

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:05,000

They're living and exploring in places that seem uninhabitable.

2

00:00:05,000 --> 00:00:10,000

At some point though, in the 1400s, they vanished.

3

00:00:10,000 --> 00:00:11,000

Yeah.

4

00:00:13,000 --> 00:00:15,000

When we talk about the success of the Vikings,

5

00:00:15,000 --> 00:00:17,000

this is one of the big secrets to that success.

6

00:00:17,000 --> 00:00:18,000

Absolutely.

7

00:00:22,000 --> 00:00:24,000

This is gonna be interesting.

8

00:00:26,000 --> 00:00:28,000

Shut up! Look at that!

9

00:00:28,000 --> 00:00:30,000

If this is real, its history changes.

10

00:00:31,000 --> 00:00:32,000

What is that?

11

00:00:32,000 --> 00:00:34,000

It's the most viking thing you could find.

12

00:00:36,000 --> 00:00:38,000

Yeah, it just bones every way.

13

00:00:40,000 --> 00:00:41,000

I'll make sure I'm keeping score here.

14

00:00:41,000 --> 00:00:45,000

We got rough water, unexploded bombs, and now great white sharks.

15

00:00:45,000 --> 00:00:46,000

Got it!

16

00:00:49,000 --> 00:00:51,000

Literally just at your feet, there's history here.

17

00:00:52,000 --> 00:00:54,000

This is a god killer. This is Beth itself.

18

00:00:55,000 --> 00:00:56,000

Iceberg!

19

00:00:56,000 --> 00:00:58,000

Hold your breath.

20

00:01:06,000 --> 00:01:09,000

Fierce, fearless, and unstoppable,

21

00:01:09,000 --> 00:01:14,000

the Vikings crossed the North Sea and raided their first town in 793.

22

00:01:17,000 --> 00:01:19,000

And for the next 300 years,

23

00:01:19,000 --> 00:01:23,000

no place in Europe with a coastline or a river was safe.

24

00:01:24,000 --> 00:01:27,000

But today, most of what we think we know about the Vikings

25

00:01:27,000 --> 00:01:33,000

comes from old German operas, cartoons, and the hunkiest Avenger, Thor.

26

00:01:33,000 --> 00:01:38,000

But the fact is, the real Vikings shaped our modern world in profound ways

27

00:01:38,000 --> 00:01:41,000

that many of us don't even realize.

28

00:01:41,000 --> 00:01:44,000

They also left behind several enduring mysteries.

29

00:01:44,000 --> 00:01:47,000

One, how did they pull it off?

30

00:01:47,000 --> 00:01:52,000

What made these waterborne warriors so undeniably powerful?

31

00:01:52,000 --> 00:01:56,000

Archaeologists are making major discoveries in the Viking homeland

32

00:01:56,000 --> 00:02:00,000

that may finally unlock the secrets of their success.

33

00:02:01,000 --> 00:02:03,000

Two, what happened to them?

34

00:02:04,000 --> 00:02:09,000

Why, after colonizing Greenland, did the entire population there seemingly vanish?

35

00:02:09,000 --> 00:02:13,000

One researcher believes he may be unearthing the answer right now.

36

00:02:15,000 --> 00:02:18,000

And three, we know the Vikings were masters of the sea,

37

00:02:18,000 --> 00:02:21,000

but how far did they really sail?

38

00:02:22,000 --> 00:02:28,000

Norse charts and sagas speak of a distant settlement across the Atlantic known as Vinland.

39

00:02:28,000 --> 00:02:30,000

Many believe it's somewhere in Canada,

40

00:02:30,000 --> 00:02:37,000

but a previously lost piece of evidence could reveal that they landed in what is now the United States,

41

00:02:37,000 --> 00:02:40,000

500 years before any European.

42

00:02:40,000 --> 00:02:45,000

If so, it's a discovery that would rewrite American history.

43

00:02:45,000 --> 00:02:48,000

So grab your magic hammer, if you can lift it,

44

00:02:48,000 --> 00:02:51,000

and join me on a transatlantic voyage to four nations

45

00:02:51,000 --> 00:02:55,000

as I tackle the mystery's mighty Vikings.

46

00:02:58,000 --> 00:03:00,000

My name is Josh Gates.

47

00:03:02,000 --> 00:03:05,000

With a degree in archaeology and a passion for exploration,

48

00:03:05,000 --> 00:03:09,000

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

49

00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:14,000

It's just straight down! Unbelievable!

50

00:03:14,000 --> 00:03:17,000

My travels have taken me to the ends of the earth

51

00:03:17,000 --> 00:03:20,000

as I investigate the greatest legends in history.

52

00:03:21,000 --> 00:03:24,000

This is Expedition Unknown.

53

00:03:29,000 --> 00:03:35,000

I begin my investigation of the Vikings in what was once the center of their world, Denmark.

54

00:03:39,000 --> 00:03:44,000

When you think of Denmark, you probably think of cold winters, industrial design,

55

00:03:44,000 --> 00:03:47,000

and a seriously depressed Shakespearean prince.

56

00:03:47,000 --> 00:03:50,000

But all that melts away in the Danish capital of Copenhagen.

57

00:03:53,000 --> 00:03:56,000

This started as a Viking fishing village in the 10th century,

58

00:03:56,000 --> 00:04:01,000

but today it's a laid-back city lined with canals and cobblestones.

59

00:04:01,000 --> 00:04:04,000

In case you're wondering why I'm on a bicycle, that's kind of the deal here.

60

00:04:04,000 --> 00:04:08,000

There's more than 250 miles of bike lanes in Copenhagen,

61

00:04:08,000 --> 00:04:11,000

and considering that 50% of residents pedal to work,

62

00:04:11,000 --> 00:04:16,000

at any given time, there are six times as many bicycles as there are cars on the road.

63

00:04:18,000 --> 00:04:22,000

Sure, it's insanely expensive and the tax rate's about 45%,

64

00:04:22,000 --> 00:04:25,000

but hey, health care, college, and grad school are free.

65

00:04:25,000 --> 00:04:30,000

People work less than 40 hours a week, and they get six weeks of paid vacation a year.

66

00:04:30,000 --> 00:04:36,000

It's probably why Denmark regularly ranks as one of the happiest countries in the world.

67

00:04:38,000 --> 00:04:44,000

I bike past all the happy, well-insured people to the premier archive of Viking history,

68

00:04:44,000 --> 00:04:46,000

the National Museum of Denmark.

69

00:04:48,000 --> 00:04:54,000

Inside, the relics and treasures of the Vikings are on display from all over Scandinavia,

70

00:04:54,000 --> 00:04:57,000

because the Vikings weren't a single nation.

71

00:04:57,000 --> 00:05:02,000

They were Norsemen, people of the North, from what is now Norway, Denmark, and Sweden,

72

00:05:02,000 --> 00:05:07,000

who roamed and conquered in a golden age that began in the middle of the 8th century

73

00:05:07,000 --> 00:05:10,000

and lasted for almost 300 years.

74

00:05:11,000 --> 00:05:14,000

Today we tend to think of the Vikings as more brawn than brains,

75

00:05:14,000 --> 00:05:17,000

with their only goals to conquer and pillage.

76

00:05:17,000 --> 00:05:22,000

But that popular image of the savage Viking warrior may be far too simple.

77

00:05:25,000 --> 00:05:30,000

So how did this band of Northern tribes become so powerful, so feared?

78

00:05:32,000 --> 00:05:39,000

To get some answers, I leave the museum and hop into a car for a trip out of town.

79

00:05:40,000 --> 00:05:43,000

You know, considering how infamously successful the Vikings were,

80

00:05:43,000 --> 00:05:48,000

it's kind of amazing that most people probably can't name one Viking king.

81

00:05:48,000 --> 00:05:53,000

The Romans have Caesar and Nero, when we think of the Huns, we think of Attila,

82

00:05:53,000 --> 00:05:59,000

the Mongols have Genghis Khan, but you know, there is one Viking king whose name we should all know.

83

00:05:59,000 --> 00:06:01,000

And in fact, perhaps we already do.

84

00:06:01,000 --> 00:06:06,000

And he may be the key to figuring out what made the Vikings so powerful,

85

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

because archaeologists have just uncovered his long-missing fortress.

86

00:06:13,000 --> 00:06:18,000

I arrive at a site called Bowring and meet chief archaeologist Nana Holm.

87

00:06:18,000 --> 00:06:19,000

This is awesome.

88

00:06:19,000 --> 00:06:22,000

Yes, welcome to the Viking fortress.

89

00:06:29,000 --> 00:06:32,000

Bowring is what is known as a ring fortress.

