaries.

481

00:27:33,760 --> 00:27:35,760

If you're a history nerd, you could die in here.

482

00:27:35,760 --> 00:27:37,760

I'm meeting Consuelo Varela,

483

00:27:37,760 --> 00:27:39,760

a professor at the Spanish National Research Council,

484

00:27:39,760 --> 00:27:41,760

to try to understand who Columbus really was.

485

00:27:41,760 --> 00:27:43,760

I'm meeting Consuelo Varela,

486

00:27:43,760 --> 00:27:45,760

a professor at the Spanish National Research Council,

487

00:27:45,760 --> 00:27:47,760

to try to understand who Columbus really was.

488

00:27:47,760 --> 00:27:49,760

So much of what we know about Columbus

489

00:27:49,760 --> 00:27:51,760

really comes from writings and journals.

490

00:27:52,160 --> 00:27:54,160

What kind of man emerges from the journals?

491

00:27:54,160 --> 00:27:56,160

A man who had an idea,

492

00:27:56,160 --> 00:27:58,160

an entrepreneur in one sense.

493

00:27:58,160 --> 00:28:00,160

Mm-hmm.

494

00:28:00,160 --> 00:28:02,160

In Columbus's copy of Marco Polo's book,

495

00:28:02,160 --> 00:28:04,160

he's made copious notes in the margins,

496

00:28:04,160 --> 00:28:06,160

expressing his dreams of finding riches in China.

497

00:28:06,160 --> 00:28:08,160

Marco Polo says that in the New World,

498

00:28:08,160 --> 00:28:10,160

there were rubies, everything.

499

00:28:10,160 --> 00:28:12,160

He's writing sapphires.

500

00:28:12,160 --> 00:28:14,160

Sapphires, sapphires, rubies.

501

00:28:14,160 --> 00:28:16,160

Right, rubies.

502

00:28:16,160 --> 00:28:18,160

Then she shows me something even more impressive.

503

00:28:18,160 --> 00:28:20,160

I'm not sure if I'm going to be able to read it,

504

00:28:20,560 --> 00:28:22,560

but I'm going to read something even more impressive.

505

00:28:22,560 --> 00:28:24,560

This is a document.

506

00:28:24,560 --> 00:28:26,560

Wow.

507

00:28:26,560 --> 00:28:28,560

This is from 1492.

508

00:28:28,560 --> 00:28:30,560

Yes.

509

00:28:30,560 --> 00:28:32,560

Oh, come on.

510

00:28:32,560 --> 00:28:34,560

So this is four months before the voyage.

511

00:28:34,560 --> 00:28:36,560

Yes.

512

00:28:36,560 --> 00:28:38,560

This document is more than historic.

513

00:28:38,560 --> 00:28:40,560

The signing of this piece of paper

514

00:28:40,560 --> 00:28:42,560

was the turning of an age.

515

00:28:42,560 --> 00:28:44,560

And what does the contract say?

516

00:28:44,560 --> 00:28:46,560

If he discovers some lands,

517

00:28:46,560 --> 00:28:48,560

he will be named Admiral of the Sea.

518

00:28:48,960 --> 00:28:50,960

And he will be named Admiral of the Sea.

519

00:28:50,960 --> 00:28:52,960

And he will be named Admiral of the Sea.

520

00:28:52,960 --> 00:28:54,960

And he will be named Admiral of the Sea.

521

00:28:54,960 --> 00:28:56,960

And he will be named Admiral of the Sea.

522

00:28:56,960 --> 00:28:58,960

And it turns out that Columbus was a pretty ruthless businessman.

523

00:28:58,960 --> 00:29:00,960

If his original contract was still valid today,

524

00:29:00,960 --> 00:29:02,960

we'd all be paying a tax to his family

525

00:29:02,960 --> 00:29:04,960

on everything we bought.

