
Our Tipis

Here at Abrams Creek we have two Cheyenne style Native American Tipis. This style tipi has a 3 pole sloped foundation, but the smoke flaps are 10" longer and slightly narrower than the Sioux and normally has a 6' plume of poles over top of tipi.

Both Tipis are 18 foot diameter and can sleep up to eight campers and includes a usable fire pit (see Basic Tipi Rules). They are made of Sunforger Canvas which is fire retardant (but not fire proof).

This guide is intended to give you a better understanding of how the Native American's used Tipi's to ensure that you get the maximum enjoyment from your experience.



Abrams Creek Retreat & Campground

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Abrams Creek Retreat & Campground

Camping in a Tipi

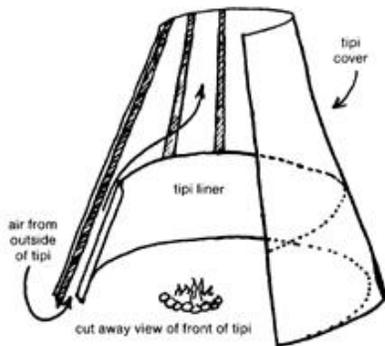


General info about Tipis

Cover: Traditionally, the cover, was not painted except for special groups such as the Bear or Wolf Clans or the tribes Medicine Mans'. They were originally made of Buffalo hide but later became canvas. The cover did not touch the ground but was staked down with about 2" of space above the ground. This was done to both protect the cover as well as create an updraft to keep the Tipi clear of smoke.

Tipi poles: The basic framework of the tipi consisted of 3 or 4 poles (historically from 12 to 25 feet long). Some of the poles were used as the frame of the travois when traveling.

Tipi lining: An additional layer of skin, sometimes brightly painted. Traditionally, it was shoulder height at the top and went to the ground. Air came under the cover, hit the liner and was forced up the 2nd wall. Heat from the fire kept the air moving up and out the smoke flaps to create a chimney effect.



Ozan: A sheet of canvas used as a half roof to reflect heat, but not smoke back to the living area. Also acted as a non-waterproof rain cover by helping to redirect water to the lining/cover space.

Basic Tipi Rules

Basic rules:

1. The fire inside a Tipi was NOT used for cooking. Do you really want to cook bacon and eggs in your bedroom?
2. It is ok, however to perk up a pot of coffee, boil water for tea or soup.
3. Keep the fire small. It does not take a very large fire to heat a Tipi. If the fire gets too big, you will be the one that gets roasted.
4. Make sure the smoke flaps are open. Their purpose is to aid in the removal of smoke.
5. Make sure the flaps are angled away from the wind. If angled into the wind, smoke will be blown back into the Tipi.
6. DO NOT use wax type logs. In your home fireplace they are perfectly acceptable but they exhaust chemicals that will circulate throughout the interior in vapor form that you will be breathing.
7. DO NOT use wet wood as it will produce a lot of sparks which could cause the Tipi to catch fire with you in it.
8. If you need help in picking out the best firewood to use or in establishing a safe fire, please contact either the owner or one of the Managers. We will be happy to assist you.
9. NEVER EVER leave the fire unattended for any reason. Make sure it is totally out before you go off exploring.

Tipi Etiquette

The old time Tipi was a temple as well as a home. The floor of the Tipi represented the earth on which we live, the walls of the Tipi, the sky and the poles, the trails from the earth to the spirit world—the links between man and Wakan' Tanka, the Great Mystery.

One always walked behind a seated person when possible and only stepped between them and the fire when unavoidable.

When entering a Tipi, you always move to the left around the tipi to your assigned sitting location.

When invited to dinner, one is expected to bring his own dishes and utensils.

When the door was open, it was an invitation for anyone to enter. When the door was closed, it was considered polite to announce yourself and if there were two sticks placed in an X in front of the door, it was their version of 'do not disturb'

Always give your guest the place of honor in the lodge and at the feast, and serve him in reasonable ways.

Never sit while your guests stand.

Do not trouble your guest with many questions about himself. He will tell you what he wants to know.

Never walk between persons talking.

Always give place to your seniors in entering or leaving the lodge, or anywhere.

Speak softly, especially before your elders, or in the presence of strangers.

Show respect to all men and women, but grovel to none.