90

00:06:33,000 --> 00:06:38,000

The archaeologists who uncovered it have built a skeletal frame to show its one-time footprint.

91

00:06:38,000 --> 00:06:42,000

Originally, it was constructed from the earth itself,

92

00:06:42,000 --> 00:06:48,000

a perfect 470-foot diameter circle with four gates aligned with the points of the compass.

93

00:06:48,000 --> 00:06:53,000

The bank was then shored up with timber beams to create a defensive shield

94

00:06:53,000 --> 00:06:56,000

to protect a set of Viking longhouses inside.

95

00:06:57,000 --> 00:07:02,000

The remains of those longhouses could contain a treasure trove of Viking relics.

96

00:07:04,000 --> 00:07:06,000

And how many of these fortresses have been found?

97

00:07:06,000 --> 00:07:08,000

So far we have five fortresses.

98

00:07:08,000 --> 00:07:10,000

They are spread out all over the country.

99

00:07:10,000 --> 00:07:13,000

And so all of these fortresses were built at the same time?

100

00:07:13,000 --> 00:07:20,000

These fortresses were all built within a couple of years by the same king, our great King Harold Bluetooth.

101

00:07:20,000 --> 00:07:22,000

And Bluetooth is in Bluetooth?

102

00:07:22,000 --> 00:07:24,000

Yes, Bluetooth as in Bluetooth.

103

00:07:24,000 --> 00:07:28,000

Bluetooth technology was invented by a Swedish company, Ericsson.

104

00:07:28,000 --> 00:07:31,000

And they named it after this great king, Harold Bluetooth,

105

00:07:31,000 --> 00:07:36,000

because he's a great communicator and he's the one who connects us all.

106

00:07:38,000 --> 00:07:43,000

King Harold Bluetooth united the Viking tribes of Denmark to rule for 30 years.

107

00:07:43,000 --> 00:07:48,000

One of the ways he consolidated control was through massive military projects.

108

00:07:48,000 --> 00:07:53,000

For example, the building of five huge ring fortresses, including this one.

109

00:07:54,000 --> 00:07:55,000

That's amazing.

110

00:07:55,000 --> 00:07:58,000

So every time we say Bluetooth, we're really talking about a Viking king.

111

00:07:58,000 --> 00:08:00,000

The biggest king of Denmark, yes.

112

00:08:00,000 --> 00:08:01,000

That's awesome.

113

00:08:01,000 --> 00:08:09,000

The Bluetooth name is baked right into the logo itself in the Norse runes for H and B, Harold Bluetooth.

114

00:08:12,000 --> 00:08:16,000

Nanna is excavating in hope of finding the remains of the Viking longhouses,

115

00:08:16,000 --> 00:08:20,000

including what may be the central headquarters of King Bluetooth himself.

116

00:08:21,000 --> 00:08:25,000

So this whole central part of the fortress, none of this has been excavated?

117

00:08:25,000 --> 00:08:26,000

Never been excavated.

118

00:08:26,000 --> 00:08:31,000

So we're going to be the first one to see what's underneath the top soil for a thousand years.

119

00:08:31,000 --> 00:08:33,000

And this is your secret weapon?

120

00:08:35,000 --> 00:08:36,000

Okay, so what do we do?

121

00:08:36,000 --> 00:08:38,000

We take the helmets and we go down on the trench.

122

00:08:38,000 --> 00:08:40,000

Down on the trench? Let's go, come on.

123

00:08:43,000 --> 00:08:46,000

Nanna and I grab hard hats and shovels and head down into the pit,

124

00:08:46,000 --> 00:08:50,000

where operator Tom begins to make methodical passes with the bucket.

125

00:08:50,000 --> 00:08:53,000

It's like doing brain surgery with an ice cream scoop.

126

00:08:55,000 --> 00:08:58,000

Is there an estimate as to how much time it took to build the fortress?

127

00:08:58,000 --> 00:09:01,000

It took less than a year to build it.

128

00:09:01,000 --> 00:09:02,000

Wow.

129

00:09:02,000 --> 00:09:05,000

So there has been a lot of people out here making this possible.

130

00:09:05,000 --> 00:09:09,000

So you need a lot of people, but you also need a lot of organization, right?

131

00:09:09,000 --> 00:09:13,000

Is there kind of an exactness to their design and their geometry?

132

00:09:13,000 --> 00:09:19,000

Yes, they are put out in the exact same measurements.

133

00:09:19,000 --> 00:09:23,000

And there is also the angles. It's so precise.

134

00:09:23,000 --> 00:09:25,000

There's real engineering here.

135

00:09:25,000 --> 00:09:27,000

And it's the first time in Denmark.

136

00:09:27,000 --> 00:09:30,000

I am, to say the least, impressed.

137

00:09:30,000 --> 00:09:34,000

The Vikings of Bluetooth's era weren't ragtag tribes of barbarians,

138

00:09:34,000 --> 00:09:38,000

but an organized, efficient society with advanced engineering skills

139

00:09:38,000 --> 00:09:41,000

and leaders that inspired them to greatness.

140

00:09:42,000 --> 00:09:45,000

We excavate inward toward the fortress' center.

141

00:09:45,000 --> 00:09:50,000

After Tom gives the ground a close shave, Nana spots something in the mud.

142

00:09:50,000 --> 00:09:52,000

You have to come over here, Jess.

143

00:09:55,000 --> 00:09:56,000

Find something.

144

00:09:56,000 --> 00:09:58,000

Actually, here we have a post hole.

145

00:09:58,000 --> 00:09:59,000

That's a post hole.

146

00:09:59,000 --> 00:10:00,000

That's a post hole.

147

00:10:00,000 --> 00:10:05,000

Post holes in the middle of the fortress are evidence of interior construction.

148

00:10:05,000 --> 00:10:10,000

We may, right now, be directly on top of an ancient longhouse.

149

00:10:10,000 --> 00:10:11,000

That's incredible.

150

00:10:11,000 --> 00:10:12,000

That's amazing.

151

00:10:12,000 --> 00:10:13,000

Nice job.

152

00:10:14,000 --> 00:10:16,000

I've only been at the site for a few hours,

153

00:10:16,000 --> 00:10:19,000

and they're already making significant finds.

154

00:10:19,000 --> 00:10:23,000

Further evidence of Viking engineering would come in the form of roads,

155

00:10:23,000 --> 00:10:26,000

which Nana believes would have been built leading to the fortress.

156

00:10:26,000 --> 00:10:29,000

She brings the excavator outside of the fortress' gates

157

00:10:29,000 --> 00:10:32,000

to look for evidence of an ancient causeway.

158

00:10:35,000 --> 00:10:36,000

What is this?

159

00:10:36,000 --> 00:10:39,000

Here we're going to see what is outside the fortress.

160

00:10:39,000 --> 00:10:40,000

Got it.

161

00:10:40,000 --> 00:10:42,000

Does that mean we have to get down inside this?

162

00:10:42,000 --> 00:10:43,000

We're going to get down.

163

00:10:43,000 --> 00:10:44,000

We're going to get dirty.

164

00:10:44,000 --> 00:10:45,000

Perfect.

165

00:10:47,000 --> 00:10:50,000

Nana's potential treasure trove of Viking relics

166

00:10:50,000 --> 00:10:54,000

is due in the great impersonation of a huge pit full of freezing mud.

167

00:10:54,000 --> 00:10:56,000

Nevertheless, she persists.

168

00:10:56,000 --> 00:10:57,000

We're going in.

169

00:11:03,000 --> 00:11:07,000

Once Tom digs us to the layer of earth that we believe is from Bluetooth's era,

170

00:11:07,000 --> 00:11:09,000

Nana and I start sifting through the muck.

171

00:11:16,000 --> 00:11:18,000

Somebody said that archaeology was glamorous.

172

00:11:20,000 --> 00:11:23,000

Just when I thought we couldn't possibly have any more fun in the mud,

173

00:11:23,000 --> 00:11:26,000

Nana detects something large below the surface.

174

00:11:26,000 --> 00:11:28,000

I think I got something here.

175

00:11:28,000 --> 00:11:29,000

You got something?

176

00:11:29,000 --> 00:11:30,000

I think I got something.

177

00:11:30,000 --> 00:11:31,000

Where?

178

00:11:31,000 --> 00:11:32,000

Feel it down here.

179

00:11:32,000 --> 00:11:33,000

Oh, yeah.

180

00:11:33,000 --> 00:11:34,000

What is that?

181

00:11:34,000 --> 00:11:37,000

It feels like a big piece of wood.

182

00:11:37,000 --> 00:11:40,000

Just move away some of this all.

183

00:11:40,000 --> 00:11:41,000

Yeah.

184

00:11:43,000 --> 00:11:44,000

Pull it up.

