

About the Coast Salish Peoples

The Coast Salish Peoples are a group of Aboriginal Peoples that live on the Northwest Coast. This includes the Strait of Georgia, Puget Sound, southern Vancouver Island, the Olympic Peninsula and western Washington State. In the Coast Salish Peoples there are many other groups such as Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian and Gitksan, but they still fall under the title Coast Salish. The Coast Salish are thought to have migrated from the coast to the interior, as this is where other Salish-speaking groups live. This shows how different cultures spread throughout the region.

The Coast Salish Peoples were hunter-gathers, which meant that they hunted animals as well as gathered plants for food. Since there was plenty of food around them, they had no need to create a system of agriculture. The ocean was a great resource, as it served as an everlasting source of high-protein food. Their diet included fish such as Salmon, Halibut and Smelt, crabs, shellfish, seaweeds and occasionally whales. That also gathered plants such as salal (see Salal article for more information).

The Coast Salish People's culture has been passed down from generation to generation through stories, songs and dances. In their culture spirits were connected to living things and the only link between the spirit world and the natural world would be a 'Medicine Man' or a 'Shaman'. They believe that at all times they are surrounded by the supernatural spirits. The Shamans job would be not only contacting with the spirits but also to cure the sick and control the surroundings, such as the weather and amount of food that was available. When healing a sick person, Shamans would use there rattles to summon up the powers from the spirit world to ask to cure the sick person. It is believed that they also could have possibly used the medicinal plants of the area to help heal the person. This is how this the playlist connects to the lives of the Coast Salish Peoples.

