

Chicha: The Drink of the Incas

From our textiles to property excursions, the **Inkaterra** experience is enveloped in our heritage and culture. An opportunity our guests particularly enjoy is taking part in the traditional Peruvian rituals, for example, making Chicha, a sweet South American beverage that harks back to the Incan Empire.

Chicha is produced from corn, a sacred crop of the Incas who dedicated entire desert plains and valleys to its cultivation. Due to its national prestige, Chicha played an integral role in the celebrations of the Incan Empire where they used offering cups of lavish golds with an inlay of silver and gemstones. The beverage was offered to gods and ancestors, including mummies of late kings.



Chicha's deep rooted heritage is a cause for celebration here at Inkaterra. At **Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba** we continue the tradition by making the drink ourselves, and encourage our guests to take part in the process too. So, how do we make it?

1. First the corn must be dried out for several days. White or purple corn can be used depending on what type of Chicha is being made
2. The corn is crushed with an Andean Grinder. Past methods included women chewing the corn and today machinery can be used to speed up the process, however, at Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba we are proud to use only traditional farming methods (although there is no chewing involved) and use original technologies such as the Andean Grinder.
3. Once the corn is ground it is added to boiling water along with wheat and various spices, such as cinnamon or clove
4. Seasonal fruits are used to sweeten the drink. Chicha morada, purple Chicha, favours the addition of strawberries but other fruits such as pineapple can be used
5. The drink is left to boil for around twenty minutes. It is then filtered to remove the small pieces of corn, which are then fed to the guinea pigs - nothing goes to waste here at Inkaterra



Upon raising a glass we hang flowers or plastic bottles outside our Aqha Wasi "El Pisonay", where our Inkaterra Chicha is prepared, so that passersby know to call in and take a sip of Peruvian past.

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