

Who are the Huichol?

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The Huichol are part of the Mexican people. currently living in northern **Jalisco, part of Nayarit, Zacatecas and Durango**, up in the mountains running through these states; They live quite isolated. Preserved until now very old customs, which they are very proud.

The Huichol are one of the ethnic groups that has managed to remain "pure" since the time of the Spanish conquest. They refer to themselves as "**Wirrárrica**" or "**Wirraritari**" (plural). It is not known whether the word "**Huichol**" is a variation of "Wirrárrica" or "Wixarika". The mountains are inhabited by mystical culture of the Huichol community; in which constantly enigmatic worlds are created whose recurring characters are **moons, suns, trees, labyrinths, spirals, mountains and cosmic oceans** tirelessly are expressed in art, religion and customs of the Huichol, a town of Huichol artists who he has maintained free from external influence through the centuries come from the central western Mexico, where the Huichols live in places removed from the Sierra Madre Occidental in the states of Nayarit and Jalisco.

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Initiation of art ritual.- Belonging to the specific religious practice of an indigenous group, the Huichol is different from the contemporary art usually found in museums and galleries dimensions. The **Huichol world**, is divided into three worlds: the mythology, the **Huichol** holds that life began in the ocean; the reference to **corn**, where daily life and develops Huichol traditions and that has to do with mysticism, which reveals the Huichol Huichol art world and its rituals that distinguishes them and give them identity as Huichol community.

While the origin of this fascinating ethnic **Huichol** is uncertain, what is indisputable is that during the period of the conquest, many survivors of various indigenous peoples mainly Huichol fled into the Sierra Madre Occidental to escape the wake of destruction left by the Spanish troops.



The **Huichol art** is a form of writing, as through the creations, the Huichol tell us their stories and myths. In each Huichol crafts leave a piece of your life. Currently, one can say that no other ethnic group in Mexico that conserve so deeply their beliefs, cults and traditions as the Huichol.

The Huichol Art has an enigmatic beauty that takes us through mythical roads and brings us closer to the beginning of time in the Huichol culture, but not just Huichol myths drawn by the Huichol artists performing drawing them into yarn or thread, religion Huichol, the world exists thanks to the visionary experience of the Huichol started and its effort to get the "**nierika**" or "**gift of seeing**". Thus for the Huichol Huichol artistic creation it has a cosmological dimension.

For the Huichol, the world has a sacred dimension to which the **mara'akame (shaman)** penetrates through sleep, establishing a link between the world of the gods and profane. Customs: If the Huichol has sickened due to a curse, the mara'akame should "clean up" the patient with feathers snuff smoke while spraying all over her body and then suck the mouth the object that causes the disease; when the patient has lost the kupuri (a part of the soul of the Huichol is located at the top of the head) the mara'akame should go in their quest to put it back in place, but when it itself has been stolen by a sorcerer, the Huichol mara'akame should confront him to recover.

It is because of the importance of **sacred Huichol world** and its intrinsic relationship to the way of life of the Huichol, who always express their art, hundreds of stories that tell the mythology and cosmogony of this fascinating culture. All those crafts Huichol that are not aimed at commercial purposes, are created to narrate the various religious experiences of the Huichol in each of their authors, making fantastic pieces of beautiful colors and unimaginable figures that can be conceived only in the mind Huichol artist.

The ancient legend: the Huichol legend relates how, in the beginning of time, there was no light in the world more than the Moon, this being a major drawback for man. The elderly and those who had the knowledge then gathered to discuss how to bring more light into the world, besought the moon send them to their only child, a lame one-eyed child. At first the Moon objected, but eventually gave his consent. Then they donned the boy in ceremonial robes, consisting of huaraches (sandals) pens and backpacks to store snuff; then gave it as a weapon a bow and arrows and painted her face, then throw it into a furnace where the fire completely consumed. However, the child was raised and ran under the earth, and was amazed at all. Five days later, appeared the Sun When the sun spread its light on earth, all the nocturnal animals (jaguars and mountain lions, coyotes , foxes and snakes) greatly bothered and fired their arrows at the star of the day.

The heat and rays of the sun were intense and blinding animals of the night, forcing them to hide in dark caves, ponds and trees; if it were not for the squirrel and the "woodpecker" the Sun could not have completed his first tour of the sky. These were the only two animals who defended the sun; they would have preferred to give their lives to let the sun die, and in the evening left some "tesguino" view so that the sun could happen. Jaguars and wolves killed the squirrel and pitorreal the end, but even to this day, the Huichol Indians make offerings to these heroes and call "Father" the squirrel. Productive Activities: Apart from selling their crafts, the main productive activities of the Huichol are basically those necessary for sustenance: hunting, fishing and agriculture. Its main **crops are corn, pumpkin, squash, amaranth, beans and chile**. Even they are plowing the land using wooden plows, and when the terrain allows, use a pair of oxen. All agricultural land is communal property. There is a temporary migration between the Huichol.

Their religious, political and economic life is organized in a way that can migrate from one place to another and then return to their places of origin. There Huichol settlements in **Tepic, Calvillo, Fresnillo and Guadalajara**; although it is unclear whether these settlements are temporary or permanent.