185

00:11:44,000 --> 00:11:45,000

You got it?

186

00:11:45,000 --> 00:11:46,000

Yes.

187

00:11:46,000 --> 00:11:47,000

Are you ready?

188

00:11:47,000 --> 00:11:48,000

Yeah.

189

00:11:48,000 --> 00:11:49,000

One, two, three.

190

00:11:49,000 --> 00:11:50,000

What is that?

191

00:11:58,000 --> 00:12:02,000

I'm in Denmark at an excavation of a recently discovered fortress

192

00:12:02,000 --> 00:12:06,000

built by the most important Viking king, Harold Bluetooth.

193

00:12:06,000 --> 00:12:08,000

Yeah, that Bluetooth.

194

00:12:08,000 --> 00:12:12,000

We're using a massive excavator, and it's already made a discovery.

195

00:12:13,000 --> 00:12:15,000

Joss, I think I got something here.

196

00:12:15,000 --> 00:12:16,000

You got something?

197

00:12:16,000 --> 00:12:17,000

I think I got something.

198

00:12:17,000 --> 00:12:18,000

Where?

199

00:12:18,000 --> 00:12:19,000

Feel it down here.

200

00:12:19,000 --> 00:12:20,000

Oh, yeah.

201

00:12:20,000 --> 00:12:21,000

Pull it up.

202

00:12:21,000 --> 00:12:22,000

You got it?

203

00:12:22,000 --> 00:12:23,000

Yes.

204

00:12:23,000 --> 00:12:24,000

Are you ready?

205

00:12:24,000 --> 00:12:25,000

Yeah.

206

00:12:25,000 --> 00:12:26,000

One, two, three.

207

00:12:26,000 --> 00:12:27,000

What is that?

208

00:12:27,000 --> 00:12:28,000

Wow.

209

00:12:28,000 --> 00:12:29,000

What is that?

210

00:12:29,000 --> 00:12:30,000

That's just a part of a wheel.

211

00:12:30,000 --> 00:12:31,000

Are you kidding me?

212

00:12:31,000 --> 00:12:32,000

That's a wheel.

213

00:12:32,000 --> 00:12:33,000

That's a wheel.

214

00:12:33,000 --> 00:12:34,000

You got it right there.

215

00:12:34,000 --> 00:12:37,000

So these would be spokes, and the wheel would be out here.

216

00:12:37,000 --> 00:12:38,000

The wheel would be out here.

217

00:12:38,000 --> 00:12:39,000

Shut up.

218

00:12:39,000 --> 00:12:41,000

Look at that.

219

00:12:41,000 --> 00:12:42,000

Look at that.

220

00:12:42,000 --> 00:12:46,000

This wheel would have been part of a Viking-era wagon.

221

00:12:46,000 --> 00:12:48,000

It's over a millennium old.

222

00:12:48,000 --> 00:12:50,000

It is a rare and important find.

223

00:12:50,000 --> 00:12:53,000

It also means Nanna might have just found her Viking road.

224

00:12:53,000 --> 00:12:58,000

So a thousand years ago, this piece of a Viking wagon

225

00:12:58,000 --> 00:13:00,000

ends up buried here.

226

00:13:00,000 --> 00:13:02,000

We're the next two people to touch it.

227

00:13:02,000 --> 00:13:03,000

Exactly.

228

00:13:03,000 --> 00:13:04,000

That's amazing.

229

00:13:04,000 --> 00:13:06,000

Nice job.

230

00:13:06,000 --> 00:13:08,000

To excavate the entire fortress,

231

00:13:08,000 --> 00:13:11,000

we'll take Nanna and her team at least another year.

232

00:13:11,000 --> 00:13:15,000

Though it's already clear this was not the home of indiscriminate pillagers,

233

00:13:15,000 --> 00:13:19,000

but rather an organized hierarchical civilization

234

00:13:19,000 --> 00:13:22,000

capable of advanced engineering and military precision.

235

00:13:22,000 --> 00:13:27,000

This organization was clearly a part of the Vikings' great success.

236

00:13:27,000 --> 00:13:30,000

To learn about another aspect of their power,

237

00:13:30,000 --> 00:13:35,000

I drive west to one of Bluetooth's other fortresses known as Treleborg.

238

00:13:42,000 --> 00:13:44,000

Unlike Nanna's cutting-edge find,

239

00:13:44,000 --> 00:13:47,000

the Treleborg ring was excavated in the 1940s,

240

00:13:47,000 --> 00:13:50,000

but there's still a lot here for me to learn.

241

00:13:52,000 --> 00:13:54,000

At first glance, the grounds look empty,

242

00:13:54,000 --> 00:13:56,000

but as I approach the site,

243

00:13:56,000 --> 00:13:59,000

Treleborg is anything but abandoned.

244

00:14:06,000 --> 00:14:09,000

Every year here in Treleborg, something really amazing happens.

245

00:14:09,000 --> 00:14:13,000

For nine days, more than a thousand people descend on these fields

246

00:14:13,000 --> 00:14:15,000

to live like Vikings.

247

00:14:15,000 --> 00:14:18,000

Now, let me be clear. This isn't a game. This isn't cosplay.

248

00:14:18,000 --> 00:14:20,000

These people are here to honor their heritage,

249

00:14:20,000 --> 00:14:21,000

to teach their children,

250

00:14:21,000 --> 00:14:25,000

and to turn back time to experience life in the Viking Age.

251

00:14:27,000 --> 00:14:30,000

The people here are teaching their children an ancient way of life

252

00:14:30,000 --> 00:14:34,000

and giving them the rare ability to live without technology.

253

00:14:34,000 --> 00:14:37,000

Laugh if you want, but during the zombie apocalypse,

254

00:14:37,000 --> 00:14:39,000

these are the folks who'll make it.

255

00:14:47,000 --> 00:14:49,000

There's also a tasty bit of culture

256

00:14:49,000 --> 00:14:52,000

that the Treleborg Vikings have dragged into the modern age,

257

00:14:52,000 --> 00:14:54,000

a honey wine called mead.

258

00:14:54,000 --> 00:14:57,000

Hello. Is this mead?

259

00:14:57,000 --> 00:14:59,000

Yeah, we've got 14 different types.

260

00:14:59,000 --> 00:15:00,000

14 different types?

261

00:15:00,000 --> 00:15:01,000

Yeah.

262

00:15:01,000 --> 00:15:03,000

Well, I had better try all of them.

263

00:15:04,000 --> 00:15:05,000

Famous last words.

264

00:15:05,000 --> 00:15:08,000

The bar is well stocked with enough flavors

265

00:15:08,000 --> 00:15:10,000

to give Baskin Robbins a run for their money.

266

00:15:10,000 --> 00:15:12,000

This one here is black currant.

267

00:15:12,000 --> 00:15:13,000

Black currant mead.

268

00:15:13,000 --> 00:15:14,000

This one is chestnut.

269

00:15:14,000 --> 00:15:16,000

Then we're going to mix up a little bit of cherry.

270

00:15:16,000 --> 00:15:17,000

Cherry mead.

271

00:15:17,000 --> 00:15:18,000

Cherry mead.

272

00:15:18,000 --> 00:15:19,000

What is this one?

273

00:15:19,000 --> 00:15:21,000

Well, take a guess.

274

00:15:21,000 --> 00:15:22,000

Chili flavored.

275

00:15:22,000 --> 00:15:23,000

Yeah.

276

00:15:23,000 --> 00:15:26,000

Yeah, it's subtle, but you can feel it coming through.

277

00:15:26,000 --> 00:15:27,000

Here it comes.

278

00:15:27,000 --> 00:15:28,000

I wet my whistle.

279

00:15:28,000 --> 00:15:29,000

Cheers.

280

00:15:30,000 --> 00:15:32,000

Then I drown it.

281

00:15:34,000 --> 00:15:36,000

Boy, it's going to be a long day.

282

00:15:38,000 --> 00:15:41,000

Then, for some reason, I decide to take a break.

283

00:15:48,000 --> 00:15:51,000

After a wake up call and a strong cup of Viking coffee,

284

00:15:51,000 --> 00:15:53,000

I remember why I've come to Trelloborg

285

00:15:53,000 --> 00:15:55,000

to meet a unique kind of warrior,

286

00:15:55,000 --> 00:15:57,000

modern day Viking soldiers

287

00:15:57,000 --> 00:16:00,000

who use authentic Viking techniques.

288

00:16:00,000 --> 00:16:02,000

I know one big reason for the Viking's success

289

00:16:02,000 --> 00:16:03,000

is how they fought.

290

00:16:03,000 --> 00:16:05,000

Now, Clinton Dale and his teammates

291

00:16:05,000 --> 00:16:07,000

are going to let me in on the secret.

