



The Mighty Aztecs

Presented by: *Russell Werner*

Mondays
 September 28, & Oct 5, 12, 19, 2015

1:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Maravilla - Club Room
 5486 Calle Real, Santa Barbara

The Mexica tribe (commonly called the Aztecs) went from being a small band of outcasts, living in exile on a small, snake-infested piece of land in the Valley of Mexico, to ruling an empire that controlled the destiny of over 25 million people.

The abiding image of the Aztecs, for most people, begins and ends with a priest hauling the heart out of some poor victim and holding it up to the sun while still beating.

We will explore the reason for sacrifice in some Aztec rituals but also build a more complete picture of this complex and quite advanced civilization. The Aztec people were poets and artists, lived under a comprehensive legal system, wrote books, took their kids to well-run schools and were meticulous in dress and hygiene. We will delve into information provided by contemporaneous accounts of the Aztec civilization written by Spanish priests and authorities working with the Aztecs as well as various indigenous accounts from the 16th Century.

The Conquistadors were stunned by the Tenochtitlan, the capital city of the Aztecs located in the middle of Lake Texcoco, with gardens, causeways, stucco building, thriving markets and the hum of trade as goods flowed from all parts of the empire – beyond anything in Europe at the time. Within 100 years of the conquest 90% of the indigenous people were dead and Tenochtitlan was reduced to rubble and disappeared under the emerging colonial city of Mexico City. However, in 1978, the Aztec’s central ritual pyramid, the Templo Mayor, was rediscovered, kicking off a new wave of scholarship and insight into this amazing civilization.



Enrollment Form: **Aztecs** – September 28, & Oct 5, 12, 19, 2015

VISTAS Members \$50, Non-members \$75

Note: At-The-Door Registration is an Additional \$5.00

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Check# _____

Name(s): _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Mail registration form to:

VISTAS Lifelong Learning, Inc., P.O. Box 23228, Santa Barbara, CA 93121-3228

Deadline for registration: September 20th

Please check here if you would like to volunteer to help with refreshments _____

BIOGRAPHY: *Russell Werner* For the past 20 years Russell Werner has been studying the ancient Maya and Aztec civilizations, including several courses in reading Maya Hieroglyphs and Mesoamerican studies given by Harvard’s Anthropology Department. Mr. Werner, often accompanied by his wife, Nancy, has travelled extensively to archeological sites throughout Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala and Belize.



His courses on the Maya and the Aztecs have been enthusiastically received at adult education programs in the Boston area including those at Tufts University and Brandeis University as well as independently-run Beacon Hill Seminars. In the Fall of 2014, “The Maya” was presented at VISTAS.

Mr. Werner has been a senior executive in the high technology industry for the past 20 years. In 2011 the Werners moved to Santa Barbara, where Mr. Werner recently served as President of the Santa Barbara Newcomers Club.

VISTAS Calendar			
Seminar/Event	Inclusive Dates	Time	Venue
Annual Picnic	Sunday, September 27	12:30 pm	Tuckers Grove
Documentary Film Club	3rd Thurs Monthly	TBD	TBD
Harvest Moon	Friday, Sept 25	9:30 am	Goleta Library
The Aztecs	Mondays, 9/28, 10/5, 12,19	1:30 pm	Maravilla Club Room
Forgiveness	Thurs, Oct 22, 29	1:30 pm	TBD
Power of Evil/Stalin & Hitler	Mondays, Oct 26-Nov23	9:30 am	TBD
College Board of Trustees	Tuesdays, Nov 10, 17, 24	1:30 pm	Valle Verde
SB HermitageTour	TBD	TBD	SB Hermitage



P.O. Box 23228

Santa Barbara, CA 93121-3228