

Inuit

Where do the Innus live?

The Innu are indigenous people of Canada, particularly eastern Quebec and Labrador. Most Innu people still live in this traditional territory today, which they call *Nitassinan*.

● *What language do the Innus speak?*

Most Innu people speak one of their two native languages, *Montagnais* and *Naskapi*. These languages are very similar to each other and to Cree, but speakers of the three languages have trouble understanding each other. Today, many Innu people also speak French or English.

● *What were Innu homes like in the past?*

The Innu made large conical wigwams out of wood frames they covered with birchbark and caribou hides. Innu villages also often included a larger, central lodge for tribal gatherings and festivities.

● *What was Innu clothing like? Did they wear feather headdresses and face paint?*

Innu women wore long dresses with removable sleeves. Innu men wore breechclout and leggings. The Innus also wore moccasin boots and long coats made of white leather. Innu people frequently painted their coats, leggings, and dresses with fancy black and red designs. Some Naskapi Indians also adopted the warmer Eskimo-style parka. Maybe this was why the Montagnais thought the Naskapis were crude dressers, or maybe the Montagnais just didn't like Naskapi painting designs as much as their own.

The Innus didn't wear headdresses. They usually wore hoods in the winter and went bare-headed in the summer. Innu men and women both wore their hair long, which is still common today. The Innus didn't usually paint their faces, though Innu men did tattoo patterns on their skin sometimes.

● *What was Innu transportation like in the days before cars? Did they paddle canoes?*

Yes--the Innu tribe was well-known for their birchbark canoes. Canoeing is still popular within the Innu nation, though few people handcraft their own canoe from birch bark anymore. Over land, Innu people used snowshoes and sleds to help them travel.

🍷 *What was Innu food like in the days before supermarkets?*

The Innu were primarily big game hunters. Men hunted moose, caribou, and bears by driving them into deep snow or onto thin ice and shooting them with arrows. Women snared small game like rabbits and collected berries and wild plants. Along the coasts, the Innu also speared fish for their diet. Unlike the Inuit, the Innu always cooked meat before eating it.

🍷 *What were Innu weapons and tools like in the past?*

Innu hunters and warriors used bows and arrows, spears, and knives

🍷 *What are Innu arts and crafts like?*

Innu artists are known for their hide paintings and their beautiful clothing. With red ochre and black paint, Innu men and women decorated their clothing and personal items with intricate patterns.

🍷 *What other Native Americans did the Innu tribe interact with?*

The most important Innu trading partners were the Cree, Algonquin, and Ojibway tribes. Since they weren't farmers themselves, the Innus liked to trade furs for agricultural products like corn and tobacco. The Innu people were not especially warlike, but they sometimes fought against the Iroquois tribes and the Inuit.

http://www.bigorin.org/innu_kids.htm