

# Mesoamerican Foods

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# Where is Mesoamerica?





# Mesoamerica






People have lived in Mesoamerica for over 10,000 years. They share a common history. While they may belong to different cultures and speak different languages, they have many things in common





The background of the slide is a complex, repeating geometric pattern in shades of brown and tan. The pattern consists of interlocking squares and diamonds, creating a tessellated effect. The lines are of varying thickness, and the overall style is reminiscent of ancient Mesoamerican art, such as that found on Aztec or Mayan textiles or pottery.

Ancient Mesoamerica was  
one of the five great ancient  
civilizations of the world.

In fact, the largest city in the world 1,500  
years ago was Teotihuacán, near present day  
Mexico City.





The ancient Mesoamerican  
civilization had many great cultural  
achievements.



# Architecture



Photo by Lindsay Mitchell



# Art











then

now





# Writing



This writing used images instead of words. This was helpful for people who spoke different languages.

# Calendars and Mathematics



This is a modern replica of a calendar wheel used to calculate birth names.



# Agriculture



Corn, squash, and  
beans growing  
together



Which foods did the ancient Mesoamerican people develop?





# Corn



Photo by Alejandro ávila de Blomberg







Beans



# Squash and Zucchini



Photo by Alejandro ávila de Blomberg



# Tomato





# Peppers or Chiles





# Chocolate







Cacao beans were used as money.



# Avocado





# Turkey





For ancient Mesoamericans, these foods were not just something to eat. They were a central part of their spiritual life, art and everyday activities.

See if you can find some of the foods you've seen in this slideshow in the following images.





This is a corn goddess, Chicomecóatl.

How many corn cobs is she wearing?





This is another illustration of the corn goddess, Chicomecóatl. People are making offerings to her.

Which foods can you find?





Ofrendas de comida hecha con maíz para Chicomecóatl.  
*Códice Florentino*, Libro II, f. 28r. BNAH.

This is yet another picture of people making offerings to the corn goddess.

What can we learn from this picture?





What are the  
creatures with  
faces?



What food do you see here?



