



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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