Native American Heritage Month



In honor of Native American Heritage Month, take the month of November to learn about Native American and Indigenous people groups of the US and our own Council area.

Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors, choose at least three of the 10 activities at right; Cadettes and up, choose at least five activities. By choosing 3, 5, or more ways to explore Native American Heritage Month, you can earn a custom patch! Which can be purchased in our Council Girl Scout Shop.)

1. Long before Europeans arrived, Indigenous people called this land home. Visit Native-Land.ca, a Canadian nonprofit, to learn about the traditional Indigenous people of the area where you live. Enter your address (or any address) in the search bar, then click on the links provided to learn more.

2. The Cherokee Nation originally covered parts of Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina. The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is one of three Cherokee tribes in the US but is the only one left in the Southeast. Visit Cherokee, North Carolina and experience it in person.

3. About 1,400 years ago, people chose what is now the Four Corners region of the US as their home. They built remarkable and elaborate cliff dwellings, which can still be visited today. Use Google Earth to explore Mesa Verde National Park and learn about the Pueblo cliff dwellers.

4. Indigenous people have always had a deep connection with the land, often considering it sacred. Take a moment to connect with the land yourself. Walk in the woods, go stargazing, learn about native plants and animals in your area, or participate in the Girl Scout Tree Promise.

5. Just south of Gatlinburg, TN, sits Kuwohi, the highest peak in the Great Smoky Mountains. This place had been called Clingman's Dome since 1859, but its name was restored in 2024. Find out what *Kuwohi* means and more about the name restoration in this article from UT-Knoxville.

6. Many Indigenous people groups use storytelling as a primary form of communication and historical record keeping. This tradition is alive and well! Listen to Native stories such as those from Gayle Ross (Cherokee), Dovie Thomason (Lakota/Apache), and Amy Bluemel (Chickasaw).

7. Many books are Eurocentric, meaning they highlight European-based ways of life, but you can increase diversity by reading books from Native authors. Visit your local public library or check out the book lists from Ohio Northern University and Penguin Random House to get started.

8. Learn about various Native artistic traditions like beadwork with Karen Hoffman (Oneida,) wampum and fiber art with Elizabeth James-Perry (Aquinnah Wampanoag,) textiles and weaving with TahNibaa Naataanii (Navajo/Diné,) and ribbon working with Anita Fields (Osage/Muscogee.)

9. Social media makes it easy to learn more about Indigenous traditions. Check out creators like Shina Nova (@shinanova) an Inuk (Inuit) throat singer, Aerius Benton-Banai (@aeriusbentonbanai) an Ojibwe jingle dress dancer, and James Jones (@notoriouscree) a Cree hoop dancer.

10. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 called for Native tribes to be forcibly relocated from their home lands into "Indian Territory" in what is now Oklahoma. This forcible relocation was named the Trail of Tears. Learn more about it and how it still impacts us today.

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