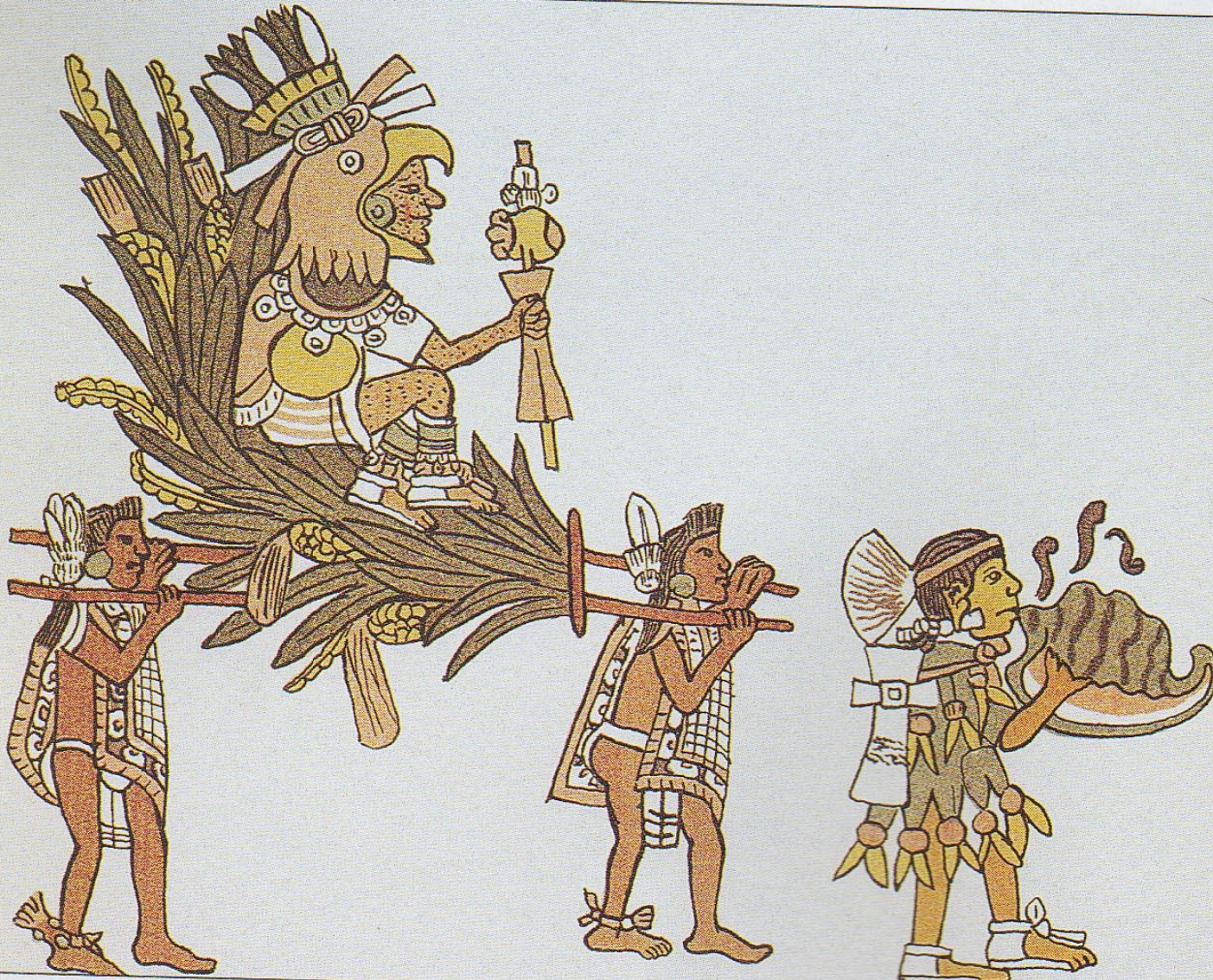




What do you see  
here?



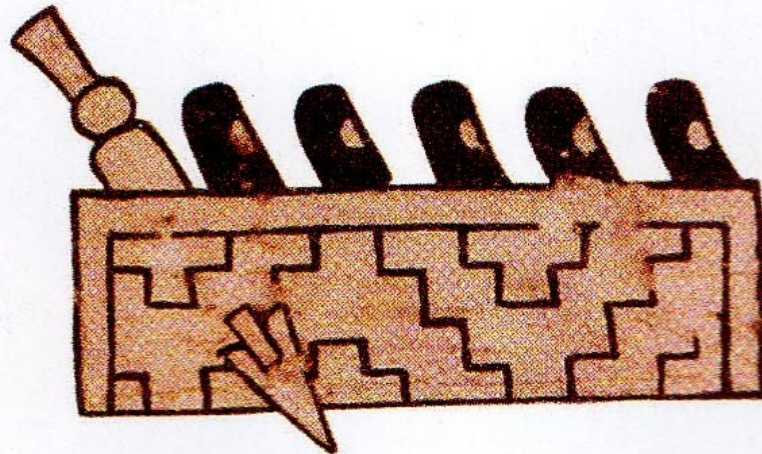
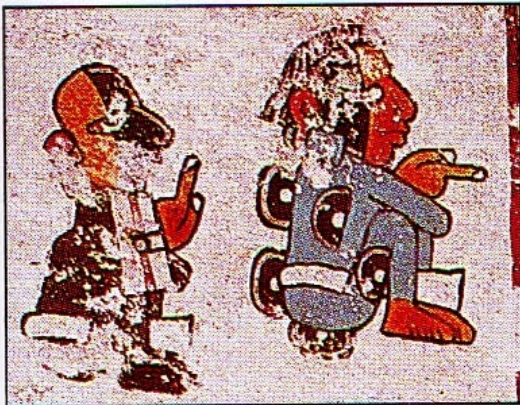
Do you know on what plant this god is  
being carried?





