



10 FUN FACTS ABOUT MISKITO CULTURE

1. In many Miskito families, when a child is born, he or she may not receive a name until they are 6 months old. Names can be given from close friends or family members. Babies often wear a beaded bracelet for good luck.
2. Children who grow up in the BOSAWAS know the land very well. They love swimming and splashing in streams, climbing trees and picking fruit, playing soccer in the village square, and riding horses.
3. The BOSAWAS is a very isolated region in Nicaragua. Some children attend school in neighboring villages. They travel on the river in boats that are hand-carved from trees by men in the community. Can you imagine taking a boat to get to school everyday?
4. The Miskito word for “sun” is *dus* (pronounced “deuce”) and the word for “river” is *wanki* (pronounced “wawnki”). *Tasba penkira* is a Miskito expression for “beautiful land.”
5. Most families have about 6-8 children – that’s a lot of brothers and sisters! That means that girls and boys often help their mothers with chores like: collecting firewood, collecting water from the stream, taking care of their baby siblings, feeding the chickens and pigs, and doing laundry.
6. Families live in traditional homes made from wood and palm leaves for the roof. Houses are built off the ground on stilts.

This is because there are many snakes, spiders and rats that would otherwise hide under the house.

7. Many girls and women love to wear beaded necklaces and bracelets. They are made from glass beads that are purchased outside the community and often brought in for workshops. The style is to wear not one but *many* necklaces which are always very colourful.

8. Corn is very important to Miskito families. It is grown on family plots of land outside of the villages. Men and boys clear the brush and till the land, and women and girls often plant the seeds. Some people say it's best to plant the corn when the moon is full.

9. In earlier years, Miskito people used to hunt and fish to feed their families. Men and boys used a bow and a special arrow (with a line attached to it) to spot fish in shallow waters and shoot the arrow. Today the River Coco is very contaminated from cattle manure and fertilizers, so people only fish in streams deep in the mountains.

10. The favourite sports played by young people in the BOSAWAS are baseball and soccer. Last year, one indigenous village called San Andres sent a youth baseball team to play in a tournament in a city outside of the region. Their team won the tournament and surprised everyone!