Igbo Culture and Traditions

Justin Carter
Igbo Homeland

The Igbo people originated from the southeastern section of Nigeria. They are dominant in the states of Aba, Owerri, Enugu, Onitshu, Abakaliki, Afikpo, Agbor, and many others.
The average Igbo home was built with dried mud and grass. It would usually have around three rooms per structure and were commonly extended due to excessive family growth.
Many Igbo ceremonies consisted of a variety of dances and musical rhythms. The Igbo people believed that song and dance was a vital part of showing respect to the gods. In most cases, the elders or ranked men would wear ancestral masks and serve as a reincarnation of the spirit.
Igbo Titles

One of the most important events in an Igbo man’s life was earning a title in his clan. In every tribe, the elder’s would reward the men with a certain title, depending on the village or tribe, whenever the man would show great wisdom, bravery, or strength. The man’s rank would affect everything in his life, from what he did to who he spoke to.
Igbo Chi

Although the Igbo people had a number of gods, their personal god, or Chi, dominated their lives. They believed that in order to live a long, prosperous life, they must keep their Chi happy and obey the traditional laws of their people.
Igbo Music

Music was very important to the Igbo people. They played a variety of different instruments at funerals, marriages, and other ceremonies. The drum was most important instrument in their culture. They also had instruments similar to flutes and gongs.
Igbo Attire

In pre-colonial Igbo society, the average person would wear very small amounts of clothing. Occasionally, a woman would wear a string of beads around her waist for medical purposes, and a man would wear animal skins at certain ceremonies. Only the elders, wise men, or respected men of a tribe wore full body suits.
The Kola-nut was a symbol of hospitality in the Igbo culture. Whenever an elder or priest arrived, the Kola-nut would be presented to them in honor of their rank. The Kola-nut was also used as a sign that the situation being discussed was extremely vital.
The Igbo culture honored the yam as the most sacred food. They considered the yam to be their Staple Crop, or origin of a nutritious diet. The Igbo people celebrate the yam with a number of festivals such as the New Yam Festival, which is during the yam’s harvest.
Igbo Cuisine

Besides the yam and Kola-nut, the Igbo people had a variety of different foods, such as cassava, corn, and Jollof rice. Soups and stews were served as side dishes, along with fish, chicken, goat meat, or vegetables.
Citations

Pictures from Google Images
"Igbo people." Wikipedia. 21 Jan 2009