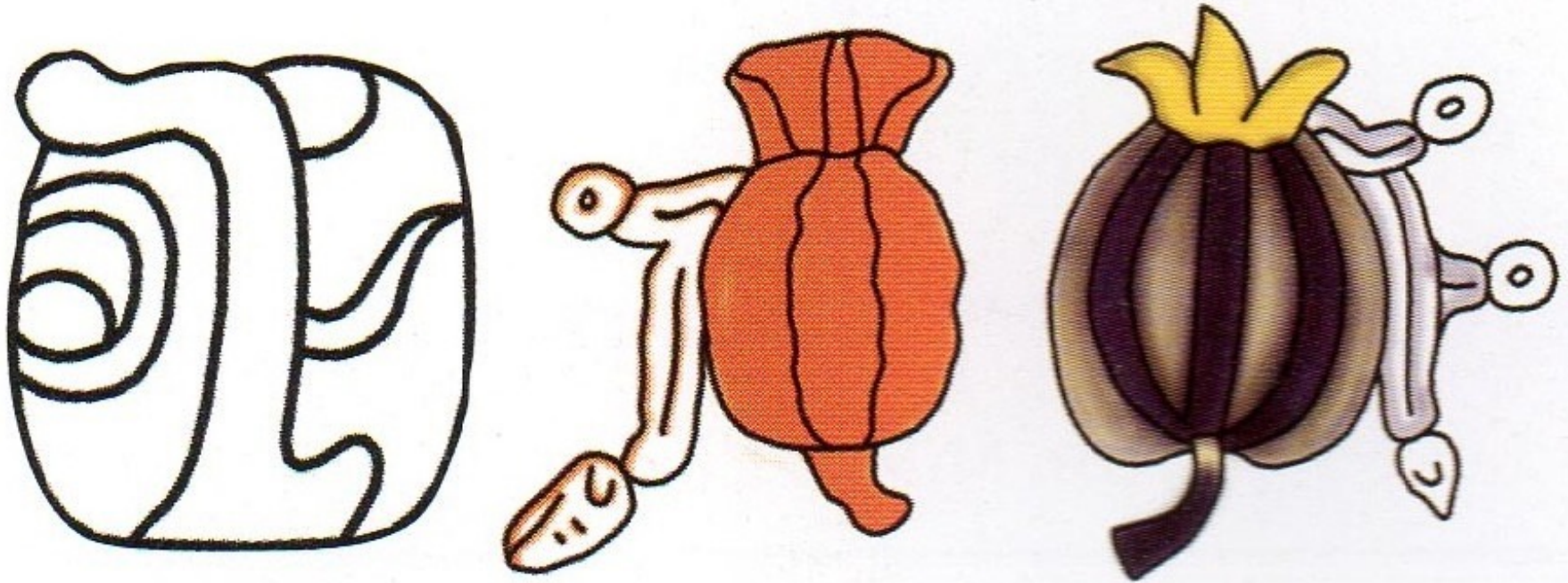
# Which Mesoamerican food is in all three illustrations?

beans





How about here?

