

# Pow Wow & Native American Tour Etiquette

A Respectful Visitor's Guide for TBEX 2025

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As a guest at this cultural gathering, your respect and thoughtfulness are essential. Pow wows and Native-led tours are deeply rooted in spiritual and communal traditions—this guide will help ensure you engage honorably and mindfully.

## Social Media & Photography: What's Okay to Share

### DO Post:

- Public performances or dances when explicitly permitted
- Artwork, food, and Native-made crafts with vendor permission
- Landscapes and community-wide views (excluding sacred areas)
- Reflections that express learning and appreciation

### DO NOT Post:

- Ceremonies, blessings, or sacred dances unless clearly authorized
- Close-up shots of people, children, regalia, or drums without consent
- Images of sacred items (e.g., eagle feathers, medicines)
- Content that reinforces stereotypes or trivializes culture

Best Practice: When in doubt—ask first. Many communities prohibit photography or request special permissions, especially at sacred sites.

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## General Etiquette: Do's and Don'ts

### DO:

- Listen to the emcee or tour guide for instructions
- Stand and remove hats during ceremonial songs (e.g., Grand Entry, Flag Song)
- Support Native artisans, performers, and storytellers
- Use respectful language—prefer specific tribal affiliations

### DO NOT:

- Touch drums, regalia, or sacred objects—these are spiritually significant
  - Cross the arena or ceremonial space uninvited
  - Interrupt or approach during prayers, songs, or ceremonial moments
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## **Personal Conduct on Tour**

- Dress modestly and comfortably, especially if you're invited to participate
  - Do not assume you can participate in a dance—wait for an invitation
  - Avoid asking intrusive questions about personal identity or spiritual practices
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## **Cultural Sensitivity & Language**

- Avoid outdated or disrespectful terms—use “Native American,” “Indigenous,” or a tribal name
  - Do not claim Native heritage unless it is documented and recognized by the community
  - Honor protocols even if they are unfamiliar—this is not a performance, it is a living tradition
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## **What Else NOT to Do**

- Do not handle offerings like tobacco bundles, feathers, or medicines
- Do not enter marked sacred or restricted areas
- Do not treat the event like a spectacle—be present, not performative