



## Landmark #31

# Moai

## Easter Island



Moai are monolithic human faces carved by the **Rapa Nui people** on **Easter Island** (which marks the easternmost point of the **Polynesian Triangle**) between the years **1250** and **1500 CE**. Nearly half are located at **Rano Raraku**, the main moai quarry, but hundreds were transported from there and set on **stone platforms** called 'ahu' around the island's perimeter. The moai are chiefly the **living faces** (*aringa ora*) **of deified ancestors** (*aringa ora ata tepuna*). The statues still gazed inland across their **clan lands** when Europeans first visited the island in **1722**, but all of them had fallen by the latter part of the 19th century. The production and transportation of the more than **900 statues** are considered remarkable creative and physical feats. The tallest moai erected, called **Paro**, was almost 10 meters high and weighed 82 tons – the moai is still extant, but has been lying face down for centuries now. As with Paro, most moai got **toppled** in the late **18th** and early **19th centuries**, possibly as a result of European contact and/or internecine tribal wars.

Click on the Pictures for two **VIDEOS** on the Moai and Easter Island