

Maya by Kelsey



The Maya Indians were located in northern Central America, including Guatemala, Belize, western Honduras, El Salvador, the southern Mexican states of Chiapas, Tabasco, and the Yucatan Peninsula states of Quintana Roo, Campeche and Yucatan. They had volcanic mountains in the south, a limestone shelf in the north, and parts were covered by a rain forest.

The Maya Indians ate mostly com that they called Maize. They also ate turkey, iguana meat, armadillo, tapir, monkey, and manatee. Indians that lived by the water also ate fish and seafood. The Maya farmers grew com, beans, cacao beans (chocolate), chili, and

bananas. They also raised bees for honey.

For houses the Maya Indians built huts out of bamboo poles covered with mud and they had thatched roofs made out of palm trees. Each family plot of land had a home, a well, an outside bathroom, a chicken coop, and a garden. They used their houses mostly for sleeping, shelter and a place to keep their belongings.

You could tell how important each Mayan was by their clothing. The type of material, what color it was and the design including their headdresses and shoes, all showed how important they were in the community.

Upper-class men wore a colorful square cotton cloth around their shoulders decorated with designs and feathers. Men from the lower class wore the same type of clothes but with no colors or decorations. Mayan women wore a huipil. A huipil is a square or rectangular piece of cloth with a hole in the center, embroidered around the neck, and in the shape of a cross. Then the huipil is folded in half stitched up the sides. The stitching stops on the sides for armholes. It is worn over a skirt tied with a belt.

While the Mayan Indians are famous for their art they are more famous for their Pyramids. They built pyramids for religious reasons and also as landmarks. The Pyramids were built very high to remind the people that the gods were always watching. They also were used to bury important people and to store their treasures, like jade.

The Maya lived in groups with all of their family. That means that parents, children, grandparents, and other relatives all lived very close to each other. Homes were close together with a patio that was shared by everyone. The whole family worked. The men and older boys were farmers, hunters and fishermen. Maya women and older girls sewed the clothes, cooked the meals, raised the children, gathered firewood, and collected water.

Some interesting things I learned are that the Maya Indians had their own alphabet, number system, and that their religion was the most important thing to them. They also thought that being cross-eyed and having a long flat head was attractive so they would hold things up in front of the babies eyes to make them cross eyed and strap a board to their heads to make their foreheads flat.