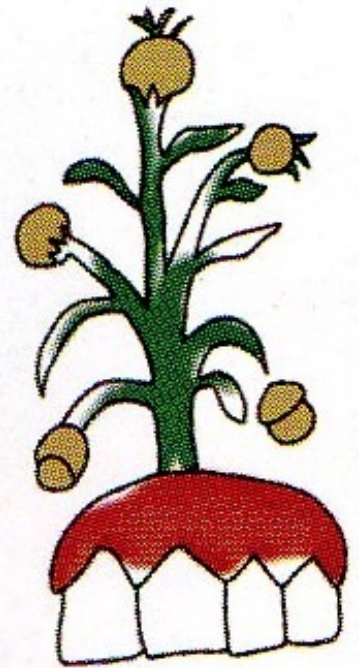
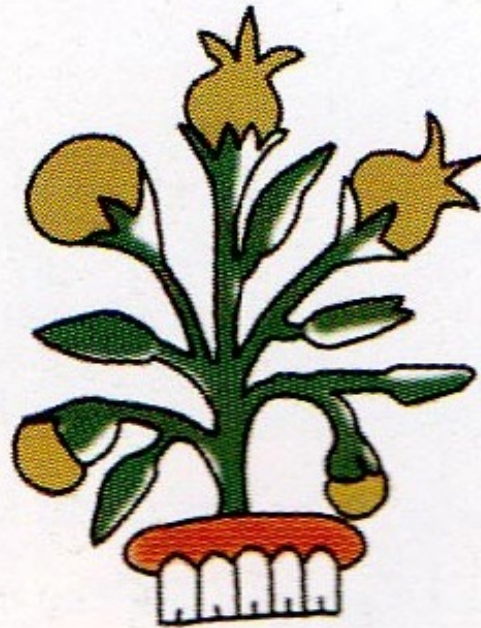
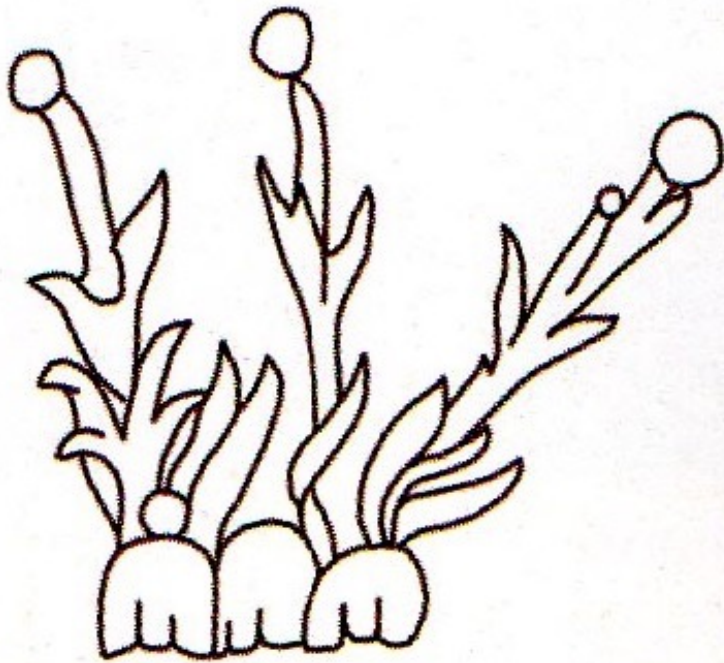