526

00:29:04,960 --> 00:29:06,960

But his writings also reveal

527

00:29:06,960 --> 00:29:08,960

a fiercely skilled and curious navigator

528

00:29:08,960 --> 00:29:10,960

who wanted to understand the unknown.

529

00:29:10,960 --> 00:29:12,960

This is astounding to see this.

530

00:29:12,960 --> 00:29:14,960

This document sets into motion

531

00:29:14,960 --> 00:29:16,960

a whole new world, really.

532

00:29:17,360 --> 00:29:19,360

His tenacity trip was incredible.

533

00:29:19,360 --> 00:29:21,360

Like, to decide to go to the ocean

534

00:29:21,360 --> 00:29:23,360

with those three vessels so small.

535

00:29:23,360 --> 00:29:25,360

And he never really got the fame.

536

00:29:25,360 --> 00:29:27,360

No, not at the moment.

537

00:29:27,360 --> 00:29:29,360

Yeah. If he could see today

538

00:29:29,360 --> 00:29:31,360

his legacy, what do you think he would?

539

00:29:31,360 --> 00:29:33,360

Well, he will be very, very, the most happiest man in the world,

540

00:29:33,360 --> 00:29:35,360

I suppose.

541

00:29:39,360 --> 00:29:41,360

With a clear sense of the man behind the legend,

542

00:29:41,360 --> 00:29:43,360

I head to the last major stop on my journey.

543

00:29:47,360 --> 00:29:49,360

Another place where the explorer

544

00:29:49,360 --> 00:29:51,360

might actually be located.

545

00:29:51,360 --> 00:29:53,360

And just like the lighthouse

546

00:29:53,360 --> 00:29:55,360

in the Dominican Republic,

547

00:29:55,360 --> 00:29:57,360

this place isn't exactly subtle.

548

00:29:57,360 --> 00:29:59,360

This is the Great Cathedral de Sevilla.

549

00:29:59,360 --> 00:30:01,360

It is the largest Gothic cathedral

550

00:30:01,360 --> 00:30:03,360

on the planet.

551

00:30:03,360 --> 00:30:05,360

It was built in the 15th century,

552

00:30:05,360 --> 00:30:07,360

took more than 100 years to complete.

553

00:30:07,360 --> 00:30:09,360

And it is an architectural masterpiece.

554

00:30:09,360 --> 00:30:11,360

And it is, at least according to the Spanish,

555

00:30:11,360 --> 00:30:13,360

the true final resting place

556

00:30:13,360 --> 00:30:15,360

of Christopher Columbus.

557

00:30:17,360 --> 00:30:19,360

The interior of the cathedral

558

00:30:19,360 --> 00:30:21,360

is awe-inspiring, soaring,

559

00:30:21,360 --> 00:30:23,360

mystical, and a place where us mere mortals

560

00:30:23,360 --> 00:30:25,360

feel very small.

561

00:30:25,360 --> 00:30:27,360

But there's no mistaking the main attraction here.

562

00:30:27,360 --> 00:30:29,360

Rising up over the congregation

563

00:30:29,360 --> 00:30:31,360

are four enormous statues

564

00:30:31,360 --> 00:30:33,360

carrying a draped coffin.

565

00:30:33,360 --> 00:30:35,360

It's so grand that you'd be forgiven

566

00:30:35,360 --> 00:30:37,360

for thinking they've got the pope up there.

567

00:30:37,360 --> 00:30:39,360

But in fact, it's believed by many

568

00:30:39,360 --> 00:30:41,360

to be the bones of an explorer.

569

00:30:41,360 --> 00:30:43,360

After going to the new world,

570

00:30:43,360 --> 00:30:45,360

the Spanish moved what they believed

571

00:30:45,760 --> 00:30:47,760

to be the right box with Columbus' bones

572

00:30:47,760 --> 00:30:49,760

to Havana before bringing them back

573

00:30:49,760 --> 00:30:51,760

to a monastery in Seville

574

00:30:51,760 --> 00:30:53,760

and then here to the nearby cathedral.