292

00:16:08,000 --> 00:16:09,000

Clinton.

293

00:16:09,000 --> 00:16:10,000

Josh.

294

00:16:10,000 --> 00:16:11,000

Hi.

295

00:16:11,000 --> 00:16:12,000

Nice to meet you, man.

296

00:16:12,000 --> 00:16:13,000

How are you?

297

00:16:13,000 --> 00:16:14,000

Nice to meet you, Josh.

298

00:16:14,000 --> 00:16:15,000

How long have you been coming to this?

299

00:16:15,000 --> 00:16:16,000

I've been coming to Trelloborg

300

00:16:16,000 --> 00:16:17,000

and making Viking fighting

301

00:16:17,000 --> 00:16:19,000

and joining Viking fighting for seven years now.

302

00:16:19,000 --> 00:16:20,000

Seven years.

303

00:16:20,000 --> 00:16:21,000

Yes.

304

00:16:21,000 --> 00:16:22,000

Now, you don't sound like you're from Trelloborg.

305

00:16:22,000 --> 00:16:24,000

No, I'm from Texas.

306

00:16:24,000 --> 00:16:25,000

Actually, Texas.

307

00:16:25,000 --> 00:16:26,000

Austin, Texas.

308

00:16:26,000 --> 00:16:27,000

And you guys are fighting today?

309

00:16:27,000 --> 00:16:28,000

Yeah.

310

00:16:28,000 --> 00:16:29,000

I mean, if you'd like,

311

00:16:29,000 --> 00:16:31,000

you're looking like the type of person

312

00:16:31,000 --> 00:16:33,000

I think would do very well in this.

313

00:16:33,000 --> 00:16:34,000

You have big stature.

314

00:16:34,000 --> 00:16:36,000

You could hold a shield with no problem.

315

00:16:36,000 --> 00:16:38,000

If you would like to learn how to fight like a Viking,

316

00:16:38,000 --> 00:16:41,000

I think Paul Thurick and Rosmus and I

317

00:16:41,000 --> 00:16:42,000

can teach you this.

318

00:16:42,000 --> 00:16:45,000

And when you fight, is it like plastic weapons?

319

00:16:45,000 --> 00:16:46,000

Absolutely not.

320

00:16:46,000 --> 00:16:48,000

We fight with steel weapons.

321

00:16:48,000 --> 00:16:49,000

And do people ever get hurt?

322

00:16:49,000 --> 00:16:50,000

That's part of it.

323

00:16:50,000 --> 00:16:52,000

You can't go swinging metal weapons

324

00:16:52,000 --> 00:16:53,000

that other folks do not expect

325

00:16:53,000 --> 00:16:55,000

to occasionally get a lump or two.

326

00:16:55,000 --> 00:16:56,000

Right, which is why most people

327

00:16:56,000 --> 00:16:58,000

don't swing metal weapons at each other.

328

00:16:58,000 --> 00:16:59,000

Yeah.

329

00:16:59,000 --> 00:17:00,000

Okay, so what do we do?

330

00:17:00,000 --> 00:17:02,000

If you want to fight like a Viking,

331

00:17:02,000 --> 00:17:04,000

you have to dress like a Viking.

332

00:17:04,000 --> 00:17:05,000

Okay.

333

00:17:05,000 --> 00:17:08,000

I don't yet have another embarrassing period

334

00:17:08,000 --> 00:17:11,000

accurate costume and get ready to rumble.

335

00:17:14,000 --> 00:17:15,000

Oh, there he is.

336

00:17:15,000 --> 00:17:17,000

Now you're looking like a Viking.

337

00:17:17,000 --> 00:17:18,000

Huh?

338

00:17:18,000 --> 00:17:19,000

All right, I got the clothes.

339

00:17:19,000 --> 00:17:21,000

So now you have to have the training.

340

00:17:21,000 --> 00:17:22,000

Yeah, I need the skills.

341

00:17:22,000 --> 00:17:23,000

And we're going to teach you

342

00:17:23,000 --> 00:17:24,000

the basics of Viking fighting.

343

00:17:24,000 --> 00:17:25,000

Okay, let's go.

344

00:17:25,000 --> 00:17:26,000

Come on.

345

00:17:27,000 --> 00:17:29,000

But before I learn how to fight,

346

00:17:29,000 --> 00:17:32,000

I ask these experts about why their Viking forebearers

347

00:17:32,000 --> 00:17:35,000

were so skilled in these brutal arts.

348

00:17:35,000 --> 00:17:38,000

When you look at how far the Vikings traveled

349

00:17:38,000 --> 00:17:40,000

and how successful they were

350

00:17:40,000 --> 00:17:43,000

at raiding and pillaging and warfare in general,

351

00:17:43,000 --> 00:17:45,000

why do you think they were so successful?

352

00:17:45,000 --> 00:17:47,000

What gave them an edge as fighters?

353

00:17:47,000 --> 00:17:48,000

It's a war culture.

354

00:17:51,000 --> 00:17:53,000

They were brought up as fighters

355

00:17:53,000 --> 00:17:55,000

from when they were small.

356

00:17:56,000 --> 00:17:59,000

They have a culture where it's your deed

357

00:17:59,000 --> 00:18:01,000

that gives you value.

358

00:18:02,000 --> 00:18:03,000

We have a poem that said,

359

00:18:03,000 --> 00:18:06,000

friends die, foe die, one day you will die.

360

00:18:06,000 --> 00:18:10,000

But the memories of a good man will never die.

361

00:18:10,000 --> 00:18:13,000

They went into the battle already accepting

362

00:18:13,000 --> 00:18:15,000

that they could die just then.

363

00:18:16,000 --> 00:18:18,000

And this was an okay result.

364

00:18:18,000 --> 00:18:22,000

They wanted, like, this is a good afterlife for them in Valhalla.

365

00:18:23,000 --> 00:18:27,000

Valhalla was the mythical afterlife for Viking warriors,

366

00:18:27,000 --> 00:18:29,000

a divine hall where the honored dead

367

00:18:29,000 --> 00:18:32,000

would receive their reward to drink, sing,

368

00:18:32,000 --> 00:18:35,000

and celebrate for all eternity.

369

00:18:35,000 --> 00:18:36,000

Time was a promotion.

370

00:18:36,000 --> 00:18:37,000

Yes, absolutely.

371

00:18:37,000 --> 00:18:38,000

You got to go to Valhalla.

372

00:18:38,000 --> 00:18:41,000

And then you get to fight and drink perpetually.

373

00:18:41,000 --> 00:18:42,000

Right.

374

00:18:42,000 --> 00:18:43,000

Right.

375

00:18:43,000 --> 00:18:44,000

Boy, I love these guys.

376

00:18:44,000 --> 00:18:46,000

All right, so we're going to move on now

377

00:18:46,000 --> 00:18:47,000

and we're going to do some basic training.

378

00:18:47,000 --> 00:18:48,000

Okay.

379

00:18:50,000 --> 00:18:53,000

This is the weapon that won the battles in the Viking Age,

380

00:18:53,000 --> 00:18:54,000

the long spear.

381

00:18:54,000 --> 00:18:55,000

Uh-huh.

382

00:18:55,000 --> 00:18:56,000

You could use this from a distance

383

00:18:56,000 --> 00:18:59,000

and you could make devastating damage to your enemy,

384

00:18:59,000 --> 00:19:00,000

even when they're wearing the chain mail.

385

00:19:00,000 --> 00:19:01,000

Got it.

386

00:19:01,000 --> 00:19:03,000

Far from the berserkers of myth,

387

00:19:03,000 --> 00:19:07,000

the Viking fighting style actually favored distance weapons,

388

00:19:07,000 --> 00:19:10,000

like spears and long axes, over clumsier swords.

389

00:19:10,000 --> 00:19:13,000

Even the shield was used as an offensive weapon.

390

00:19:13,000 --> 00:19:14,000

Okay.

391

00:19:14,000 --> 00:19:15,000

It's looking really good.

392

00:19:20,000 --> 00:19:22,000

Suddenly, a horn sounds,

393

00:19:22,000 --> 00:19:25,000

and I realize what these guys have spent all year training for.

394

00:19:25,000 --> 00:19:28,000

Today, two armies of over 150 warriors

395

00:19:28,000 --> 00:19:30,000

are facing off on the battlefield,

396

00:19:30,000 --> 00:19:34,000

using only the 10th century's finest weapons and tactics.

397

00:19:34,000 --> 00:19:37,000

The combatants, who I'm amazed to find include me,

398

00:19:37,000 --> 00:19:40,000

cross over a moat to the arena.

