



■ **OPPOSITE:** - The Monument of Humanity, one of the most fascinating and mysterious rock formations of Marcahuasi

■ **THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT**

- Ancient ceramics can always be found in burial places like this one. Several years ago archaeologists found well preserved mummies which are displayed in a little museum in San Pedro de Casta
- The town of San Pedro de Casta, population 1200
- View from the plateau
- Today's descendants of the ancient people of Marcahuasi

Are these great stone Marcahuasi sculptures the work of man and if so what purpose did they serve, or, have they been formed by a complex process of erosion?

The Marcahuasi Plateau is 4,200 metres above sea level and covers an area of approximately 8 sq km. Other points of interest include evidence of human activity, suggesting that the plateau was by no means as desolate and inhospitable as it is today. There are ruins of settlements, burial places and remnants of a fort built on top of the highest rocky outcrop.

We also found traces of irrigation systems, dams, dikes, canals and drain gullies carved into solid rock, evidence that there was once an abundance of water. In the past those who possessed water possessed power, could it be that Marcahuasi was a significant centre of civilisation? ■