

## Title:

Tips on How to Buy and Shop for Authentic Native Indian Carvings

## Word Count:

784

## Summary:

Shopping tips for buying Pacific Northwest Native Indian Carvings. Telling the difference between the real authentic pieces from the imitation reproductions.

## Keywords:

buy, shop, native, indian, carvings, pacific, northwest, authentic

## Article Body:

Many visitors to the Pacific Northwest will be exposed to Native Indian art while touring the region, especially in British Columbia. Among this aboriginal artwork are the magnificent hand made Pacific Northwest Native Indian wood carvings by the Canadian aboriginal artists in BC. While in some of the major Canadian cities (Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal) or other tourist areas popular with international visitors such as Banff, such carvings will be seen at various retail shops and displayed at some museums as well as some public areas such as parks. Since Pacific Northwest Native Indian art has been getting more international exposure, people may be seeing this aboriginal fine art form at galleries and museums located outside the Northwest too.

As a result, many tourists and art collectors will decide to purchase Native Indian art as nice souvenirs for their homes or as very unique gifts for others. Assuming that the intention is to acquire an authentic piece rather than a cheap tourist imitation, the question arises on how does one tell apart the real thing from the fakes? It would be pretty disappointing to bring home a piece bought in Vancouver only to find out later that it isn't authentic or even made in Canada. One would have to be careful in tourist areas where all sorts of other souvenirs such as t-shirts, hockey jerseys, postcards, key chains, maple syrup and other Canadian items are sold.

The safest places to shop for Pacific Northwest Native Indian art carvings to ensure authenticity are always the reputable galleries that specialize in Native Indian art. Some of these galleries have advertisements in the city tourist guides found in hotels. Reputable Native Indian art galleries are also listed in magazines which focus on Native art such as American Indian Art and Native Peoples. These galleries will usually be located in the downtown tourist areas

of major cities or within Indian reservations. When one walks into these galleries, one will see that there will be only Native Indian art and none of the other usual tourist souvenirs such as t-shirts or postcards. These galleries will have only authentic Native Indian art for sale as they do not deal with imitations or fakes. The carvings are usually signed by the carver.

Some of these galleries also have websites so you could shop and buy authentic Native Indian carvings from home anywhere in the world. In addition to these street retail specialty galleries, there are now reputable online galleries that also specialize in authentic Native Indian art. These online galleries are a good option for buying art since the prices are usually lower than those at street retail galleries due to lower overheads. Of course, like any other shopping on the internet, one must be careful so when dealing with an online gallery, make sure that their pieces have information on the actual artist or carver to ensure authenticity.

Some tourist shops do carry authentic Native Indian art as well as the other touristy souvenirs in order to cater to all types of tourists. When shopping at these types of stores, it is possible to tell apart the real pieces from the reproductions. Authentic Native Indian carvings are carved from wood. Reproductions are made of plastic or resin from a mold will be much lighter in weight. A reproduction will sometimes have a company name on it and will never feature an artist's signature.

An authentic Native Indian carving is a one of a kind piece of artwork and nothing else on the store shelves will look exactly like it. If there are duplicates of a certain piece with exact details, the piece is not authentic. If a piece looks too perfect in detail with absolute straight bottoms or sides like the fake totem poles shown in the previous chapter, it is probably not real. Of course, if a piece features a sticker indicating that it was made in an Asian country, then it is obviously a fake. There will also be a huge price difference between authentic pieces and the imitations.

Where it becomes more difficult to determine authenticity are with the reproductions that are also made of wood or some type of wood composite. This can be a real gray area to those unfamiliar with authentic Native Indian art. They may even have some type of tag indicating that it was hand made or painted but if there are other pieces on the shelves that look too similar in detail, they are most likely crafts produced in large quantities rather than authentic fine art originals. The authentic pieces will always be the highest priced and are usually kept in a separate shelf or wall within the store.