

History

The Yakima are a Native American tribe now found primarily in eastern Washington state. Many Yakima people engage in ceremonial, subsistence, and commercial fishing for salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon in the Columbia River and its tributaries; including within land ceded by the tribe to the United States. Their right to fish in their former territory is protected by treaties re-affirmed in late 20th-century court cases: *United States v. Washington* (known as the Boldt Decision, 1974)* and *United States v. Oregon* (*Sohappy v. Smith*, 1969). The Sámi people also used tepees and lived in large northern parts of Norway and Sweden, northern parts of Finland, and the Murmansk area of Russia. Historically known as Lapps or Laplanders, the terms are considered derogatory today.

Lewis and Clark encountered the Yakama tribe in October 1805 and met Chief Kamiakin, the war leader of the Yakama Nation.



The Yakama were semi-nomadic and needed shelters that were easy to set up and take down. They lived in one of three shelters, depending on the season. The types of shelters were a semi-subterranean pit house, a tepee or a tule-mat lodge.

- Pit houses were winter shelters that were built with logs and sealed for insulation with earth (sod) and grasses. They were built below ground with an entrance and ladder at the top
- The summer shelters were the tepee and tule-mat lodge, both above ground.
- Tepees were covered with animal skins but the tule-mat lodge was covered with mats of strong, durable, tule reeds (bulrushes).



Sami lavvu structures, Finnmark, Norway

It's not a tipi, it's a lavvu. We're in Sami country here in Finnmark, Norway, and these temporary dwellings were used by the indigenous Sami people as they followed their reindeer herds across northern Scandinavia. The design has made its way into other symbols of the Sami culture, including the coat of arms for the municipality of Kautokeino and the design of the Sami Parliament building in Karasjok, Norway.

Ethnobotanical Gardens

Native plant “starts” from Bönhoeffer Gardens (to your SW, by the I-5) illustrate 99 foods and materials available to the American peoples who lived here 10,000 years without the need to develop agriculture. Planter boxes contain:

Historical definition [\[edit\]](#)

There are several historical references that describe the lavvu structure (also called a *kota*, or a variation on this name) used by the Sami. These structures have the following in common:^{[1][2][3][4][5]}

1. The lavvu is supported by three or more evenly spaced forked or notched poles that form a tripod.
2. There are upwards of ten or more unsecured straight poles that are laid up against the tripod and which give form to the structure.
3. The lavvu does not need any stakes, guy-wire or ropes to provide shape or stability to the structure.
4. The shape and volume of the lavvu is determined by the size and quantity of the poles that are used for the structure.
5. There is no center pole needed to support this structure.

[illegible]

Legends & Lessons

Both the Yakima and Sami used the horse and the tepee. Tepees are associated with group movement and are found around the world. As are horses that were once extinct in North America. Yakima Indians traded for a few older, gentler horses in the 1700s. It takes but 2 decades to build a herd of horses and the US Army killed 800 Palouse horses in 1 day in 1858.

Saunas, longhouses, tepees, horses, bows/arrows, spears, and potatoes (camus) for winter carbohydrates are a few of the many similarities of these peoples of different lands.

*During the 1850s as Governor Stevens was “herding” the Indians onto the reservations, he made a standard, boilerplate covenant in all treaties for “*education and the freedom to fish and hunt off-reservation in usual and accustomed grounds and stations.*” Many citizens in WA today blame Judge Boldt for his decision that was simply his upholding the Law regarding contracts. Natives did not see land, fish, and soil as a commodity to sell. All peoples used spears; our “state” recalls Shakespeare’s Hamlet: “*Hoisted on one’s own petard.*”