



Story Ideas First Peoples

- ✿ The Banff area has been an important trade route and a sacred place for First Nations peoples for millennia. When Banff National Park was established in 1885, the area was largely a wilderness, but it was far from pristine or un-peopled. The area's passes have been traveled, its wildlife hunted, its vegetation managed, and its valleys inhabited for more than 4,000 years. Indeed, some archaeological sites indicate that humans have been active in the Bow Valley for far longer than that. Just across the highway from the hotel, at Vermilion Lakes, archaeologists excavated the oldest known shelter in Canada, a campsite dating back more than 11,000 years.
- ✿ Today, the Kutenai, Shuswap, Blackfoot, and Stoney Nations all consider the Bow Valley part of their traditional territory. Archaeological evidence found near The Juniper--such as exotic stone artifacts from as far away as the Yellowstone National Park area--points to a tradition of trade and the sharing of ideas between the aboriginal cultures of the Rocky Mountains, the Plains, and the British Columbia interior.
- ✿ All evidence indicates that the mountain peoples used the landscape of what is now Banff National Park very intensively. They harvested mountain plants, following ripening root crops (such as glacier lily and silverweed) and roasting them in earth ovens. When they weren't hunting bison on the Plains, these earlier cultures were subsisting on other large mammals, as the sheep, elk, and deer of the mountains. In addition to hunting and gathering food, there is evidence that early peoples in Banff systematically pruned and burned vegetation, to promote diversity and to draw ungulates into the valleys, where they were easier to hunt.
- ✿ The mountain regions were also important spiritual places for early aboriginal people. However, no amount of archaeological research can excavate the beliefs and stories of the people who moved through the park in eras long ago. For this, we must look to the knowledge and wisdom of the First Nations peoples who live in and around Banff today.
- ✿ Inspired by the Bow Valley corridor bridging two abundant food baskets from the prairie grasslands to the Fraser Valley Delta, the Juniper Bistro features "**cross roads**" **cuisine**. "Cross Roads" is drawn from the memory of the first peoples who traveled between the salmon region to the west and the buffalo plains to the east. As they journeyed to these places the first peoples used the current Juniper site as a resting ground and location to cache food.
- ✿ Juniper's Bistro, Muk a Muk, is named after a first peoples' word which is Chinook for "food" or "feast". In continuation of the sharing between peoples of BC and Alberta, food product is purchased direct from local suppliers whenever possible: 80% from Alberta and British Columbia. Purchasing is prioritized to serve certified organic produce and protein whenever possible. (i.e. Spring Creek Beef, Highwood Crossing Farms, Bles-wold Farms Dairy, Wapiti Ways Elk, Carmen Creek Bison, Popular Bluff Farm)

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