



INDIAN PUEBLO CULTURAL CENTER
Gateway to the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico

Family Guide



INDIAN FAMILY PUEBLO OF COCHITI, NEW MEXICO.

Family Guide To the Pueblo House



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Welcome to the Pueblo House! This Family Guide contains a series of pages, each focusing on an object in the house. Use the pages in any order to have fun, search for symbols and details in the display, and talk about what you see. Some pages have extra activity ideas to continue at home or at your school. Please enjoy this Guide as a souvenir of your visit to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center.

FIVE OTHER GREAT THINGS FOR FAMILIES TO DO AT THE MUSEUM

- If you are here on the weekend, don't miss the dance performances, which are held in the main courtyard at 11 AM and 2 PM April thru October and at 12 noon in the winter months. Dances are held inside in case of bad weather. Learn about Pueblo ceremonial traditions and listen to some wonderful music. While you are here, make sure to visit with the demonstrating artist as well. We have visiting traditional artists here from among the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico here each week, and you can watch them work, talk to them about how they learn their craft, and you might be able to purchase a new treasure.
- Visit the Museum Theater in the permanent collection on the lower level to see two short films about eminent Pueblo artists Maria Martinez (San Ildefonso) and Pablita Velarde (Santa Clara). Ask at the front desk to find out if there are any special features!
- Spend time in the courtyard looking at the incredible murals which were commissioned for the museum in 1976. Explore the wonderful paintings by a variety of Pueblo artists.
- Stop at the hands-on stations in the permanent collection and learn about natural resources in the region and how Pueblo people adapted them to their lives.
- Check out the gardens. If the season is right, we probably have corn, beans and squash growing, maybe some gourds and melons, and who knows what else. Learn about different species, Pueblo agricultural traditions, and come by for harvest!

ARCHITECTURE

The Pueblo people of New Mexico are famous for their mastery of stone masonry in their ancestral homes, and their remarkable adobe construction in their villages that has been used for the last millennia up to the present day. Adobe is the material that the bricks for their homes are made of. It is a mixture of mud, straw, and sometimes ash. When combined and formed into bricks which are dried in the hot New Mexico sun, it is a very strong building material. Adobe homes have very thick walls and are generally very cool in the summer and warm in the winter. **Look** at the doorway between the rooms and measure how wide the walls are. You may lightly **touch** the adobe bricks in the Story Room. If you like, take out some of the pretend bricks in the basket and see if you can **build** an adobe wall.



Acoma Pueblo- Old & New On the left is the top of the monumental tower built at the mission during Spanish occupation in the 17th century, and on the right is a row of houses with varying degrees of modern adaptations, including all kinds of doors and different sizes of windows. Historically, before glass was readily available, there would have been only small windows, which did not open, but had panes made of sheets of mica, a thin transparent kind of stone, which would let light in, but not the hot or cold air.



This is one of the last surviving mica windows which can be found at Acoma.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture, another word for farming, occurs when people begin planting and cultivating crops. The crops can include plants that are native to the region or seeds brought in from other areas. Some of the crops planted by the Pueblo people include corn, squash, beans and cotton. Today, many Pueblo people are still farmers, planting traditional crops and many new ones, and other Pueblo people may have jobs in town, but their farms and gardens are still very important to their lives. Agriculture carries a sacred significance and determines a great deal of a Pueblo's work cycles, ceremonies, and feasts.

Find things in and around the house that are products of Pueblo agriculture. **Look** at the many different kinds of corn that have been gathered, and the chile ristra which is hanging outside the door. **Open** the discovery drawers to find different kinds of seeds. **Talk about it.** What do these seeds tell you about the Pueblo diet? Compare planting techniques from other part of the country to the Pueblo dry-farming methods. What is a planting stick? Do you **think** it would work well in your gardens at home? Think about how these tools and dry farming techniques are perfect for living in the desert southwest.

Local climate plays a dominant role in the lives and fortunes of farmers everywhere. One of the greatest difficulties of growing crops in the desert is the lack of rainfall. The Pueblo devised a system of irrigation canals to bring the water from the rivers to their fields. Pueblo farmers have developed planting techniques and designed their fields for maximum yield, knowing that next year could be really dry, or too hot for a successful crop. Raised planting beds, mounds and ridges often found in traditional systems serve to control soil temperatures and to reduce waterlogging by improving drainage for when the New Mexico rains start in late summer.



Pueblo girls hulling dried corn for storage.

Photo courtesy of Western History/Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library

FOOD

The Pueblos are strong, supportive communities, and at harvest time, neighbors share the foods from their gardens. As has been written by Priscilla Vigil (Tesuque), “It takes more than recipes to make good food.” The other requirements she listed are “rain to make the seed turn in the ground, the sun to break the earth, the air to freshen the crop and the tender care of the farmer.”¹ Corn, beans and squash have been cultivated for as long as people have farmed this region for thousands of years. These are the staple foods of this region, combined in dozens of ways, usually with meat and chiles, to make stews, soups and baked puddings, or to top cornmeal tortillas. In addition, many Pueblo cooks will add some wild-gathered ingredients, such as piñon nuts collected in the fall.

In New Mexico, some chiles are a relatively recent addition to the cuisine of the Pueblos, apparently brought from Mexico ancient Indian traders. The Spanish, when they arrived in the 16th century, brought the familiar adobe horno, the mud oven that sits outside many Pueblo homes, and the wheat to make bread to bake in it. Today, the Pueblo oven baked bread is an important staple, along with corn, which is central to Pueblo identity and spiritual practice. Try some Pueblo bread from the café, or try a recipe for some of the other specialties at home. Be careful if you are not used to the spicy chile peppers!



