Art of Heritage 2005

Tainos & Caribs
Rediscovering Heritage

Old Time Cooking
Recipes From Our Historical Cookbook

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund

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Thanks also to Radio Peckham and Southwark Arts Forum
Far too much of the history and culture of the African and Caribbean people has been misstated, understated, and in some cases, deliberately destroyed or omitted. The onus is with these communities to recover, rediscover and promote their own heritage.

The Art of Heritage, Caribbean Origins festival is an effort in this regard. It endeavours to highlight and promote one aspect of the rich history, namely that of the Tainos and Caribs. These were indigenous people who first settled in the Caribbean, long before the arrival of Columbus.

Art of Heritage will be a fun event celebrating the heritage of the Tainos and Caribs. There will be lots to see and do. Additionally, the project will have longer lasting outcomes such as a multimedia CD, this activity booklet, an animation based on the story of a young Taino boy, and other general educational materials.

Art of Heritage is the culmination of the efforts of a large number of individuals and organisations to whom ODAC UK, owes a deep gratitude for their contributions of time and resources.

I would especially like to mention Bryn Hyacinth, Mitch Miller, Henry Hughes-Davis, Arlene Sinclair, Ruth-Anne Lynch and Tameka Empson who have been particularly generous with their time and expertise.

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Finally to you the patrons, we hope you find it an enjoyable and educational experience.

Andrew Nelson
Chairman, ODAC UK,
November 2005
Hi! This pull out mini-mag is your key to a huge amount of knowledge about the Tainos and the Caribs, native peoples of the Caribbean. Their history is actually what Art of Heritage 2005 is all about. Have fun with the activities based on the Taino-Carib Notebook. Along the way you’ll be guided by a few characters from this year’s feature film-ARU & THE GAIA. Meet Huri, Maboya, Aru and Yuri. Enjoy!

In those days Arawidi, the Sun Spirit, came down upon the earth in fashion like unto man. And it came to pass that after fishing in his favorite creek, he made a dam, and said ‘This creek must not run dry lest when I come again I find no fishes here.’ The otters heard his words and broke his dam and let the water flow forth. When Arawidi returned and saw the destruction, he called to him the woodpecker and made him guardian of the water, and to this day, the woodpecker flies low over the little creeks, fulfilling the charge of Arawidi, that there always be water for the fishes.

Now it fell on a day, that Arawidi, while passing through the sky heard loud tapping. Hastening to the spot he saw the fierce alligator, and seizing him with his mighty hand, he smote the reptile with a hard club upon the head and tail. The alligator cried out, ‘O, Arawidi, slay me not, if thou wilt spare me, I will give thee a damsel fair to look upon, to be thy bride.’

So Arawidi left off from beating the alligator, who forthwith called him to his friends the water-spirits, who sought and found only a comely maiden of wondrous charms, who was placed in Arawidi’s arms to be his bride.

No more did Arawidi smite the alligator in his wrath, but to this day can be seen the marks of that first beating indented on his head and notched along his tail.
Tainos were the most culturally developed people living in the Caribbean islands of Cuba, the Bahamas, Hispaniola, Jamaica and Puerto Rico at the time of the Spanish Conquest in 1492. Although many different types of societies lived by growing root crops, fishing, gathering and hunting small games, not all had reached the chiefdom stage of the Taino.

The earliest Caribbean farmers were from the Orinocan-Amazonian rainforest areas. In Venezuela, these groups were able to adapt to life in a coastal region.

The daily life of the Taino took place within different settlement types. These were: those which were organized in a circular pattern around a central plaza; those which were made up of two intersecting streets; and the smallest ones, made up of only a few bohios (homes) perched high on top of a steep river bank.

- Taino labour was divided according to gender and age. Women did most of the daily work. Women tended the fields until harvest, prepared food, fetched water and cared for domestic animals. Pottery making and food gathering were also female tasks.

- Taino people fished with nets and weirs, bone, shell hooks, spears and sometimes with bows and arrows.

- Dog breeding for food and hunting purposes was an important Taino activity. A larger species was very important for hunting hutia, a large rodent which only appeared at nights.

- Caribs spoke more than one language. In addition to a Cariban language they spoke a trade language, which was used only in the men’s house and on expeditions to the mainland.

- Caribs emphasized warfare and trade, where as the Tainos emphasized religion and burial customs.

- Caribs elected temporary war chiefs to lead their raids. The Tainos on the other hand, had hereditary chiefs.

- Caribs were not savages, as has sometimes been assumed because of their ritualistic cannibalism.
Use the Notebook facts on the previous page to work these Crossword and Find-a-Word puzzles.

ACROSS
4. Main animal bred for hunting
5. Caribs emphasized warfare and _______
8. Tainos emphasized _____ and burial customs
10. Shell hooks, nets and weirs were used for _________
11. The Caribs had ________ chiefs lead their raids

DOWN
1. Type of Taino home
2. A god common to Tainos and Caribs
3. Large rodent frequently hunted by tainos
6. The area from which most early Caribbean farmers originated
7. _______ chiefs lead the Taino raids
9. The type of floor in Taino homes

Use the Notebook facts on the previous page to work these Crossword and Find-a-Word puzzles.

carib
bohio
cacique
taino
hutia
indigenous
hunt
amerindian
caribbean
plaza
zemi
These two characters from the Art of Heritage film Aru & the Gaiac Taino need some colour!

Remember to see how your masterpiece compares with the actual characters in the movie.
Tainos and Caribs

Rediscovering Heritage

Tainos and Caribs were indigenous Amerindians who inhabited much of the Caribbean region prior to the arrival of Europeans.

The Tainos inhabited the Greater Antilles. At the time of the arrival of Columbus in 1492 there were five Taino Kingdoms on Hispaniola each of these being led by a Chief or Cacique.

The Caribs occupied the Lesser Antilles. They were more warlike compared with the Tainos and indeed a warrior tradition was an important part of their culture. They came to represent the last bastion of resistance to European Colonisation.

Quite soon after the arrival of the Spanish and other Europeans, once flourishing populations of the these peoples estimated in the order several million, suffered rapid decline to a few thousand. This was as a result of several factors, in particular the brutality of the colonial experience and the diseases which the colonists brought with them such as smallpox for which the Amerindians had no immunity.

As with many other indigenous peoples, European colonisers came to portray Caribs and Tainos as savages and barbarians.

These labels were used as justifications for the subjugation, enslavement and genocide of indigenous races. In the case of the Caribs, they also were said to be cannibals. Again, this was a convenient exaggeration of the custom of Carib warriors to consume a small portion of the flesh of their defeated enemies.

Groups of Tainos and Caribs have managed to survive to the present day such as Tainos in Puerto Rico and Guyana and Caribs in Dominica. They represent an early and important part of Caribbean heritage.
The cassava is peeled and grated...

The excess water is squeezed out through a towel...

The lumps are sieved out. Once done the cassava is poured on a hot (flat) pan...

The cassava is shaped and rounded and flipped until browned.