399

00:19:41,000 --> 00:19:43,000

The rules are simple.

400

00:19:43,000 --> 00:19:46,000

Fight to the death, or at least the simulation of it.

401

00:19:53,000 --> 00:19:56,000

The armies face off on the pitch.

402

00:19:56,000 --> 00:19:59,000

They're wielding real axes, real spears,

403

00:19:59,000 --> 00:20:03,000

and there's a real chance of serious injury.

404

00:20:04,000 --> 00:20:06,000

Despite the crowd of spectators,

405

00:20:06,000 --> 00:20:08,000

you can hear a pin drop.

406

00:20:11,000 --> 00:20:13,000

And then, it's war.

407

00:20:30,000 --> 00:20:32,000

I'm in the middle of...

408

00:20:32,000 --> 00:20:34,000

Well, hang on, I've kind of got my hands full here.

409

00:20:37,000 --> 00:20:38,000

Ah!

410

00:20:44,000 --> 00:20:46,000

Well, holla, here I come.

411

00:20:46,000 --> 00:20:47,000

I'm ready.

412

00:20:47,000 --> 00:20:49,000

I'm so ready.

413

00:20:50,000 --> 00:20:51,000

Sorry about that.

414

00:20:51,000 --> 00:20:55,000

My performance at the Treloborg Viking Festival's battle

415

00:20:55,000 --> 00:20:58,000

wasn't exactly the Game of Thrones fantasy I had envisioned.

416

00:21:01,000 --> 00:21:03,000

Fighting continues for a solid hour.

417

00:21:03,000 --> 00:21:06,000

This winner-take-all melee is a nail-biter,

418

00:21:06,000 --> 00:21:08,000

and ends with a festival first.

419

00:21:14,000 --> 00:21:17,000

Last Man Standing isn't a man at all.

420

00:21:21,000 --> 00:21:23,000

Unprecedented for the festival, perhaps,

421

00:21:23,000 --> 00:21:25,000

but not to Norse history,

422

00:21:25,000 --> 00:21:27,000

where women were known to fight in battle.

423

00:21:28,000 --> 00:21:30,000

Recently, archaeologists in Sweden

424

00:21:30,000 --> 00:21:33,000

found that a decorated grave from the 10th century

425

00:21:33,000 --> 00:21:36,000

belonged to a female Viking warrior.

426

00:21:36,000 --> 00:21:39,000

It's time for a Viking celebration,

427

00:21:39,000 --> 00:21:41,000

which will involve a metric ton of mead

428

00:21:41,000 --> 00:21:43,000

and hopefully some designated driving.

429

00:21:51,000 --> 00:21:53,000

Having seen the Vikings' organization

430

00:21:53,000 --> 00:21:55,000

and engineering skills at Boring,

431

00:21:55,000 --> 00:21:57,000

and now their fighting prowess,

432

00:21:57,000 --> 00:22:00,000

I drive to learn the next secret of the Viking's success.

433

00:22:07,000 --> 00:22:10,000

Well, it's clear the Vikings were fierce fighters,

434

00:22:10,000 --> 00:22:14,000

but just strength alone does not make for a successful empire.

435

00:22:14,000 --> 00:22:16,000

You have to be able to mobilize that strength

436

00:22:16,000 --> 00:22:18,000

and take it abroad.

437

00:22:18,000 --> 00:22:20,000

And when it comes to navigating the high seas,

438

00:22:20,000 --> 00:22:22,000

the Vikings were maritime masters.

439

00:22:27,000 --> 00:22:29,000

To find out more about the mysterious secrets

440

00:22:29,000 --> 00:22:32,000

that gave the Vikings such an edge on water,

441

00:22:32,000 --> 00:22:34,000

I'm meeting Master Shipbuilder Martin Dehiel

442

00:22:34,000 --> 00:22:37,000

at the Viking Ship Museum just outside of Copenhagen.

443

00:22:38,000 --> 00:22:40,000

These are actual Viking ships.

444

00:22:40,000 --> 00:22:42,000

These are the actual Viking ships

445

00:22:42,000 --> 00:22:44,000

a thousand years old that you see around us.

446

00:22:44,000 --> 00:22:46,000

And let's talk about these boats. Where do they go?

447

00:22:47,000 --> 00:22:49,000

Because of these boats,

448

00:22:49,000 --> 00:22:52,000

the reach of the Vikings were extraordinary.

449

00:22:52,000 --> 00:22:54,000

And what is it generally about the design of these boats

450

00:22:54,000 --> 00:22:56,000

that makes them so good?

451

00:22:56,000 --> 00:22:58,000

It was really well engineered.

452

00:22:58,000 --> 00:23:01,000

It was quick and it was well, you know, it sailed really well.

453

00:23:01,000 --> 00:23:04,000

They were really capable of traveling long distance

454

00:23:04,000 --> 00:23:07,000

and taking hard seas in the North Sea.

455

00:23:07,000 --> 00:23:10,000

And you can say that it was like the F-16 of the Viking Age.

456

00:23:10,000 --> 00:23:12,000

Right.

457

00:23:13,000 --> 00:23:16,000

This advanced technology allowed for an astonishing expansion

458

00:23:16,000 --> 00:23:18,000

of the Vikings' ambition.

459

00:23:18,000 --> 00:23:22,000

They were able to extend west to Britain, Ireland and France,

460

00:23:22,000 --> 00:23:24,000

south to Spain and the Mediterranean,

461

00:23:24,000 --> 00:23:27,000

and as far east as Finland, Russia,

462

00:23:27,000 --> 00:23:30,000

and even down to the Black and Caspian Seas.

463

00:23:33,000 --> 00:23:36,000

The big question for me then is, how the hell do they build them?

464

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:37,000

I'll show you.

465

00:23:37,000 --> 00:23:38,000

You can show me?

466

00:23:38,000 --> 00:23:39,000

Yeah, I can show you. Yeah.

467

00:23:41,000 --> 00:23:44,000

We go behind the museum and the ships from the Viking past

468

00:23:44,000 --> 00:23:46,000

leap into the present.

469

00:23:46,000 --> 00:23:48,000

This workshop is where Martin and his team

470

00:23:48,000 --> 00:23:51,000

are building fully functional Viking vessels,

471

00:23:51,000 --> 00:23:55,000

the Viking Way, using only the materials and tools available

472

00:23:55,000 --> 00:23:58,000

to a 10th century Norse ship builder.

473

00:23:59,000 --> 00:24:00,000

Wow.

474

00:24:00,000 --> 00:24:02,000

This is the actual shipyard right here.

475

00:24:02,000 --> 00:24:04,000

Look at this place. This is crazy.

476

00:24:04,000 --> 00:24:07,000

Outside the workshop, I see something incredible.

477

00:24:07,000 --> 00:24:10,000

A brand new Viking ship taking shape.

478

00:24:10,000 --> 00:24:12,000

And how long will it take you to build this whole ship?

479

00:24:12,000 --> 00:24:14,000

Pretty much two years is the plan.

480

00:24:14,000 --> 00:24:15,000

Wow.

481

00:24:15,000 --> 00:24:17,000

So it's 11,000, 12,000 man hours.

482

00:24:17,000 --> 00:24:19,000

12,000 man hours to build this.

483

00:24:19,000 --> 00:24:24,000

And one of the really labor-chance things is to cleave out these oak logs.

484

00:24:27,000 --> 00:24:28,000

Okay, this is what I need to understand.

485

00:24:28,000 --> 00:24:33,000

How do we go from trees to, you know, a Viking ship?

486

00:24:33,000 --> 00:24:34,000

How does that happen?

487

00:24:34,000 --> 00:24:35,000

Yeah, I'll show you.

488

00:24:35,000 --> 00:24:36,000

Okay.

489

00:24:36,000 --> 00:24:39,000

In the 10th century, getting lumber wasn't as easy as running to Home Depot.

490

00:24:39,000 --> 00:24:42,000

The Vikings had to make planks out of these.

491

00:24:42,000 --> 00:24:44,000

And not only didn't they have chainsaws,

492

00:24:44,000 --> 00:24:47,000

they didn't have anything that could mill an oak log.

493

00:24:47,000 --> 00:24:50,000

The only thing they had was this.

494

00:24:50,000 --> 00:24:52,000

Yeah, I'll start it up.

495

00:24:53,000 --> 00:24:55,000

To split an oak tree the Viking way,

496

00:24:55,000 --> 00:25:00,000

Martin drives a series of wedges that get progressively larger into the wood.

497

00:25:00,000 --> 00:25:02,000

The physics are simple.

498

00:25:02,000 --> 00:25:04,000

In practice, it's brutal.

499

00:25:10,000 --> 00:25:11,000

Got one.

