

Archaeological finds

A few of the treasures unearthed by Indiana Jones:

Golden Idol

Appearance: "Raiders of the Lost Ark"

The idol Indiana Jones retrieves in South America is fictional, but is based on an actual Aztec statue known as the goddess of obstetrics.



Headpiece of the Staff of Ra

Appearance: "Raiders of the Lost Ark"

Indiana Jones uses the headpiece to the Staff of Ra to pinpoint the final resting place of the Ark of the Covenant. According to the movie, the fictional headpiece was inscribed on two sides. When both sides were read properly, the headpiece would reveal how tall the staff needed to be in order for the sun to hit the jewel at its center.



The Ark of the Covenant

Appearance: "Raiders of the Lost Ark"

According to Jewish history, the Ark protected the Israelites as they searched for the Promised Land, and it helped destroy the great walled city of Jericho. King Solomon constructed a temple and placed the Covenant in the inner sanctum, the "Holy of Holies." After the Babylonians plundered the Temple, the Ark vanishes into myth.



Sankara Stones

Appearance: "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom"

The stones are really "lingas" or sacred Hindu symbols. Filmmaker George Lucas created the fictional "Sankara Stones," which are used to grant fertility to Shiva's worshippers. Real lingas can be small enough to be used as amulets or large and set in altars.

The Holy Grail

Appearance: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade"

The Grail was said to be the cup that Jesus Christ drank from at the Last Supper, and the cup which Joseph of Arimathea caught Christ's blood in when Christ was removed from the cross. The major strand of the Grail legend probably started with Chretien de Troyes, a French poet of the 12th century.



INDIANA JONES. MAN OF ADVENTURE

By Tish Wells
McClatchy Newspapers

Make way for the return of whip-cracking teacher, archaeologist and adventurer Indiana Jones — the man who put sex appeal into excavating dirt mounds, crawling through bug-filled caves and knowing world history.

The name of Indiana Jones has become synonymous with archaeology and adventure. His fictional exploits have sparked the interest of generations of students, making it cool to be an archaeologist. His jacket and bullwhip are even in the Smithsonian Institution's legacy collection.

And his archaeological exploits have taken him — and us — all over the world.

In the first movie, "Raiders of the Lost Ark," Jones visits South America, hunting a golden idol; Nepal, where he met up with his old lover, Marion Ravenwood; and finally Egypt, hunting the Ark of the Covenant.

In "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom," Jones visits Shanghai and a maharajah's palace in India. In the third movie, "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade," he and his estranged father, Henry, travel through Venice, Austria and Berlin before heading on to the Middle East in search of the Holy Grail.

Where will he be going this time?

Sorry — no spoilers here. The new adventure, "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull," opens May 22.

Swashbuckling archaeologist Indiana Jones (played by Harrison Ford) has traveled around the world in search of priceless artifacts.

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Marion Ravenwood (played by Karen Allen)

Globe-trotting

Select locations of some of Indiana Jones' greatest adventures

MAP LEGEND

- From "Raiders of the Lost Ark"
- From "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom"
- From "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade"

SOURCES: LUCASFILM; "THE INDIANA JONES HANDBOOK," BY GENISE KIERNAN AND JOSEPH D'AGNESE

