



TIXINDA
a weaving
cooperative



DREAMWEAVERS PRESENTS

In the community of Pinotepa de Don Luis, situated on the Costa Chica of Oaxaca, artisans of Mixtec origin, masters in the art of weaving on back-strap looms, weave beautiful cloth that they use in different types of dress. There is the *posahuanco* which is a type of skirt of pre-hispanic origin; the *huipil*, a tunic dress used for special occasions; and the *reboso*, a shawl used by the women both for warmth and to carry things, including their babies!

The women weavers of this community have formed a cooperative called “*Tixinda*” which has over 60 women, both young and old, who are passing down the 3,000+ year old tradition of spinning and weaving from one generation to the next. In addition to producing their traditional dress, *Tixinda* also produces table linens, bed linens, throw pillows and bags, using both traditional and contemporary designs.

The men of this town struggle to preserve a pre-hispanic practice of dyeing hand spun cotton with the ancient purple dye *tixinda* which is milked from the nearly extinct *purpura pansa* mollusk, which lives in a few sacred bays along the coast of Oaxaca. Illegal poaching has nearly decimated these snails. The weavers also dye their thread with *cochinilla*, a red dye derived from thousands of crushed female beetles which grow on the nopal cactus; and the blues and blacks of the native *anil* or indigo plant.

The women of *Tixinda* hand spin the cotton thread with a spindle called a *malacate*. Both natural white cotton and the rare, brown *coyuchi* cotton are grown in this town and are spun into thread and painstakingly woven on back-strap looms by the women of this community. It takes about two weeks of preparation and spinning to produce 1 kilo of cotton thread, and approximately 3 months to weave a traditional *huipil* using 4 kilos of thread, which is why their textiles are prized by museums and collectors!

The Mixtec women of *Tixinda* are proud to offer their weavings to world and hope that by working together as *hermanas* or sisters, they can preserve this ancient tradition for generations to come.

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