



Hopi Heritage

 **beanstack originals**



Hopi Heritage

Discover more about southwestern Indigenous heritage.



For at least 16,000 years, humans have called the lands that now make up the United States home. Thousands of nations and tribes have lived and continue to live across the country. These peoples created many unique heritages. A heritage is a sense of identity, culture, and history that is passed down over time. Read on to learn more about just one part of the country's rich and varied Indigenous heritage.

Discover the Past

Humans first arrived in North America more than 16,000 years ago. Scientists think that these people came from what is now Russia. They arrived in the northwest of North America. Over time, they spread out across the continent and formed different cultures and lifestyles. One of these cultures, called the Cochise culture, likely traveled into what is now the American southwest around 10,000 years ago.

Then, about 2,000 years ago, a different civilization emerged. This culture is known as the Ancestral Pueblo culture. The Ancestral Puebloans were farmers who built ways to control water in order to grow food in the harsh desert. They created permanent homes by carving into caves

DID YOU KNOW?

Hopi is short for Hopi `sinom, which translates to "the ones who behave correctly."



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Hopi architecture.

or directly into rocky cliffsides. These homes were called cliff dwellings. They often had to be reached by ladders! By 1300, however, many of these communities had been abandoned. Historians aren't sure why. They think there may have been droughts, which are long periods without rain. However, many descendants of the Ancestral Puebloans developed their own cultures. One of these cultures is the Hopi.

FUN FACT

Some of the oldest Ancestral Puebloan homes were not cliff dwellings but underground houses, known as kivas.

Who Are the Hopi?

The Hopi have traditionally lived across the southwestern United States in parts of what are now Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado. Like their ancestors, the Hopi created clever

ways to survive in the harsh desert. They created new ways to farm that conserved water. They helped crops like beans, corn, squash, and melons grow in dry lands. The Hopi also created adobe homes out of the nearby soil, clay, and straw. In addition to their farmed foods, Hopi hunters used bows and arrows to hunt local animals.



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Katsina Dolls used for prayers and rituals.

Art and Culture

The Hopi are also skilled craftspeople. Traditional crafts include woven baskets, which feature colorful, geometric patterns. The Hopi also create beautiful pottery. It is often painted with swirling, geometric lines.

Religion has historically been an important part of Hopi culture. Many Hopi practice what they call Maasaw's Way. Maasaw is a Hopi spirit, called a katsina. Maasaw's Way teaches peace and goodwill. Because religion is so important, it is often shown in Hopi art and in ceremony.

The Hopi use art to depict katsina. They also partake and perform in special, private ceremonies that honor these katsina. Many of the ceremonies involve dances with sacred prayers, rituals, and costumes.