

Traditional Western Apache Diet Project

Overview of Ancestral Western Apache Diet

Based on elder interviews, staff was able to reconstruct 96 pre-reservation daily menus (8 days per month), and to conduct an initial nutritional analysis of these menus.

The initial analysis and interviews indicate that:

1. Our ancestral diet, *and living the life that supported that diet*, kept us healthy and happy by living according to the natural rhythm and processes of Nigosdzán (the Earth).
2. We gathered highly diverse foods from ecosystems ranging from 2,000 to 10,000 ft. in elevation, including:
 - Over 200 edible wild plant species;
 - Over 12 varieties of corn, and squash; and
 - Nearly 50 species of mammals and birds.
3. Wild plant foods comprised 40% - 60% of our total diet;
Agricultural plants comprised 25% - 50% of our total diet; and
Wild meat comprised 20% - 40% of our total diet
4. Our diet was:
 - High in fiber (2X USDA Guidelines)
 - High in protein (2X USDA Guidelines)
 - Low in saturated fats (28% of USDA Guidelines)
 - Healthy in polyunsaturated fats (68% of USDA Guidelines)
 - Low in cholesterol (53% of USDA Guidelines)
 - Low in sodium
 - High in B, C, and K vitamins, calcium, zinc, and iron
 - Sweet, without processed sugars
 - Rich in a wide variety of whole and wild foods and supplements
 - Filling with little volume