

What are Mitasses?

Mitasses, or leggings, were an important article of clothing worn by the Métis. They were not only decorative but served to keep the wearer warm in the cold winter months. They also would have protected the wearer from insects and brush in the summer.

They were made from tanned Deer, Caribou, Moose, and bison hides or a wool cloth. They were always decorated with floral, and sometimes geometric, designs using beadwork or embroidery.

Men's Mitasses would be fully decorated, as they would be worn over their pants. Some styles of Mitasses folded over at the top and included fringe, to cover the string that secures them.

A woman's Mitasses would be only decorated at the bottom, as the rest would have been covered by a skirt. The leggings for both men and women would stop just below the knee.

North Island Métis (NIMA) publishes a monthly newsletter.

Go to NIMA's website (www.nimetus.com/newsletters) to read current and past newsletters.

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NORTH ISLAND MÉTIS

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**NORTH ISLAND
MÉTIS**

Métis
Mitasses



History

Historically Cree and Ojibwa First Nations people wore leggings. The leggings could communicate information about the wearer, such as gender, identity, and status. Male hunters would have beautifully decorated clothing, from their wives.

In Cree culture it was believed that the Memekwesiw (the little people) would be pleased by a hunter who was carefully dressed for the hunt. It was believed that you needed to be in your cleanest and best clothing when out hunting.

Among some First Nations cultures, the decorations on a person's leggings would be a specific reference to their spiritual helpers. The more spiritual helpers a hunter had, the more decorated their leggings became.



<https://www.ancientpages.com/2017/06/07/nimerigar-mythological-race-of-little-people-living-in-wyoming/>

Southern Michif

Mitasses - Leggings

Di kottoon - Cotton

Kaashkikwaata - Sew

Kishitew - Warm(th)

Wawayshiiha - Decorate

Aen Zhnoo - Knee

Boolay - Ankle



McCord Stuart Museum



Getting Started

- Material (one of the following):
 - Melton
 - Stroud
 - Felt
 - Velvet
 - Buckskin
- Stabilizer
- Liner (cotton, broadcloth, fleece, flannel)
- Twill tape
- Beading thread and glass beads
 - OR embroidery thread
- Beading or embroidery needles