

# NATIVE AMERICAN TRAVEL TRUNK

## Native American Artifacts and Re-creations

- **Lapis Lazuli Beads:** Lapis Lazuli is a dark blue stone that was worn and loved by Native Americans. Some believe that the stone carries mystical powers that help the wearer stay in tune with their surroundings. It is also said to represent friendship and truth.
- **Silver/Turquoise/Shell Jewelry:** The Navajo were the first Native Americans introduced to silver and they began to create items using this silver. Native Americans all around the U.S. regarded turquoise to be a special stone. Native Americans in the Southwestern U.S. believed that turquoise and shell beads had the power to make the wearer attractive and well-loved. To the Pima in southern Arizona, turquoise meant strength and healing. For most tribes, turquoise represented strength, skill, and even invincibility.
- **European Beads:** Beads were used by Europeans for trading with Native Americans. Native Americans used the beads as jewelry, or adorned their clothing with the beads
- **Porcupine Quills:** Native Americans used porcupine quills to make beautiful items of clothing. They could dye the quills all different colors and incorporate them into moccasins (shoes), shirts, hide robes, and back rests. Using quills to create clothing is called “quillwork”.
- **Bow and Arrow:** Native Americans used bows and arrows to hunt and fight. They made these weapons using resources from the Earth around them. A tough wood or animal horns could be used to make the bows. Bowstrings were created using animal guts, rawhide, or plant fibers. The arrows were created from sharpened stones. Feathers used at the end of arrows were used to help the arrow fly straight.
- **Native American Beadwork:** Beadwork was a form of art created and practiced by Native Americans. Each tribe had unique patterns and techniques that they could be identified by. Beadwork was used to make jewelry, clothing, belts, and more. Native Americans used beadwork primarily as added decoration.
- **Wampum:** Wampum are small beads created out of shells by some groups of Native Americans. These were polished cylindrical shells and were often strung together to wear as decoration or used as a currency.

- **Arrowheads:** Arrowheads were created using stones and used for hunting. These could have been attached to spears or to arrows to be used with bows.
- **Fish Hook:** Native Americans carved fish hooks out of animal bone. They used these fish hooks to fish for food.
- **Mink:** Native Americans told several legends and stories about minks, in which they were often tricksters and troublemakers. In some tribes, it was believed that minks were lucky animals and should be treated with respect. “The Mink and the Fish” legend from the Ojibwe tribe is a story that has been passed down orally by tradition.

“The Mink and the Fish”

Mink found a live pike on the lakeshore. He told the pike, "Pike, the Muskie is calling you all kinds of names." "What is he calling me?" asked Pike. Mink answered, "He says you're wall-eyed." Pike did not like to be called names and said, "Well, he's got teeth like a saw blade and a long, plated face. He's not pretty, either."

There was a muskie nearby, and Mink told him what Pike had said about him. Mink went back and forth, back and forth, getting Muskie and Pike mad at one another. Finally, Pike and Muskie had a big fight and Mink acted as referee. Muskie and Pike ended up killing each other in the fight, so Mink had the last laugh on them.

Mink got a big kettle and boiled and dried the meat. Then he lay down to rest. He was taking life easy. He had the fish eggs, which were his favorite, all together next to him, and all he had to do was open his eyes and stick out his tongue out to eat them. Finally, he dozed off.

Some Indians came by in their canoes and saw Mink lying there with all those fish. They came ashore and picked up all the fish and put them in their canoes. Where Mink had all the fish eggs right next to him, they put rocks there. Then they went away.

When Mink woke up, he reached with his tongue for the fish eggs, but instead there was only rocks and stones which broke his teeth. He realized they'd played a trick on him and he just walked away.

- **Deer:** Deer were hunted for food and resources (hide, bones) by many Native American tribes. It was seen as respectful by most tribes to use the whole animal when hunted. They used the meat to eat, skin for clothing, bones for tools, and antlers to create other materials.

- **Buffalo:** Buffalo were hunted for food and other resources, much like deer. Native Americans used the entire buffalo - meat for food, hides with hair for robes, bedding, and rugs. Processed hides (leather) were used to make clothing, bags, arrow quivers, teepee covers, shoe soles, and knife sheaths.
- **Native American Headdress:** Also called a war bonnet, these feathered headgears were traditionally worn by male leaders who earned great respect in their tribe. Headdresses are traditionally worn for ceremonies to show honor to the person wearing it. These headdresses were viewed as having spiritual and political importance and only someone who had been chosen by the tribe could wear them.
- **Pottery:** Native Americans used clay that they could find close to their homes to sculpt pottery. Pottery was used to collect and carry liquids (like water). Over time, it developed into a more artistic form of decoration.