575

00:30:53,760 --> 00:30:55,760

But did they take the right box?

576

00:30:55,760 --> 00:30:57,760

Or, like the Dominicans claim,

577

00:30:57,760 --> 00:30:59,760

is someone else buried here?

578

00:30:59,760 --> 00:31:01,760

I try to get in for a closer look at the coffin.

579

00:31:01,760 --> 00:31:03,760

But then this happens.

580

00:31:11,760 --> 00:31:13,760

Very, very strict.

581

00:31:14,160 --> 00:31:16,160

Journalists are not allowed to be on camera

582

00:31:16,160 --> 00:31:18,160

with the tomb.

583

00:31:18,160 --> 00:31:20,160

That's against the rules.

584

00:31:20,160 --> 00:31:22,160

They have to remain separate.

585

00:31:22,160 --> 00:31:24,160

Very, very guarded.

586

00:31:24,160 --> 00:31:26,160

Despite making arrangements to film here,

587

00:31:26,160 --> 00:31:28,160

church officials are really uptight

588

00:31:28,160 --> 00:31:30,160

about anyone exploring this historic mystery.

589

00:31:30,160 --> 00:31:32,160

Honestly, it feels like it's bordering

590

00:31:32,160 --> 00:31:34,160

on conspiracy, and I try not to take it personally.

591

00:31:36,160 --> 00:31:38,160

Not a lot of leeway in there.

592

00:31:38,160 --> 00:31:40,160

Even just getting a camera crew in there

593

00:31:40,160 --> 00:31:42,160

was a huge amount of effort.

594

00:31:42,560 --> 00:31:44,560

First, I'm getting thrown out of a cathedral.

595

00:31:44,560 --> 00:31:46,560

Are you kidding me on this show?

596

00:31:49,560 --> 00:31:51,560

I may not have made it up to the coffin itself,

597

00:31:51,560 --> 00:31:53,560

but fortunately for me,

598

00:31:53,560 --> 00:31:55,560

someone else has.

599

00:31:55,560 --> 00:31:57,560

Several years ago, the remains were briefly transferred

600

00:31:57,560 --> 00:31:59,560

to the University of Granada for testing.

601

00:31:59,560 --> 00:32:01,560

So that's where I'm headed next

602

00:32:01,560 --> 00:32:03,560

to see if they manage to decipher the DNA.

603

00:32:03,960 --> 00:32:05,960

My meeting isn't for 24 hours,

604

00:32:05,960 --> 00:32:07,960

so I disembark in the city of Pamplona,

605

00:32:07,960 --> 00:32:09,960

where I can't help but notice that everyone is wearing

606

00:32:09,960 --> 00:32:11,960

white, red,

607

00:32:11,960 --> 00:32:13,960

and hiding behind a lot of very sturdy looking barriers.

608

00:32:13,960 --> 00:32:15,960

This is the Festival of San Fermin,

609

00:32:15,960 --> 00:32:17,960

though you might know it better

610

00:32:17,960 --> 00:32:19,960

as the running of the bulls.

611

00:32:19,960 --> 00:32:21,960

To witness the insanity for myself,

612

00:32:21,960 --> 00:32:23,960

I toss on the traditional attire,

613

00:32:23,960 --> 00:32:25,960

hoping to avoid an evil.

614

00:32:25,960 --> 00:32:27,960

I'm not sure if I can get to the end of this video,

615

00:32:27,960 --> 00:32:29,960

but I'm sure I can.

616

00:32:29,960 --> 00:32:31,960

I'm sure I can.

617

00:32:32,360 --> 00:32:34,360

In the meantime, I'm trying to get the attire,

618

00:32:34,360 --> 00:32:36,360

hoping to avoid any blood spatter

619

00:32:36,360 --> 00:32:38,360

on my crispy whites.

620

00:32:38,360 --> 00:32:40,360

This is the definition of madness.

621

00:32:40,360 --> 00:32:42,360

Here's what you need to know

622

00:32:42,360 --> 00:32:44,360

about the running of the bulls.