squash



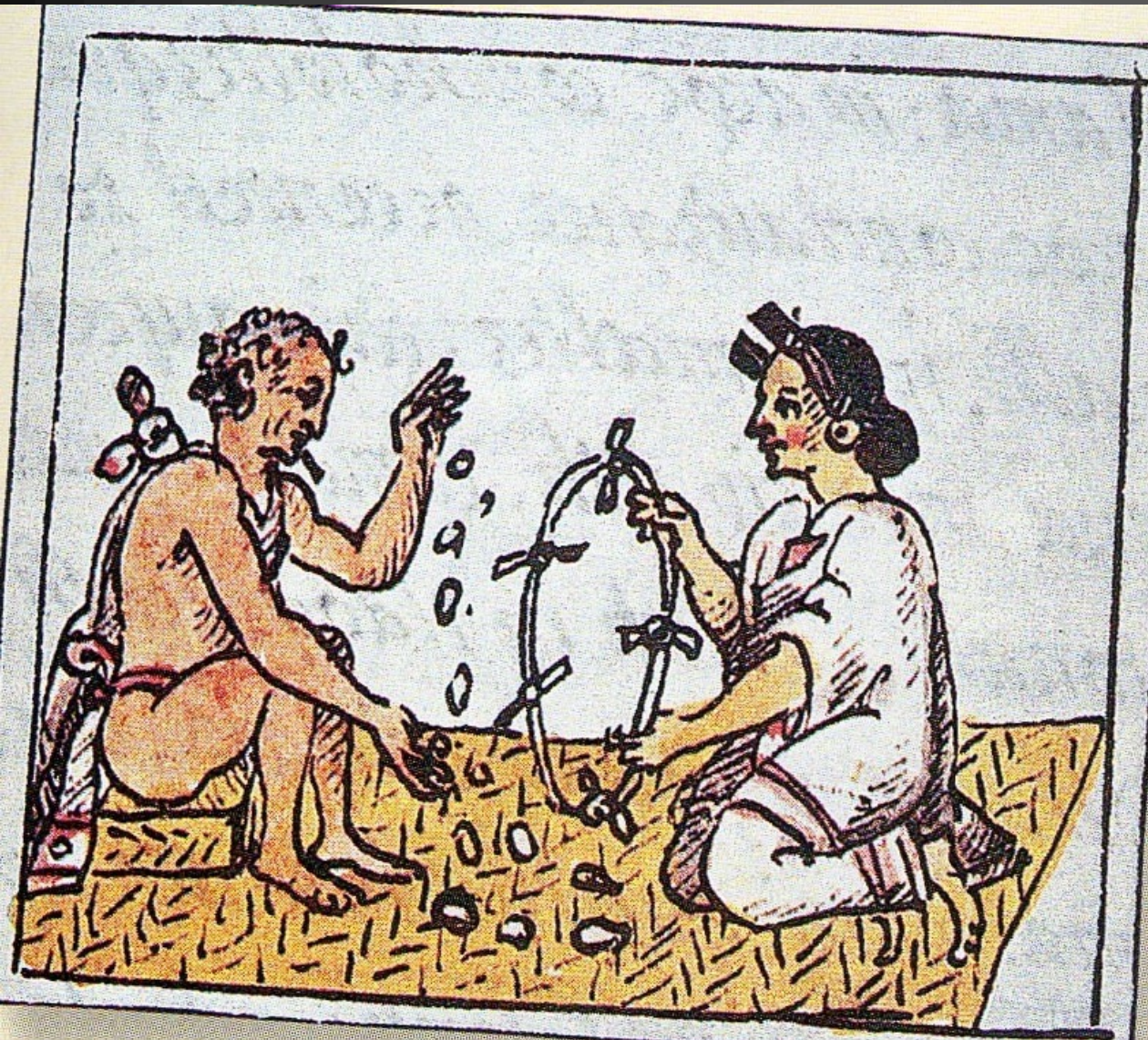
# What food is shown here?

tomatoes





Can you  
guess what  
these gods  
are doing?



They are using grains  
of corn to divine (see)  
the future.





What are this  
god and  
goddess  
giving each  
other?

The Rain god Chac and the moon goddess IxChel exchange cacao  
(Madrid Codex)





What food is this woman preparing?

An Aztec woman pouring chocolate from a standing position to raise the foam (Tudela Codex)



After seeing the images made by  
ancient Mesoamericans, what can  
you say about their culture?



Today people all over the world have made these Mesoamerican foods their own. What about you?





Which of these foods would be very different without the work of ancient Mesoamericans?





Which U.S. holidays would be very different without foods from ancient Mesoamerica?







Can you remember eight foods the  
people of ancient Mesoamerica  
developed?



# Photo credits

Corn cob (first page) Darwin Bell

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d3/Corn\\_on\\_the\\_cob.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d3/Corn_on_the_cob.jpg)

Palenque by Tato Grasso

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:0150\\_Palenque.JPG](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:0150_Palenque.JPG)

Jack o' lantern by Derek Kerl

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/legalnonresident/4064771724/>

Hamburger and fries by Simon Law

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Guacamole by Nikodem Nijaki

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Thanksgiving dinner

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