

HUNGO PAVI

Hungo Pavi is one of the few Chacoan buildings to remain unexcavated and undisturbed. When the Chacoans migrated away in the A.D. 1200s, forces of nature slowly collapsed the roofs and upper walls. Centuries of windblown sand covered the building and native grasses and shrubs grew on top, leaving the upper walls protruding from the mounded site to indicate its former glory.

The building looked similar when Navajo people occupied the canyon several hundred years ago, as well as when U.S. military expeditions encountered the site in 1849. In that year, the Washington Expedition, a military reconnaissance, surveyed Navajo lands and wrote accounts of Chacoan sites. A Mexican guide with the expedition (Carravahal), named the site, although its meaning is now lost.

GREAT HOUSES

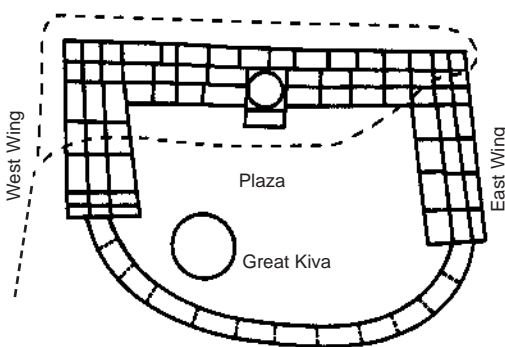


Archeologists call Hungo Pavi a “great house,” one of a dozen monumental buildings built in this canyon during the extraordinary period of Chacoan culture that dominated the region between A.D. 850 and 1150. Chaco was the heart of the world that united many

diverse peoples under a shared culture and vision.

Great houses are thought to be public buildings with small resident populations. These buildings would have hosted pilgrims who came to Chaco to attend ceremonies, trading events, and public gatherings. They were religious and public centers for nearby communities, and over 150 distant communities.

THE TRAIL



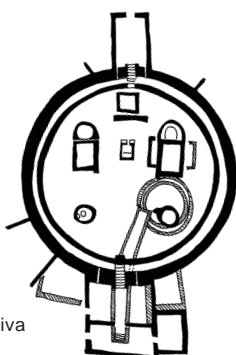
Site plan and walking trail

The trail—less than a ¼-mile in length will fork as you approach the fallen walls. Go to the right and stand at the top of the rise (west wing) for a view of the building. From this point, you can see the typical great house ground plan—a D-shaped building enclosing a plaza. Fajada Butte is in the distance.

Please help us protect this fragile connection to the Chacoan

people. We want all visitors to continue to have the freedom to visit this and other sites, and to explore them on their own, but we can only do this with your help. We need every visitor to be especially careful to protect the ancient masonry, wood, plaster, pottery pieces, and petroglyphs. Thanks for helping kept the experience unique and special for all visitors.

THE PLAZA AND GREAT KIVA

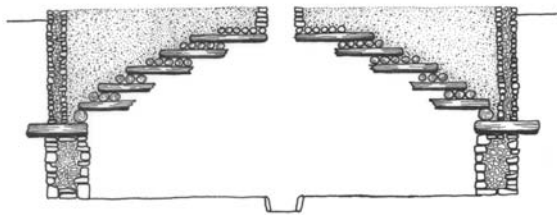


Great Kiva

Walk down the trail into the open plaza. Plazas are important sacred places in modern pueblos where public ceremonies, trading events, and daily activities occur. Note the large circular depression to the right—a great kiva (large round ceremonial chamber), covered by centuries of windblown sand, native shrubs, and grasses.

The Chacoans often placed great kivas in great house plazas. Like modern kivas, they would have accommodated hundreds of people from surrounding communities and the region during times of ceremonies and public gatherings. Excavated great kivas can be seen at Pueblo Bonito, Chetro Ketl, and Casa Rinconada.

CHACOAN KIVAS



Kiva cross section

Continue down the trail to the center of the plaza until you see an exposed doorway on your left that enters a single story room. Behind this room is a typical Chacoan feature—an elevated kiva—round rooms built into an above-ground square enclosure. Kivas had flat roofs with small hatches for access, and people descended ladders into the interior. In modern Puebloan cultures, kivas are used

by men and women for religious worship, preparation, dance, prayer vigils, and public gatherings.

Further up the trail, near the top of the next rise (east wing), you can see the interior of a second story room. The large round holes in the back wall are where large roofing beams were placed. The small holes supported smaller timbers and the completed roofs.

SITE CONSTRUCTION

The people began construction on Hungo Pavi in the A.D. 1000s, when Chacoan culture was flourishing, and Pueblo Bonito and other buildings were well under way. They continued the construction in several building episodes over the next 150 years, always conforming to the original D-shaped design.

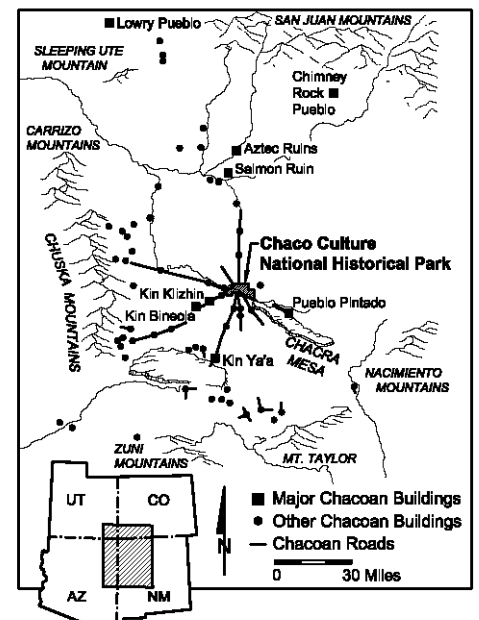
Chacoan construction was unique and the structures were immense and multi-storied. The people developed a distinctive masonry that added strength and stability of the massive structures. The builders quarried hard sandstone from the top of the cliffs, impounded water,

and mixed clay and sand for the mortar.

They traveled to mountain forests, 40-60 miles away on wood harvesting expeditions where they cut trees, peeled the bark, and dried them for a year or more to reduce their weight. Teams of people carried the beams back for construction. Before using them, they carefully trimmed them, cut the ends flush, and sanded the ends with stone tools. Very little wood remains at Hungo Pavi, but you may see many round sockets (especially along the back wall) where the people once placed the wood beams.

PREHISTORIC ROADS

At the eastern most point of the trail, examine the cliff wall further east. When the sun is overhead, you may see a wide steep stairway carved into the sandstone cliff. This provided access from the canyon floor to the mesa top where it connects with an elaborate prehistoric road system. This stairway is now closed due to its fragile condition.



Chacoan road system and outlying communities

THE LEGACY

Hungo Pavi is a unique Chacoan great house built by the ancestors of many Southwestern Indian peoples. It is part of the history and traditions of the Hopi, the Pueblo peoples of New Mexico, and the Navajo, who continue to respect and honor it.

The legacy of the Chacoan people includes the architectural and engineering marvels of the

Chacoan world, dryland adapted crops of corn, squash, and beans, the sophisticated use of astronomy, and the enduring beauty of their art. The traditions that began in places like Chaco Canyon did not end there, but continue on in the lives and traditions of American Indian descendants today.