623

00:32:44,360 --> 00:32:46,360

It's been going on here in Pamplona for more than

624

00:32:46,360 --> 00:32:48,360

200 years.

625

00:32:48,360 --> 00:32:50,360

It's been in existence in Spain since the 14th century,

626

00:32:50,360 --> 00:32:52,360

and it is really, really crazy.

627

00:32:52,360 --> 00:32:54,360

They take

628

00:32:54,360 --> 00:32:56,360

6 very angry bulls

629

00:32:56,360 --> 00:32:58,360

that are going to die later on today

630

00:32:58,360 --> 00:33:00,360

in the bullfighting arena,

631

00:33:00,360 --> 00:33:05,360

exactly 8 a.m. 8,000 runners will flood these streets with one goal, to not get bored.

632

00:33:05,360 --> 00:33:09,360

But it is without a doubt the most dangerous half mile in the world.

633

00:33:12,360 --> 00:33:18,360

Since nothing in Spain is done with understatement, the bulls are released with the firing of a rocket in the main closet.

634

00:33:31,360 --> 00:33:41,360

I'm searching for the truth behind the two different final resting places of Christopher Columbus, in both the New World and the Old.

635

00:33:42,360 --> 00:33:47,360

Currently, I'm in Pamplona, where I'm trying to stay out of the way of some seriously angry livestock.

636

00:33:51,360 --> 00:33:56,360

Proponents of the running of the bulls will tell you that there have only been 15 deaths since 1910,

637

00:33:56,360 --> 00:34:01,360

though failed to advertise that there are more than 100 gorengs and trampolines each year.

638

00:34:03,360 --> 00:34:06,360

Just brutal. People just getting knocked down.

639

00:34:08,360 --> 00:34:11,360

Bulls are dangerous, the other people are just as dangerous.

640

00:34:11,360 --> 00:34:12,360

Of course.

641

00:34:23,360 --> 00:34:29,360

When it's all over, the bloodshed is minimal and no one is dead. Other than the bulls of course, which I can't say I feel good about.

642

00:34:30,360 --> 00:34:35,360

But as I wrestle with the question of whether or not this whole event is cultural or cruel or both really,

643

00:34:37,360 --> 00:34:40,360

I'm distracted by a parade of giants.

644

00:34:42,360 --> 00:34:49,360

There are four pairs of kings and queens here. One for each of the four corners of the world, including the Americas.

645

00:34:50,360 --> 00:34:52,360

Something added to the festival after the discovery of the New World.

646

00:34:58,360 --> 00:35:01,360

These guys are known as the caliquis.

647

00:35:02,360 --> 00:35:08,360

So they are designed to guard and protect the royal statues and they do that by beating people up.

648

00:35:11,360 --> 00:35:13,360

It's literally beating up children.

649

00:35:14,360 --> 00:35:17,360

Oh God, oh God, now it's starting to hurt a little bit actually.

650

00:35:18,360 --> 00:35:20,360

This guy has a serious anger management problem.

651

00:35:22,360 --> 00:35:25,360

With my senses now battered into numbness, I need to get to my meeting.

652

00:35:27,360 --> 00:35:33,360

I jump back on my train to meet Dr. Miguel Botella, a professor of anthropology at the University of Granada.

653

00:35:35,360 --> 00:35:37,360

How many years at the university? Cuántos años?

654

00:35:38,360 --> 00:35:39,360

Forty-two years.

655

00:35:40,360 --> 00:35:45,360

When Columbus' crypt of the Seville Cathedral was last opened, Dr. Botella was there.

656

00:35:46,360 --> 00:35:52,360

In 2006, his team did DNA testings on what was inside and he's agreed to share their findings with me.

657

00:35:53,360 --> 00:35:56,360

Had they opened the crypt in the cathedral in Seville before?

658

00:35:58,360 --> 00:36:02,360

Since 1898, it hadn't been opened any time.

