



**THE PACHAKUTI MESA TRADITION®**  
Cross Cultural Shamanic Arts for Personal & Planetary Renewal  
**EARTH OFFERINGS**

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## **BASIC DESPACHO CEREMONY**

In a *despacho* ceremony, we reverently create a beautiful and balanced mandala-like offering on a large piece of paper placed on the ground. Then we gently fold it up and offer it from the heart by burning it in a sacred fire, burying it in the Earth or offering it to water such as a river, lake or the ocean. We use these ritual offerings to give thanks for the gifts we have received and to offer *ayni* to Pachamama, the *Apukuna* and the Unseen World, including the guardians of nature and the Spirit Realm of the various *pachas*. Within the Pachakuti Mesa Tradition most collective *despachos* are for offering *ayni* and setting group ceremonial intentions. *Despacho* ceremonies can also be performed individually. When prayerfully prepared and offered with love and gratitude, a *despacho* creates a resonant space and great medicine by offering a feast to the Unseen World that further opens the passageway of mutual support and deeper interconnection. *Despacho* ceremonies also restore balance and harmony to our lives.

**Note: There are hundreds of different kinds of *despachos*, with unlimited intentions for their creation, and each medicine person creates a unique offering. While following traditional ways using customary ingredients is rewarding, what is most important is the love, gratitude and reverence given during the preparation, creation and offering of the *despacho*.**

To prepare a *despacho*, we offer specific gifts that are resonant with the five directions of the Pachakuti Mesa to the guardians of nature, the unseen spirit beings that are associated with each direction:

**TIRAKUNA** – “The Watchers” live in rock outcroppings, deserts, forests and sacred ceremonial sites. They are honored in the south and feed on the energy of animal products: fat (especially llama, *untu*), jerky, blood, bones, feathers, fur, teeth, etc. (The medicine from offerings in the south is physical health and manifestation.)

**AWKIKUNA** – “Nature Spirits” live in moist marshes, meadows and fields. They are honored in the west and feed on the energies of plant products: grains, tobacco, beans, cornmeal, leaves, flowers, cotton, etc. (The medicine from offerings in the west is emotional health, relationships and magic.)

**MALKIKUNA** – “Tree Spirits” live in ancient trees and represent the tree of life reaching far into the heavens, and deep into the earth. They are honored in the north and feed on the energy of mineral products: crystals (often powdered), mica, magnetite, pyrite, gemstones, sand, stones, ores, etc. (The medicine from offerings in the north is spiritual health and hierophany.)

**MACHULA AWLANCHIS** – “Benevolent Ancient Ones” were once human. They live in the spirit world and our memories. They are honored in the east and feed on the energies of human-made products: beads, cookies, candies, *recados* (lead figurines), candles, arts and crafts, photos, drawings, poems, etc. (The medicine from offerings in the east is mental health and wisdom.)

**APUKUNA** – “The Mountain Lords” are the spirits of great mountains. They are the first to hear the will of Creator, and pass this energy on to all life forms. They are honored in the sacred center and feed on the energies of incense, *untu* (llama breast fat), coca or bay leaves and all of the above ingredients. (The medicine from offerings in the center is service, power, protection and blessing.)

**PACHAMAMA** – Mother Earth feeds on all that is placed elsewhere in the *despacho*. (The medicine from these offerings is life, healing and fertility.)



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A traditional Andean *despacho* includes items from each of the first five lists of products above, along with other ingredients such as:

- An equilateral cross, to symbolize the *Tawantinsuyu*, and balance and harmony
- A shell, ideally a scallop, to represent the *T'eqse Muyu*, the vast liquid universe, and Pachamama's fertility
- Sugar, candy, sprinkles for the sweetness of life
- Incense for carrying prayers
- Spices for the spice of life
- Seeds for "planting" and growth
- Raisins for the *Machula Awlanchis*
- Colored confetti for the celebration of life
- Red and white flowers and flower petals (especially carnations and roses) for honoring Pachamama and the *Apukuna* respectively
- Gold and silver foil representing the sun and moon
- Beads or little stars representing the stars
- Magnets, magnetite or pyrite to attract good fortune to us
- Animal crackers to be in good relationship with the animals
- Cotton representing the clouds
- Rainbow ribbon or yarn representing the bridge between worlds and for tying together all offerings
- Personally meaningful items including photos and small craft items
- Three coca or bay leaves, a *k'intu*, to carry our prayers to the Spirit World
- Additional traditional ingredients: lima beans, peanuts in their shells, pieces of starfish, rice, popcorn, chick peas, colored sprinkles, lavender, quinoa, birthday candles, round crackers, clear alcohol or florida water, red and white wine to honor Pachamama and the *Apukuna*, blue cornmeal, tobacco, perfumes, photos, herbs, and dried beans
- Red string or yarn to tie up the *despacho* after it is folded

A traditional Andean *despacho* is usually prepared in the west of the principle mesa, facing east. Begin by offering a little florida water to that space. Then place the *despacho* cloth and white paper, at least a foot square, on top. Reverently assemble the ingredients on the paper starting with a shell with a cross on top in the center. Then place some of the animal, vegetable, mineral and human made products in the south, west, north and east, respectively, of the *despacho*. Create a beautiful and balanced mandala of offerings, which have been filled with love, prayers and gratitude before they are placed. Offer incense, coca or bay leaves and/or *untu* to the center. Propitiate it by sprinkling the *despacho* with a little florida water and/or red and white wine. When the *despacho* is complete, ring a bell and pray over it. Gently fold the top third of the paper down, the bottom third up, the left third to the right and the right third to the left, inserting the right side into the left side. Tie the bundle with a red string like a present. Then it is ready to carry with reverence as an offering to the sacred fire.

The reception of the *despacho* may be divined by observing the fire, the smoke and the way the *despacho* burns in relation to the directions of the mesa.

The *despacho* may also be ceremonially offered to the Spirit Realm by burying it in the earth or releasing it into a non-stagnant body of water, such as a river, lake, lagoon or the ocean.