

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Chichester



When I moved from St. Louis to Toronto in 1987, I began buying Native American art to give to my brother Tom each Christmas. Because of his profound appreciation of these gifts, I began to pay more attention to Native art in Canada.

On a vacation to Montreal one year, I discovered Attikamek birchbark rognans for sale in a boutique. I was fascinated by these etched bark baskets that were tied together with spruce roots and had a smoked moosehide strap. I bought one for Tom. Little did I know then that it would change the course of my life.

A few years later, I mentioned to Tom that I was searching for a hobby business to start on the side, but couldn't decide what to do. He immediately told me that I needed to poke around the reservations in Canada and buy Native American arts and crafts to sell in the U.S. If I did the sourcing, he would do the selling. He compiled a list of items for me to look for literally on the back of an envelope. When I got back to Canada, I bought a box of arts and crafts worth a thousand dollars—and Tom and I started selling.

In the early years, I took Native arts and crafts with me to sell in the mid-west to pay for my visits back to see family and friends in the U.S. In mid-1994, I left my job with an economics consultancy in Toronto to start a company called American Vietnam Trading to take advantage of the ending of the U.S. trade embargo against Vietnam. I worked closely with a colleague in New York City and

took Native art with me each month when I went to meetings in Manhattan. After our meetings, I hopped a cab to Greenwich Village and peddled Native American crafts to help pay my \$1,000 per month phone bills. After six months, it was clear that the Vietnamese consulting business was extremely interesting, but not very lucrative. I either needed to get another job or try exporting Native arts and crafts full time.

In January 1995, I dropped the Vietnamese gig and went full time selling Native arts and crafts. I spent my time poking around reservations in Canada looking for interesting items to pack in my car to take to galleries, museums, and trading posts in the eastern United States. This was a very hard way to make money, but at least it gave me a chance to work on my own. And boy did I work... and work... and work....

Since then, Chichester has grown into a mail-order business with offices in both Toronto, Ontario and Antwerp, New York. Our product line quickly expanded into trading post gifts, furs, craft supplies, and whatever else caught my eye. The line continues to widen and deepen over time, and we now import from more than 45 countries.

Our goal, however, remains the same: we want to offer products not readily found elsewhere to serve the needs of museums, galleries, trading posts, catalog retailers, individuals, artists, collectors, and manufacturers around the world.

Everything in this catalog that is made by Native American Indians is identified with the symbol ♦ in the picture. Everything that has been assembled by Native American Indians from substantially non-Native materials is identified by the symbol ⊙.

We buy directly from many Native Americans as well as from reputable Native co-ops and non-Native dealers in the U.S. and Canada. We value the efforts of the Native American artists and craftspeople we deal with and

support and comply with the *Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990*, the *Indian Arts and Crafts Enforcement Act of 2000*, and the *Indian Arts and Crafts Amendments Act of 2009*.

Most Native American merchandise is located in the ethnic arts and crafts section. The rest of the catalog generally contains non-Native merchandise (i.e., items not made by Native American Indians) but may have Native-made items. Native items are identified by the symbols ♦ or ⊙.

In addition to the merchandise in this catalog, we offer many other items on our websites. The web is ideal for items that are unique and impossible to catalog or for merchandise that is available only in limited quantities. We also list closeouts and specials on the web. Visit our websites at www.NaturalExotics.com (full e-commerce website with wholesale password), www.chichesterinc.com (massive legacy website), and www.chichestercanada.com to see what else is available in our Canadian company.

If you have any questions about our products, please do not hesitate to call us at 1.800.206.6544 or send an e-mail to info@chichesterinc.com

On behalf of our staff, Native American friends, and many suppliers around the world, thank you for giving us an opportunity to serve you.

Sincerely,

Paul E. Crosby

Paul Crosby
President