

THE STRANGE 7 GIANTS OF THE URALS

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In the northern Urals, where these leave behind vegetation to become velvety hills that blend into the horizon, seven giants majestically rise. Seven stone colossi that, in the middle of nowhere, seem to have made a stop in their journey to contemplate the scenery from the top of a high plateau. With heights varying from 30 to 42 meters, these seven moais, that nature has molded during more than 200 million years, form one of the most impressive and magic geological legacies on the planet.

The geological formation of Man-Pupu-Nyor (Мань-Пупу-Нёп, that in the Mansi language means "little mountain of the gods") is found in an inhospitable and remote area of the Komi Republic. The seven stone totems that form this monumental group aren't only amazing for their location, dimensions, and imposing presence, but also for their incredible forms (some of them are narrower at the base) and whimsical distribution (six are grouped together while the seventh seems to be observing them from afar).

This singular phenomenon, that since time immemorial has been the source of all kinds of fables and legends, originated 200-300 million years ago, when in this place a mountain stood. With the passing of time, erosion caused by rain, wind, freezing, and other meteorological phenomena has continued to wear down the surface until forming the seven pillars currently left standing. In the Urals (one of the oldest mountain ranges on earth) we can find other formations that are similar to Man-Pupu-Nyor, but none of them equal it in either dimension or spectacularity.

Ancestrally, access to this place had been reserved to shamans of the mansi people. Multiple legends have arisen in its surroundings, in which the common denominator tends to be the clash between a shaman and group of giants. According to one of the most oft-told, a shaman had cast a spell on six evil giants that were trying to cross the mountain range, converting them to stone, but with the bad fortune of also falling victim to the spell, in this way explaining the distribution of the pillars (six grouped together and one apart).

Due to its remote location, access to Man-Pupu-Nyor is reserved to very well prepared excursionists or travelers that have access to helicopters or snowmobiles.