500

00:25:18,000 --> 00:25:22,000

At the Viking Ship Museum outside of Copenhagen, Denmark,

501

00:25:22,000 --> 00:25:28,000

master shipbuilder Martin Dehiel is teaching me how the Vikings established dominance over the seas

502

00:25:28,000 --> 00:25:32,000

and helped define three full centuries as the Viking era.

503

00:25:35,000 --> 00:25:41,000

This oak log is destined to become wood planks for a new Viking ship that Martin is building,

504

00:25:41,000 --> 00:25:43,000

if we can manage to split it in two.

505

00:25:43,000 --> 00:25:45,000

She's got one.

506

00:25:48,000 --> 00:25:49,000

Yeah!

507

00:25:50,000 --> 00:25:51,000

Well done.

508

00:25:51,000 --> 00:25:53,000

Nice job.

509

00:25:53,000 --> 00:25:58,000

Now we need to turn our unfinished board into a smooth, perfect plank.

510

00:25:58,000 --> 00:26:01,000

And the bandsaw won't be invented for 800 years or so.

511

00:26:01,000 --> 00:26:03,000

So what's the technique here?

512

00:26:03,000 --> 00:26:05,000

The technique is that you have to be not too, too tense.

513

00:26:05,000 --> 00:26:07,000

It's a little bit like skiing.

514

00:26:07,000 --> 00:26:08,000

This is nothing like skiing.

515

00:26:08,000 --> 00:26:09,000

Alright, alright.

516

00:26:11,000 --> 00:26:14,000

I give the wood a pass with the razor sharp axe.

517

00:26:14,000 --> 00:26:18,000

To my surprise, it goes through the plank like a knife through butter.

518

00:26:19,000 --> 00:26:21,000

Just like that, yeah.

519

00:26:22,000 --> 00:26:25,000

Okay, so once we get this down to the right thickness, then what happens?

520

00:26:25,000 --> 00:26:26,000

Yeah, then we need to fire.

521

00:26:26,000 --> 00:26:27,000

We need to fire.

522

00:26:27,000 --> 00:26:28,000

Okay.

523

00:26:30,000 --> 00:26:34,000

To make the plank more flexible and strong, we heat it over the coals.

524

00:26:35,000 --> 00:26:41,000

This activates a polymer in the wood called lignin, which allows the wood fibers to bend and then set.

525

00:26:42,000 --> 00:26:43,000

Wow, look at that.

526

00:26:43,000 --> 00:26:44,000

It's pretty good.

527

00:26:44,000 --> 00:26:45,000

It's like elastic now.

528

00:26:45,000 --> 00:26:46,000

Yeah, yeah.

529

00:26:46,000 --> 00:26:47,000

And that's just from heating it up.

530

00:26:47,000 --> 00:26:48,000

That's it.

531

00:26:48,000 --> 00:26:53,000

Once it's nice and flexible, we have only five minutes to get the plank into place on the boat's frame.

532

00:26:53,000 --> 00:26:56,000

Before it becomes as stiff as a... a board.

533

00:26:57,000 --> 00:26:58,000

Okay, in here?

534

00:26:58,000 --> 00:27:00,000

Yeah, up a little higher.

535

00:27:05,000 --> 00:27:07,000

Okay, giant Viking clothespin.

536

00:27:07,000 --> 00:27:08,000

Check.

537

00:27:08,000 --> 00:27:09,000

Yeah.

538

00:27:10,000 --> 00:27:11,000

Look at that.

539

00:27:11,000 --> 00:27:13,000

I mean, it's almost 90 degrees.

540

00:27:13,000 --> 00:27:14,000

That is.

541

00:27:14,000 --> 00:27:16,000

And that's forming the bottom of the keel of the boat.

542

00:27:16,000 --> 00:27:17,000

That's it, yeah.

543

00:27:17,000 --> 00:27:18,000

Wow.

544

00:27:18,000 --> 00:27:21,000

The technology, once you see it, feels so basic.

545

00:27:21,000 --> 00:27:22,000

It's elemental.

546

00:27:22,000 --> 00:27:23,000

That's true, yeah.

547

00:27:23,000 --> 00:27:24,000

But the skills required...

548

00:27:24,000 --> 00:27:26,000

You just have to know how.

549

00:27:26,000 --> 00:27:31,000

When we talk about the success of the Vikings, this is one of the big secrets to that success, right?

550

00:27:31,000 --> 00:27:32,000

Absolutely.

551

00:27:32,000 --> 00:27:35,000

The skill of building boats, but also the skill of sailing boats.

552

00:27:35,000 --> 00:27:36,000

Right.

553

00:27:36,000 --> 00:27:38,000

So that combination, absolutely.

554

00:27:38,000 --> 00:27:45,000

Thus far, I've seen the Vikings' ability to organize and build and got a firsthand taste of their battlefield skills.

555

00:27:45,000 --> 00:27:52,000

Now, I see how they developed the most advanced technology of the day to dominate the waters of Europe and beyond.

556

00:27:52,000 --> 00:28:08,000

I leave Martin behind and take to the road for an archaeological site that may show us how the Vikings use their sea power for more than we ever imagined.

557

00:28:08,000 --> 00:28:15,000

I'm driving now to the town of Riba, which is one of the most important Viking sites in the world.

558

00:28:15,000 --> 00:28:20,000

And I've arranged to meet with an archaeologist named Soren Sinbeck, who is a man of the word,

559

00:28:20,000 --> 00:28:31,000

an archaeologist named Soren Sinbeck, who is making extraordinary discoveries that could totally reshape our understanding of the true nature of Viking power.

560

00:28:31,000 --> 00:28:36,000

Arriving in Riba, I find a dig site that's taking up valuable real estate in the city center.

561

00:28:36,000 --> 00:28:39,000

I duck behind the barriers to meet Soren.

562

00:28:39,000 --> 00:28:40,000

This is amazing.

563

00:28:40,000 --> 00:28:41,000

Do you like it?

564

00:28:41,000 --> 00:28:44,000

You've got a site going, like, literally in the middle of town.

565

00:28:44,000 --> 00:28:49,000

Yeah. Riba is a pretty little town today, but in the Viking Age, it was a really amazing place.

566

00:28:49,000 --> 00:28:54,000

It's the first place we can call a town in Scandinavia, the first town of the Vikings.

567

00:28:54,000 --> 00:28:57,000

And so what's going on in this Viking town? What specifically is right here?

568

00:28:57,000 --> 00:29:03,000

What we're looking at here was really the marketplace, where the craftsmen and the merchants had their shops.

569

00:29:03,000 --> 00:29:05,000

This is the Viking Mall.

570

00:29:05,000 --> 00:29:06,000

This is the Viking Mall.

571

00:29:06,000 --> 00:29:08,000

And what's being sold at the Viking Mall?

572

00:29:08,000 --> 00:29:16,000

Well, everything you want, if you're a Viking, you can get jewelry, you can get glass beads, you can get a good sword, you can get a treasure chest.

573

00:29:16,000 --> 00:29:18,000

You could buy a padlock for your treasure chest.

574

00:29:18,000 --> 00:29:25,000

It's funny. It's just the image of Vikings strolling around in a market and trading for things and buying things.

575

00:29:25,000 --> 00:29:26,000

It makes perfect sense.

576

00:29:26,000 --> 00:29:30,000

It just sort of cuts against that stereotype of them as these marauders, you know?

577

00:29:30,000 --> 00:29:33,000

This is a much more civilized look at the culture.

578

00:29:33,000 --> 00:29:34,000

It's all about trade.

579

00:29:34,000 --> 00:29:41,000

It's all about exotic commodities being exchanged here because of the ability to sail.

580

00:29:41,000 --> 00:29:43,000

Can you show me what you're finding?

581

00:29:43,000 --> 00:29:44,000

Yes, sure.

582

00:29:44,000 --> 00:29:45,000

Join me.

583

00:29:45,000 --> 00:29:46,000

Please, yeah.

584

00:29:48,000 --> 00:29:52,000

We go into a pit that Soren's team is currently excavating.

585

00:29:52,000 --> 00:29:54,000

Relics are literally sticking out of the walls.

586

00:29:54,000 --> 00:29:57,000

This isn't digging, it's pointing.

587

00:29:57,000 --> 00:29:58,000

Look here.

588

00:29:58,000 --> 00:29:59,000

Can you see something reddish here?

589

00:29:59,000 --> 00:30:00,000

Yeah, absolutely.

590

00:30:00,000 --> 00:30:01,000

Yeah.

591

00:30:01,000 --> 00:30:04,000

This is a Viking crucible.

592

00:30:04,000 --> 00:30:10,000

Crucibles like this are containers that were put into a fire to melt precious metals like gold and silver.