An horno , or oven; used especially for baking delicious bread

All set for a feast at Taos Pueblo. Feast days are when the finest food is served in Pueblo communities. After the dances, the homes around the plaza provide food for friends, neighbors and guests. Photo courtesy Shannon Lujan

Take out a paper and pencil. Write down some of your favorite recipes. **Prepare** a meal with your family, and enjoy how good it tastes!

¹“Pueblo Indian Cookbook,” was published by the Museum of New Mexico Press in 1972

FAMILY

Relations

Pueblo dwellings are interconnected multi-level apartment-like structures made of stone and plaster or adobe bricks. The interconnectedness of these dwellings is part of what shapes Pueblo family relationships. The Pueblo family unit is very tight knit, and there are many kinds of extended family connections. Pueblo culture is matrilineal. This means that children are born into the mother's clan. In addition to a child's mother and father and brother and sisters, a Pueblo boy or girl also has clan relations. Sometimes these clan relations extend into other Pueblos, where there has been intermarriage between Pueblo people of different villages. When a child grows up in a pueblo, he or she has many, many relatives. There is a very strong sense of belonging.



How many family pictures can you find in Pueblo House? The clans are often named for plants and animals common in the Pueblo environment. **Play** with the puppets and make up a story about some clan animals and their families. **Read** the book, Pueblo Girls: Growing Up in Two Worlds. How is the Roybal family the same as yours? How is it different? When you get home, **write** your own story about growing up. What will you share about your life experiences? What have you learned from your mother or father, or your grandparents?

COMMUNITY

Language

Pueblo peoples have lived in the American Southwest for thousands of years. The pueblo tribes represent several distantly related languages, and they have continued to maintain close contact with each other since the arrival of Europeans in the region in the sixteenth century. Among the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico, there are 5 languages spoken. Zuni is spoken only by the Zuni. Tiwa is spoken by Taos, Picuris, Sandia, and Isleta. Tewa is spoken by San Juan, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Nambé, Tesuque, and Pojoaque. Towa is spoken only by the Jemez. Keresan is spoken by Acoma, Cochiti, Laguna, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, and Zia.

Government

Today the 19 pueblos of New Mexico all participate in an organization called the All Indian Pueblo Council. Each pueblo is autonomous and has its own tribal government. The Pueblos have been able to retain a tribal land base, retain a strong sense of community, and maintain their languages and cultures. The name "Pueblo" is the same as the Spanish word for "village" and denotes both the people and their communal homes.

Traditions

Pueblo people are at home in both their Native world and in the world of the dominant American culture. They are very much U.S. citizens while still remaining Pueblo. The Pueblos use gourd rattles, wooden drums, and rawhide as musical instruments for their ceremonies and dances, which are unique to each tribe and have prescribed roles for the leaders, singers, dancers, and spectators. Many dances, performed usually by men who sing and men and women and boys and girls who dance in line formations or in procession, are held in honor of seasonal change and related duties, such as hunting in the winter, or harvest in the autumn. Many dances relate to the bringing of rain, which brings sustenance to all living things. For the Pueblo people, rain is life.

Modern Life

Many Pueblo people are also employed in the urban areas near their homes, and many of them who now live in these urban areas return to the pueblo frequently. Many job opportunities are now provided by tribally run enterprises, including ranching, gaming, agriculture, golf courses, manufacturing and the hospitality industry. Traditional craftwork in pottery, weaving, jewelry, and drum making are also important sources of income. To some the old villages may seem like a museum from their modern perspective, but for the people who live there and the Pueblo people who are from there, the community interaction is still very important. Ancient traditions are carried forward into the future.



Some resources to learn more:

While you are visiting New Mexico-

See if you can find and identify other adobe structures. Many buildings are made to resemble the true adobe, but here are some clues: look for thick walls, and sometimes rounded corners. Sometimes an adobe house might look like it is melting, which can happen with a lot of rain, but it is probably just due for some new mud plastering. Here are some hints for finding adobe in Santa Fe: <http://architecture-sf2.nm-unlimited.net>

Learn where the Pueblos are located- many of them have their own small visitors' centers, and Taos and Acoma currently have tours of their villages. You can locate them on a **map** at this site, <http://www.newmexicoindianart.org/tribespueblosmap.html>, and also learn a lot about how Pueblo artists have become an important part of the regional economy selling their traditional pottery and jewelry. Before visiting a Pueblo, it is always a good idea to contact them directly, to make sure they are open to the public. You may be fortunate enough to visit during a feast day celebration.

When you are home

See if you can find other similar kinds of earth-built architecture in other parts of the world. **ArchNet** (www.archnet.org) is the world's largest online databank of international architecture.

Learn more about indigenous agriculture and try to grow some of your own . Look up **Native Seed Search** www.nativeseeds.org . They run a seedbank which houses, for future generations, the seeds of crops and wild plants traditionally used as food, fiber and dyes by prehistoric and more recent cultures inhabiting the arid southwestern U.S. and northwestern Mexico.

If you can't be here , you can still **try out some great meals** by sampling the recipes at <http://www.cookingpost.com/recipe.cfm>. The Cooking Post is a tribal enterprise of Santa Ana Pueblo, and there are some great dishes featured here.

Come back and visit us! Visit us again soon at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, at the museum and on the web, at www.indianpueblo.org

