

GREAT CELEBRATIONS AND TRADITIONS

Aboriginal Nations celebrate their cultures and spirituality at various ceremonies, rituals, festivals and gatherings.

Ceremonies and rituals

Nature	Ceremonies to mark the passing of the seasons or the importance of the sun exist in many Nations.
The calumet	Tobacco has long been regarded as a means to purify oneself, and is also related to the values of sharing and showing trust in others.
Plants	Sweetgrass and sage are important plants. Their scents have purification and even healing properties.
Hunting	The hunter thanks the spirit of the animal for giving its life to enable the hunter to survive.
Walking out	When babies are about a year old, the whole community welcomes them at a ceremony where they walk out of the family home for the first time to their grandparents who are waiting for them with open arms and gifts.
Sweat lodge	In some nations, those who need to think or heal will go to a hut with a fire inside and throw water on it to create steam. They will stay there for a long time, waiting for a spirit or vision to help them find the solution.

The First Nations and Inuit also celebrate births and weddings like other Quebecers.

Festivals and gatherings

Goose Break	For the Eeyou (Cree), the goose-hunting season is an important time of year for passing on traditions. The hunt ends with a big feast.
Powwow	Large gatherings that usually take place on summer weekends. Celebrations featuring dance and music, sports competitions, crafts and food to celebrate Aboriginal traditions.
Makusham	For the Innu, Makusham is a great feast, during which they cook big game meat slowly all day long. This big celebration is an opportunity to sing and dance, a way to bond with each other and a way to pay tribute to the animals that allow humans to survive.
Montréal First People's Festival	An annual festive event that has been held in held Montreal since 1990, organized by <i>Terres en Vue</i> to celebrate today's Aboriginal cultures in the three Americas. It features movies, visual arts, concerts, lectures, dance shows, etc.