593

00:30:10,000 --> 00:30:14,000

It was an essential tool for casting jewelry and other fine objects.

594

00:30:14,000 --> 00:30:15,000

That's incredible.

595

00:30:15,000 --> 00:30:19,000

It's a great find, but the pit has more to offer.

596

00:30:19,000 --> 00:30:22,000

Hang on, do you know what this is?

597

00:30:22,000 --> 00:30:27,000

It's what we call loom weight, which is used when you weave material, textile.

598

00:30:27,000 --> 00:30:33,000

Indications of a loom mean there were skilled artisans here making sophisticated crafts.

599

00:30:33,000 --> 00:30:38,000

If you never imagined a Viking knitting a sweater, you could start now.

600

00:30:38,000 --> 00:30:42,000

After finding evidence of a jeweler and a textile maker in this Viking mall,

601

00:30:42,000 --> 00:30:45,000

I'm half expecting to find a food court with a Sabaro pizza.

602

00:30:45,000 --> 00:30:48,000

But what we find next is nearly as exciting.

603

00:30:48,000 --> 00:30:49,000

Hang on.

604

00:30:49,000 --> 00:30:50,000

Is this a phone?

605

00:30:50,000 --> 00:30:51,000

No, I think it's...

606

00:30:51,000 --> 00:30:52,000

What is that?

607

00:30:52,000 --> 00:30:53,000

Okay, I think it's...

608

00:30:53,000 --> 00:30:54,000

So, so...

609

00:30:54,000 --> 00:30:56,000

No, hang on, do you know what this is?

610

00:30:56,000 --> 00:30:59,000

Oh, this is a mold.

611

00:30:59,000 --> 00:31:00,000

It's a casting mold.

612

00:31:00,000 --> 00:31:02,000

You can hear the metal?

613

00:31:02,000 --> 00:31:03,000

Yeah, yeah, this is for...

614

00:31:03,000 --> 00:31:05,000

Oh, look at that.

615

00:31:05,000 --> 00:31:07,000

You'd pour metal into that to make...

616

00:31:07,000 --> 00:31:08,000

metal ingots.

617

00:31:08,000 --> 00:31:11,000

The mold we found was a simple way to make ingots.

618

00:31:11,000 --> 00:31:16,000

Blocks of metal which could be melted, traded or processed into goods.

619

00:31:16,000 --> 00:31:17,000

I think we need to wash this.

620

00:31:17,000 --> 00:31:18,000

Yeah, okay, let's go.

621

00:31:18,000 --> 00:31:19,000

It's fantastic.

622

00:31:19,000 --> 00:31:20,000

Let's wash it out.

623

00:31:20,000 --> 00:31:26,000

We take our find outside to a washing station, along with another wheelbarrow full of archeological potential.

624

00:31:30,000 --> 00:31:31,000

Hello.

625

00:31:31,000 --> 00:31:32,000

Oh, hello.

626

00:31:32,000 --> 00:31:33,000

Hi, how are you?

627

00:31:33,000 --> 00:31:34,000

I'm Josh.

628

00:31:34,000 --> 00:31:35,000

Hi, Maneta.

629

00:31:35,000 --> 00:31:36,000

Hi, this is the washing station.

630

00:31:36,000 --> 00:31:37,000

It is.

631

00:31:38,000 --> 00:31:42,000

Soren washes a thousand years of dirt from our casting mold.

632

00:31:42,000 --> 00:31:47,000

Under the flow of the water, it turns out to hold even more significance than we thought.

633

00:31:47,000 --> 00:31:48,000

Hang on, that's over here.

634

00:31:48,000 --> 00:31:49,000

Oh, what's that?

635

00:31:49,000 --> 00:31:50,000

What is that?

636

00:31:57,000 --> 00:32:05,000

I'm at a dig site in Riba, Denmark, where archeologists are excavating what may be one of the first marketplaces in Scandinavia.

637

00:32:05,000 --> 00:32:10,000

One of the artifacts we've discovered may help us understand how the Vikings became so dominant.

638

00:32:10,000 --> 00:32:11,000

Hang on, that's over here.

639

00:32:11,000 --> 00:32:12,000

Oh, what's that?

640

00:32:12,000 --> 00:32:13,000

What is that?

641

00:32:13,000 --> 00:32:14,000

It's an axe.

642

00:32:14,000 --> 00:32:15,000

It's an axe.

643

00:32:15,000 --> 00:32:16,000

It's a little amulet.

644

00:32:16,000 --> 00:32:18,000

They reused the back of that for an amulet.

645

00:32:18,000 --> 00:32:19,000

The backside of it?

646

00:32:19,000 --> 00:32:20,000

Yeah.

647

00:32:20,000 --> 00:32:24,000

So you could cast your ingots here on the front side and then on the back side.

648

00:32:24,000 --> 00:32:25,000

Do you see that?

649

00:32:25,000 --> 00:32:26,000

How Viking can you get?

650

00:32:26,000 --> 00:32:27,000

That's incredible.

651

00:32:27,000 --> 00:32:29,000

It's the most Viking thing you could find.

652

00:32:29,000 --> 00:32:30,000

I mean, right?

653

00:32:30,000 --> 00:32:32,000

Does anything get more Viking than that?

654

00:32:32,000 --> 00:32:33,000

That is awesome.

655

00:32:35,000 --> 00:32:38,000

The marketplace at Riba makes it clear.

656

00:32:38,000 --> 00:32:47,000

The Vikings weren't just raiders, but traders who molded ingots for currency and artists who created stunning jewelry and crafts.

657

00:32:47,000 --> 00:32:59,000

Their organized society put their skills to use, building huge military fortresses, while their desire to trade and create pushed them to relentlessly expand.

658

00:32:59,000 --> 00:33:10,000

Their warriors fought with cutting-edge tactics and weapons, and their shipbuilding capabilities allowed them to explore all over the known world and beyond.

659

00:33:10,000 --> 00:33:20,000

It's there that I'm going next, to the place the Vikings expanded west and where the final secret of their success awaits.

660

00:33:20,000 --> 00:33:28,000

Iceland.

661

00:33:28,000 --> 00:33:33,000

Right at the top of my shortlist of the world's coolest capitals is the city of Reykjavik.

662

00:33:33,000 --> 00:33:40,000

It's got all the design sense of Scandinavia, but with this funky flair that is unmistakably Icelandic.

663

00:33:40,000 --> 00:33:47,000

It's kind of bohemian and backpackery, and yet at the same time it's lined with high-end shops and a killer food scene.

664

00:33:47,000 --> 00:33:54,000

In short, there's really no place else like it, which is perhaps not surprising considering it's an isolated island of modern-day Vikings.

665

00:33:55,000 --> 00:34:02,000

Iceland's capitals sits just below the Arctic Circle, and at the base of a massive volcano that's anything but dormant.

666

00:34:02,000 --> 00:34:08,000

The unique geography also contributes to a feeling that in the summer months can drive a person a little crazy.

667

00:34:08,000 --> 00:34:12,000

It is, and I f\*\*\* you not, 11.30 at night.

668

00:34:12,000 --> 00:34:19,000

It's like the sun is broken. Nothing works. Why? How does anybody sleep here? It doesn't make any sense.

669

00:34:24,000 --> 00:34:29,000

Don't let the metropolitan veneer of Reykjavik fool you. Iceland is wild.

670

00:34:29,000 --> 00:34:39,000

Just a few miles out of town is a brutal land, exactly like the one the Vikings first saw when they arrived here from Scandinavia 1200 years ago.

671

00:34:39,000 --> 00:34:48,000

By the time they got to Iceland, the Vikings were already a military powerhouse, but they weren't yet the cultural force that would resonate through history.

672

00:34:49,000 --> 00:35:00,000

To find out how Iceland helped the Vikings' empire and legend endure, I travel to the ancient village of Reykjavik, where I meet archaeologist Kevin Smith and his colleague Gudmundur Olofsson.

673

00:35:00,000 --> 00:35:07,000

So let's talk a little bit about how the Vikings came to be here. So in what year do the Vikings make it to Iceland roughly?

674

00:35:07,000 --> 00:35:09,000

Roughly around 870.

675

00:35:09,000 --> 00:35:16,000

Around 870. Why? Why come here? It seems like a very remote place. It's a hard winter. It's kind of an imposing landscape, really.

676

00:35:16,000 --> 00:35:23,000

One of the reasons is it was there and it was unoccupied. So if you think about it coming from Scandinavia, here's a huge island. Nobody there.

677

00:35:23,000 --> 00:35:25,000

This is a great place to set up shop.

678

00:35:25,000 --> 00:35:31,000

Right. And that is kind of the Viking way, right? They just keep sort of pushing out and out and finding new places.