659

00:36:03,360 --> 00:36:08,360

The problem he got is there were a lot of media and they were impression on him like,

660

00:36:09,360 --> 00:36:14,360

please doctor open the box and they were sort of expecting that Columbus is going to be there

661

00:36:15,360 --> 00:36:18,360

and there were only like 150 grams of ashes and bones.

662

00:36:19,360 --> 00:36:20,360

There was only 150 grams.

663

00:36:21,360 --> 00:36:22,360

So very little.

664

00:36:23,360 --> 00:36:27,360

Very little. They believe that people in the past had taken pieces of bones as souvenirs.

665

00:36:28,360 --> 00:36:30,360

So we were shocked to find there wasn't a full skeleton left.

666

00:36:32,360 --> 00:36:34,360

So this is the inside of the box?

667

00:36:35,360 --> 00:36:38,360

Inside the box there were small pieces of bones.

668

00:36:39,360 --> 00:36:42,360

He shows me on a model what small pieces remained in the crypt.

669

00:36:43,360 --> 00:36:47,360

Little bit of the jaw, arm, couple of leg bones and a little bit of vertebrae.

670

00:36:48,360 --> 00:36:51,360

They removed the bones to do DNA analysis.

671

00:36:52,360 --> 00:36:57,360

They then swabbed the gums of hundreds of people around the world with the last name Cologne in Spain or Colombo in Italy.

672

00:36:58,360 --> 00:37:03,360

The idea was to try to determine Columbus' nationality but the results were inconclusive.

673

00:37:04,360 --> 00:37:08,360

The DNA was a match but that doesn't settle the case. It only means it's the same family.

674

00:37:09,360 --> 00:37:13,360

It could be Columbus or it could be his son if the wrong box was brought back from the new world.

675

00:37:14,360 --> 00:37:17,360

We couldn't get enough DNA out of the sample to be sure.

676

00:37:19,360 --> 00:37:23,360

In terms of the physical examination, do you think that the samples match Columbus?

677

00:37:24,360 --> 00:37:29,360

Normally I'd compare the bones with the images of the person but Columbus never sat for a portrait.

678

00:37:29,360 --> 00:37:32,360

So every painting you've seen of Columbus isn't him.

679

00:37:33,360 --> 00:37:35,360

So every image that we have of him is made up?

680

00:37:39,360 --> 00:37:43,360

All invented by painters who never met him. We have no idea what he looked like.

681

00:37:44,360 --> 00:37:51,360

So I went to Santo Domingo and the people there are 100% confident that he's in Santo Domingo.

682

00:37:52,360 --> 00:37:55,360

They say that everybody in Spain has it wrong, you guys are crazy.

683

00:37:55,360 --> 00:37:57,360

Maybe, maybe crazy.

684

00:37:58,360 --> 00:38:01,360

What do you say to the people there? How do you refute that?

685

00:38:02,360 --> 00:38:08,360

If they are so confident then they should allow the world to test those bones. Until then Columbus

and his grave are a puzzle.

686

00:38:09,360 --> 00:38:11,360

Everything about him is a mystery, even in death.

687

00:38:12,360 --> 00:38:18,360

However, even if the Dominicans don't open the remains of the lighthouse there might still be hope for an answer.

688

00:38:18,360 --> 00:38:25,360

DNA technology is evolving fast. In the future machines may be able to use the small sample we have to get a definitive answer.

689

00:38:26,360 --> 00:38:29,360

We've taken great pains to preserve the DNA we've recovered.

690

00:38:30,360 --> 00:38:34,360

And were those samples kept here in this university?

691

00:38:35,360 --> 00:38:36,360

Is it possible to see the sample?

692

00:38:37,360 --> 00:38:38,360

Yeah.

693

00:38:41,360 --> 00:38:44,360

I waste no time in racing downstairs to the DNA lab.

694

00:38:44,360 --> 00:38:49,360

It's possible that a little bit of Christopher Columbus is on the other side of this door.

