



*The state of Acre in Brazil looks like a moth*

The preparation of Piyaretsi, a fermented beverage made from cassava (macaxeira)

*Text and imagens from Teacher Maria Alexandrina S. Pinhanta Shãtsi*

“The Piyaretsi is a beverage much appreciated by my Ashaninka people. It is a beverage made from manioc, corn, peach palm and banana and is prepared by women. It is drunk when sweet and fermented and has a whole process to follow and prepare these drinks. It is present at all times, at parties and in everyday life of families. It serves as food, it is drunk sweet and fermented, sweet is more for moments of work and at home, fermented more in times of parties in the weekends.

The Piyaretsi party is very important for us Ashaninka, because in those moments is where families gather to talk, tell stories, talk to their children, women teach their daughters to sing, the men to play drum, flute, sōkari and sing. The songs that are sung during the party, they bring moments of sadness, emotions and joy that ask forces to birds, spirits and plants related to the piyaretsi party to give us strength and move on.

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How to prepare the Piyaretsi made from cassava:

This beverage from our Ashaninka people, only women prepare and serve it. The mothers of families are responsible for the transfer of this knowledge to their daughters. Mothers call their daughters and go to the place where the cassava grows, where we plant the cassava and other plants, cut the feet of cassava and pull the potatoes from the ground, put in the paneros, large baskets made of liana to carry fruits and vegetables harvested, as the cassava, for example, which is carried into the panero to home.

Arriving home the cassava is peeled, washed, they put over cardboard and lead to fire until it is thoroughly cooked. After it is cooked they pour it into a large bowl made of a wood proper for the Piyaretsi brewing. They pound the cassava with a shovel until it is a dough. Then the women take a kind of sweet potato that is used in the preparation of the drink, put the potato in the mouth, chew along with the cassava or only the potato, is at the discretion of who's chewing and after about 15 minutes of being in the mouth return in the trough and go pounding all the time. This process is repeated many times, until the dough is soft and sweet.

After this is done leave the dough for about 2-3 days in the bowl topped with banana straw or mat and leave in an environment that is not very sunny. After three days they put water and crumble the dough until it is a liquid good to drink and leave it there for 4-5 hours and is ready to drink. The longer it gets stored, stronger it becomes, this if you want to drink it fermented and in the parties.

View photo attachment ."



























*Teacher Shãtsi*