679

00:35:33,000 --> 00:35:41,000

Vikings in Iceland farmed volcanic soil here and perfected new skills they hadn't mastered in Scandinavia, like writing.

680

00:35:42,000 --> 00:35:51,000

Reykjavik is culturally vital to Iceland and the Vikings because it is the hometown of a writer whose work makes Shakespeare look like a flash in the pan.

681

00:35:51,000 --> 00:36:02,000

This is the former home of Snorri Sturdlissen. And I would say that many people, by many people I mean me, don't really know who that is, but this is a name that we should know, right?

682

00:36:02,000 --> 00:36:03,000

Absolutely.

683

00:36:03,000 --> 00:36:09,000

Exactly. He's the guy who gives us the background to the Norse mythology.

684

00:36:10,000 --> 00:36:18,000

Sturdlissen was a local chieftain who wrote down the oral traditions of the Norsemen's mythology into a work known as the prose edda.

685

00:36:18,000 --> 00:36:22,000

The book features gods and legends we're still telling stories about today.

686

00:36:24,000 --> 00:36:34,000

Odin, the Allfather. Thor, the Thunder God with his mighty hammer. And Freya, the goddess of love, fertility, and war.

687

00:36:35,000 --> 00:36:50,000

As the Viking myths encouraged warriors to join their fallen brethren in Valhalla, so too did their gods prepare for Ragnarok, a world-ending cataclysm when the gods would perish in the flame of the fire demon Surtur.

688

00:36:51,000 --> 00:36:55,000

I'm sure the Thor Ragnarok movie will be totally faithful to all of this.

689

00:36:55,000 --> 00:36:56,000

Absolutely.

690

00:36:56,000 --> 00:37:06,000

What is amazing is how much of literary and pop culture has been influenced by Viking mythology, by Norse mythology.

691

00:37:06,000 --> 00:37:12,000

I mean, look at Game of Thrones right now, that same sense of the battle in the north, of the frost giants and such coming.

692

00:37:12,000 --> 00:37:19,000

See us, Lewis. J.K. Rowling, Lord of the Rings, Tolkien was a scholar of Old Norse and Old English.

693

00:37:19,000 --> 00:37:29,000

Even going to the westerns, the frontier sense of this lone person against the others and either defending law or being an outlaw.

694

00:37:29,000 --> 00:37:33,000

The word outlaw that we have is a word from Old Norse.

695

00:37:34,000 --> 00:37:41,000

Outlaw isn't the only English word we get from the Old Norse. Husband, haggle, and hell are just a few.

696

00:37:41,000 --> 00:37:47,000

And that's only from the ages. All told, there are hundreds that we use every day, literally.

697

00:37:47,000 --> 00:37:52,000

You may not realize it, but the names of several days of the week are taken directly from Old Norse.

698

00:37:53,000 --> 00:38:01,000

Wednesday, that's Odin's, a.k.a. Odin's day. Thursday, that's Thor's day. Friday, Freya's day.

699

00:38:01,000 --> 00:38:10,000

So the gods are right there. The three top gods, the three top gods that you always hear in Snorri's descriptions were Odin, Thor, and Freya.

700

00:38:10,000 --> 00:38:12,000

And they're three days of the week, side by side.

701

00:38:12,000 --> 00:38:16,000

The big question is, how did this mythology add to their success?

702

00:38:16,000 --> 00:38:25,000

In Iceland, we're just beginning to come into focus about that. And today we'd like to take you up into the mountains here, up under the glaciers.

703

00:38:25,000 --> 00:38:31,000

Certainly is a place where mythology and archaeology all come together in a really kind of spectacular place.

704

00:38:31,000 --> 00:38:33,000

And I'm hoping you'll come with us to take a look at it.

705

00:38:33,000 --> 00:38:34,000

I would love to see it.

706

00:38:34,000 --> 00:38:35,000

Fantastic. Let's go.

707

00:38:41,000 --> 00:38:52,000

Deep in the wilds of Iceland, Kevin knows a place where the Norse myths weren't just stories, where monsters and demons dwelled, and only the Vikings dared to tread.

708

00:38:53,000 --> 00:39:00,000

So now we're heading to one of the most rugged frontiers on Earth to uncover the last secret of the Vikings' greatness.

709

00:39:01,000 --> 00:39:20,000

In order to learn how the Vikings' mythology helped make them a world player, archaeologists Kevin Smith and Gudmundur Olofsson are bringing me to a site where myth and history violently collide.

710

00:39:21,000 --> 00:39:25,000

To get there, we drive onto a road unlike any on Earth.

711

00:39:25,000 --> 00:39:26,000

Wait, what is all that?

712

00:39:26,000 --> 00:39:27,000

That is the lava field.

713

00:39:27,000 --> 00:39:28,000

That's lava.

714

00:39:28,000 --> 00:39:29,000

That's lava.

715

00:39:29,000 --> 00:39:31,000

And it's enormous.

716

00:39:32,000 --> 00:39:35,000

Eventually, we run out of what little road we have.

717

00:39:39,000 --> 00:39:40,000

Yai, yai, yai, yai, yai.

718

00:39:41,000 --> 00:39:43,000

It's like driving on the moon.

719

00:39:43,000 --> 00:39:54,000

I would like to congratulate you.

720

00:39:54,000 --> 00:40:00,000

I think in ten years of driving on some of the worst roads in the world, you found the worst one.

721

00:40:00,000 --> 00:40:01,000

Perfect.

722

00:40:01,000 --> 00:40:03,000

Yeah, this is award-winning here.

723

00:40:04,000 --> 00:40:07,000

There's a reason that Iceland is one big pothole.

724

00:40:08,000 --> 00:40:15,000

The island has over 30 volcanoes, and the ground on which we're driving was once a raging sea of molten rock.

725

00:40:15,000 --> 00:40:21,000

Though this was once one of the hottest places on the planet, it now looks like we should be less concerned with fire.

726

00:40:22,000 --> 00:40:24,000

Okay, the river's high.

727

00:40:25,000 --> 00:40:27,000

And more with water.

728

00:40:28,000 --> 00:40:29,000

The road is gone.

729

00:40:30,000 --> 00:40:32,000

Gudmundur, do you think we can get through that?

730

00:40:32,000 --> 00:40:34,000

I think we can make it in this car.

731

00:40:34,000 --> 00:40:36,000

It should be only a water-to-feed.

732

00:40:37,000 --> 00:40:38,000

Should be.

733

00:40:38,000 --> 00:40:39,000

Should be.

734

00:40:39,000 --> 00:40:40,000

Should be only one or two feet deep.

735

00:40:40,000 --> 00:40:41,000

Alright.

736

00:40:43,000 --> 00:40:44,000

Okay, here we go.

737

00:40:44,000 --> 00:40:45,000

Window closed.

738

00:40:46,000 --> 00:40:48,000

I mean, if it's that deep, we're screwing.

739

00:40:48,000 --> 00:40:49,000

Alright, fair enough.

740

00:40:53,000 --> 00:40:55,000

Okay, boys, hold your breath.

741

00:40:55,000 --> 00:40:56,000

Okay.

742

00:41:00,000 --> 00:41:02,000

It's deeper than two feet over here.

743

00:41:04,000 --> 00:41:06,000

It's real deep. It's dragging it.

744

00:41:08,000 --> 00:41:09,000

Ah!

745

00:41:12,000 --> 00:41:13,000

Come under, come under.

746

00:41:16,000 --> 00:41:18,000

There's more expedition to come.

747

00:41:19,000 --> 00:41:24,000

My investigation of the Vikings takes me to the edge of the apocalypse.

748

00:41:24,000 --> 00:41:26,000

This is a god-killer. This is death itself.

749

00:41:27,000 --> 00:41:32,000

And then, I'm headed to one of the most dangerous environments on Earth.

750

00:41:32,000 --> 00:41:34,000

Ice man, turn!

751

00:41:34,000 --> 00:41:35,000

Turn!

752

00:41:35,000 --> 00:41:38,000

To discover why the Vikings vanished.

753

00:41:38,000 --> 00:41:40,000

So life is getting harder here?

754

00:41:40,000 --> 00:41:41,000

Yeah, exactly.

755

00:41:41,000 --> 00:41:46,000

And finally, I'm tackling the biggest mystery of all.

756

00:41:46,000 --> 00:41:48,000

This is gonna be interesting.

757

00:41:48,000 --> 00:41:51,000

Did the Vikings discover what is now the United States?

758

00:41:51,000 --> 00:41:53,000

If this is real, it's history-changing.

759

00:41:57,000 --> 00:42:00,000

Next time on Expedition Unknown.