

Native american pow wows



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A Pow Wow is a gathering of North America's Native people. The word Pow Wow comes from the Narragansett word powwaw, which means "spiritual leader". A modern pow-wow is a specific type of event where both Native American and non-Native American people meet to dance, sing, socialize, and honor American Indian culture. There is generally a dancing competition, often with significant prize money awarded. Pow-wows vary in length from one day session of five to six hours to three days.

Major pow-wow or pow-wows called for a special occasion can be up to one week long. Planning for a pow-wow generally begins months, perhaps even a year, in advance of the event by a group of people usually referred to as a pow-wow committee. Pow wows may be sponsored by a tribal organization, by an American Native community within an urban area, a Native American Studies program or American Native club on a college or university campus, tribe, or any other organization that can provide startup funds, insurance, and volunteer workers.

A pow-wow is often set up as a series of large circles. The center circle is the dance arena, the outside circle which is much larger consist of the MC's table, drum groups, and sitting areas for dancers and their families. Most of the various types of dances performed at a pow-wow are descended from the dances of the Plains tribes of Canada and the United States, the most common is the intertribal, where a drummer will sing a song and anyone who wants to can come and dance. The clothing worn by participants is known as Regalia.

Music for pow-wow dance competition and other activities is provided by a "Drum," a group of performers who play a large, specially designed drum and

sing traditional songs. The number of members of a drum group may vary, but is usually at least four people, and can be far more. Some members of the drum group may wear traditional regalia and dance as well as drum, other times drummers simply wear street clothing. Drums usually rotate the duty of providing songs for the dancers, each taking a turn at the direction of the pow-wow management.

The men do their own series of dances one in particular is called the Fancy Feather Dance . It is a dance which featured vivid regalia with dramatic movement, including spins and leaps. This performance was truly a spectacular to see the crowd cheer and roared as they performed this routine. For the women a more traditional dance is done. This dance featured traditional regalia made of cloth or leather, which had authentic design and materials. The women dancers whom performed this routine did so with precise and highly controlled movement. There were various vendors' booths, where you can buy food, music, jewelry, souvenirs, arts and crafts, beadwork, leather, and regalia supplies. The most popular food item was a Native American, Indian taco which consists of dough deep fried in oil and topped with a vast array of taco toppings. Another dish they served was fry bread which is the same dough as the Indian tacos fried in oil, but this can be eaten plain or topped with fresh fruit, honey, and powder sugar.