695

00:38:59,360 --> 00:39:07,360

I'm at the University of Granada in Spain where I just learned that on the other side of this lab door might lay some of the actual remains of Christopher Columbus.

696

00:39:11,360 --> 00:39:12,360

There you go.

697

00:39:15,360 --> 00:39:23,360

Security is tight. And precautions are extensive. And why wouldn't they be?

698

00:39:24,360 --> 00:39:30,360

As I've learned countries will go to extraordinary lengths to protect Columbus and his legacy.

699

00:39:31,360 --> 00:39:32,360

Here it is.

700

00:39:33,360 --> 00:39:34,360

This is it?

701

00:39:35,360 --> 00:39:36,360

CC.

702

00:39:37,360 --> 00:39:38,360

Christopher Columbus.

703

00:39:39,360 --> 00:39:42,360

So this right here, this tiny piece of liquid.

704

00:39:42,360 --> 00:39:43,360

Yeah.

705

00:39:43,360 --> 00:39:44,360

This could be Christopher Columbus.

706

00:39:44,360 --> 00:39:45,360

Yes.

707

00:39:45,360 --> 00:39:51,360

What I'm holding against all odds is very possibly a small vial of liquid history.

708

00:39:51,360 --> 00:39:57,360

This is incredible. The most famous explorer in the world that his DNA could be right here.

709

00:39:57,360 --> 00:39:59,360

Thank you so much for showing me this.

710

00:40:00,360 --> 00:40:01,360

You're welcome.

711

00:40:01,360 --> 00:40:03,360

I know it's a very little sample, but it's a big thrill.

712

00:40:03,360 --> 00:40:04,360

Yeah.

713

00:40:04,360 --> 00:40:05,360

It really is. It's amazing.

714

00:40:06,360 --> 00:40:08,360

What else do you have in here? Anything cool? Zombies?

715

00:40:09,360 --> 00:40:10,360

No.

716

00:40:10,360 --> 00:40:11,360

Aliens?

717

00:40:11,360 --> 00:40:12,360

Jimmy Hoffa?

718

00:40:15,360 --> 00:40:23,360

They're not quite there yet, but any day now these scientists may be able to confirm the last resting place of the great explorer himself.

719

00:40:26,360 --> 00:40:32,360

In the past two weeks, I have flown thousands of miles across the globe to shed light on the mysteries of Columbus.

720

00:40:32,360 --> 00:40:39,360

And looking for his lost flagship, the Santa Maria, reports that it has been found now seem premature.

721

00:40:40,360 --> 00:40:48,360

But there is evidence beneath the sea and on land of an entire era of history yet to be reported.

722

00:40:48,360 --> 00:40:49,360

That is a cannon.

723

00:40:50,360 --> 00:40:56,360

And in a search for Columbus's remains, I followed his five-century voyage across two continents.

724

00:40:56,360 --> 00:41:02,360

I've seen two coffins with his name on it and even held what could be a vial of his DNA.

725

00:41:03,360 --> 00:41:12,360

My professional hunch is that after so many relocations, Christopher Columbus's remains are likely scattered across the continents that he himself connected.

726

00:41:14,360 --> 00:41:21,360

But more than anything, I can't shake the feeling that I now know more than ever about Columbus and yet nothing at all.

727

00:41:22,360 --> 00:41:25,360

The man remains frustratingly out of focus.

728

00:41:25,360 --> 00:41:35,360

I see him as both hero and villain, who deserves the admiration for his daring mastery of the seas and condemnation for what he did when he crossed to the other shore.

729

00:41:36,360 --> 00:41:40,360

But without him, none of us who call the New World home would be here.

730

00:41:40,360 --> 00:41:45,360

Without his vision and his tenacity, our own lives may never have come to be.

731

00:41:45,360 --> 00:41:56,360

As citizens of the modern world, we have to live with Columbus's legacy, learn from his mistakes, celebrate his triumphs, and continue to explore new worlds beyond our own.