

Hidden Treasures of the Past

Adam Ford



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Hidden Treasures

What Are Treasures?

A treasure can be many different things. It can be gold and silver, or jewels. But a treasure can also be a painting, an old book, a crumbling **ruin** or even the **remains** of a person who lived long ago.

Sometimes, very old objects, ruins or remains are so rare and important that they are described as “treasures of the past”.

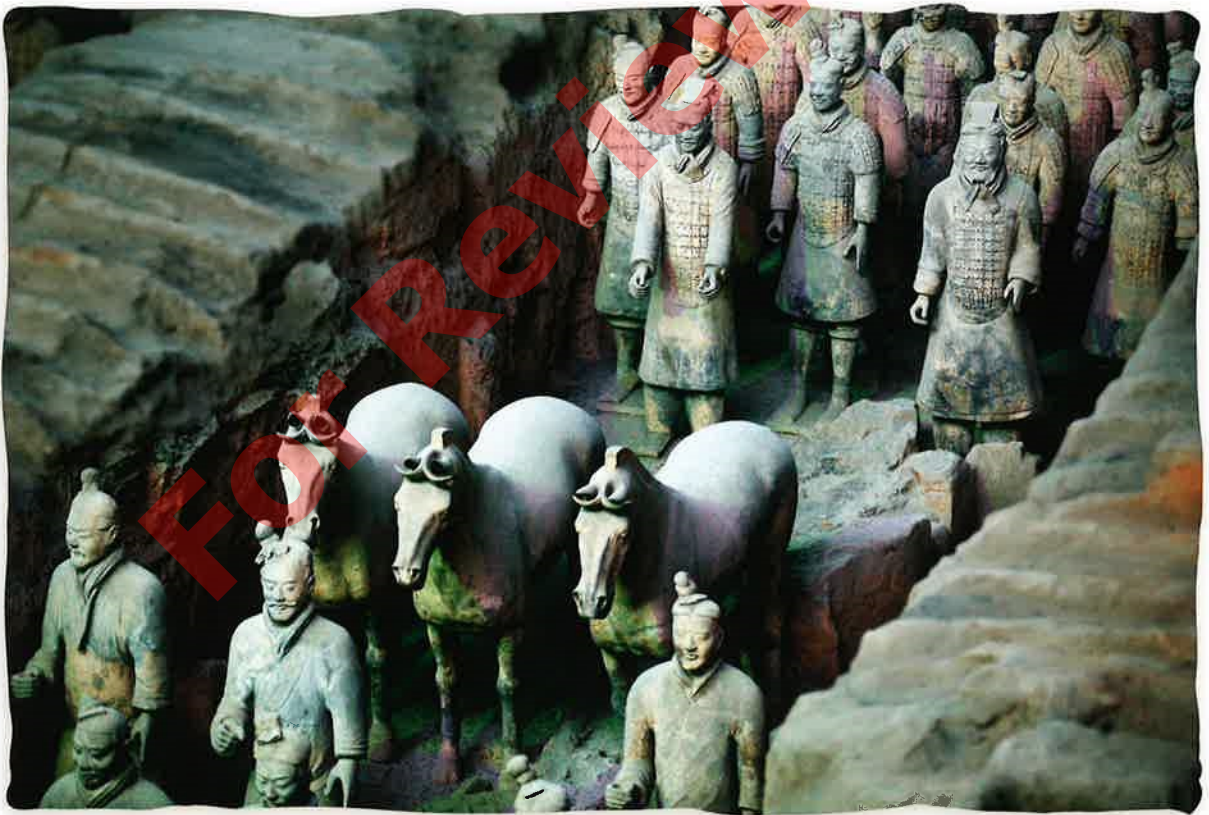


Mist covers the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu in Peru.

Over hundreds or thousands of years, treasures can become hidden and lost. But how?

Some treasures are buried and then forgotten. Others are destroyed by a natural disaster, or slowly fall down over the years and disappear under plants and leaves, then under soil.

Then, one day, someone stumbles on a crumbling old wall in a forest, or an **archaeologist** digs a hole, and treasures that have lain hidden are found again.



The Terracotta Warriors were buried under the ground in China for over 2000 years.

The Golden Mask of Tutankhamen

The golden mask of Tutankhamen (say: *Too-tan-ka-men*) is one of the most famous ancient treasures ever discovered. Tutankhamen was a **pharaoh** (say: *fair-oh*), or king, who ruled Egypt over 3000 years ago. The pharaohs were rich and powerful, and the Egyptian people believed them to be gods. Tutankhamen was one of the richest and most powerful pharaohs of them all.

The mask of Tutankhamen weighs over 10 kilograms.



This wall painting from ancient Egypt shows Tutankhamen and some gods.



Tutankhamen was buried wearing this golden mask.

Ancient Egyptians believed that after a person died, they went on to live another life. They called this the “afterlife”. Often, the dead were buried in **tombs** with objects they would need in the afterlife, including food, clothes and weapons. Their bodies were also prepared for the next life. They were **preserved** by a process called “mummification”. The mummies of the pharaohs were buried in golden coffins, along with many other treasures. A pharaoh’s coffin is called a “sarcophagus” (say: sar-kof-a-guss).

Many Egyptian tombs were broken into and the treasures stolen by robbers thousands of years ago. But the tomb of Tutankhamen remained hidden in a place called the Valley of the Kings until it was discovered by the English archaeologist Howard Carter in 1922.



The tomb of Tutankhamen is in the Valley of the Kings in Egypt.

Tutankhamen was buried with many **precious** objects including jewellery, weapons, statues, furniture and even **chariots** made of gold. One of the greatest treasures found inside the tomb was the golden mask of Tutankhamen. It is made of gold and jewels and is thought to show the face of Osiris (say: *Oh-sy-ris*), the god of the afterlife.



The inside of the tomb of Tutankhamen was crowded with treasures.