

Kids & Schools Tools

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon

The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were one of the Ancient 7 Wonders of the World, chosen by Philon of Byzantium in 200 B.C.

A magnificent garden paradise said to have been built in the 7th century B.C. in the middle of the arid Mesopotamian desert, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon were testimony to one man's ability to, against all the laws of nature, create a botanical oasis of beauty amid a bleak desert landscape. King Nebuchadnezzar II created the gardens as a sign of love for his wife homesick Amyitis, who, according to legend, longed for the forests and roses of her homeland. Amyitis, daughter of the king of the Medes, was married to Nebuchadnezzar to create an alliance between the nations. The land she came from, though, was green, rugged and mountainous, and she found the flat, sun-baked terrain of the Mesopotamia (this region of southwest Asia) depressing. The king decided to recreate her homeland by building an artificial mountain with rooftop gardens.

The Hanging Gardens probably did not really "hang" in the sense of being suspended from cables or ropes. The name comes from an inexact translation of the Greek word *kremastos* or the Latin word *pensilis*, which means not just "hanging" but "overhanging," as in the case of a terrace or balcony. The gardens were terraced and surrounded by the city walls, with a moat of water outside the walls to repel invading armies. There is also a less-reliable, alternative story that the gardens were built by the Assyrian Queen Semiramis during her five-year reign starting in 810 B.C. and the gardens have sometimes been referred to as the "Gardens of Semiramis." Indeed, there is doubt amongst historians and archaeologists as to whether this lost paradise ever existed, given that excavations at Babylon have not found any definitive trace of this mythical oasis.



If you want to find out more about the exciting campaign to name the New 7 Wonders of the World, please go to the New7Wonders website at www.new7wonders.com.

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Official Declaration of the New 7 Wonders of the World

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