

# Aboriginal Circle

## HOW ABOUT SOME SINZIBUCKWUD?

Does the word sinzibuckwud mean anything to you? First clue: it is a very sweet substance.

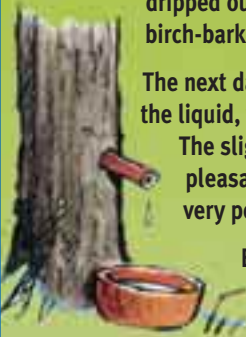
Second clue: it's an Algonquian word meaning "drawn from trees." Think you've guessed what it is? Sinzibuckwud is maple syrup! Aboriginal people in eastern Canada introduced the first settlers to this precious liquid taken from maple trees.



Where does this tradition come from? One of many legends is that an Iroquois chief was on his way hunting and drew out his hatchet that was stuck in a maple tree. All that day, a colourless liquid dripped out of the cut left by the hatchet and into a birch-bark container laid at the foot of the tree.

The next day, the chief's wife cooked a game stew in the liquid, which she thought was ordinary water.

The slightly sweet taste of the stew was a pleasant surprise! Maple water soon became very popular.



Each spring, families left their winter camp and settled in a maple orchard. The men cut notches into the maples and inserted small wood-carved spouts.

They then placed small bowls directly on the ground to collect the sap. Sheltered in special huts, the women were busy boiling the maple water.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT?

As early as 1700, settlers boiled maple sap to produce syrup and sugar. This was an outdoors activity. Makeshift shacks, which were torn down at the end of the sugaring season, appeared in the 1800s. These shacks had a rectangular opening in the centre of the roof to let the steam out. That's how the first sugarhouses appeared.

If You Seek...

You Will Find

Do you want to know more about Aboriginal people? Or are you looking for information for your school projects? Visit our Web site at

[www.inac.gc.ca](http://www.inac.gc.ca). Happy surfing!

