

RARÁMURI ATHLETES TO REPRESENT MEXICO AT THE MASTERS INDIGENOUS GAMES 2025 IN CANADA



Who are the rarámuri?

The Rarámuri, also known as Tarahumaras (a name given to them by colonizers), are an Indigenous people originally from the Sierra Tarahumara in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico. They live in one of the most western regions of Mexico, inhabiting canyons, mountains, and highlands, maintaining a deep respect for the surrounding natural environment.

The Rarámuri community preserves a traditional way of life centered around subsistence farming (mainly corn and beans), herding, gathering, and artisan crafts. They are also known for their colourful clothing, traditional music, and a deeply spiritual worldview, in which nature, ancestors, and ritual celebrations play a central role.

The word “Rarámuri” comes from their own language and carries a deep meaning: “those with light feet.” This name is no coincidence, as it reflects one of the most admirable characteristics of this community: their ability to run long distances as part of daily life, celebrations, and traditional competitions.

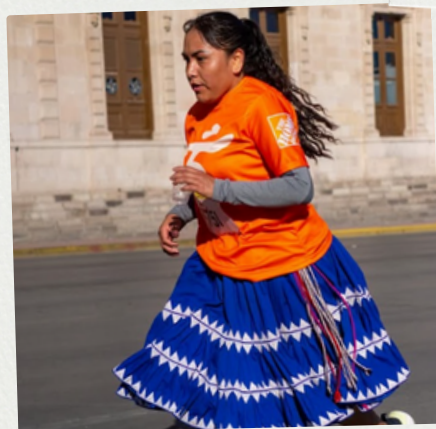
Physical endurance is not just a sport to them; it is a spiritual and cultural act. For the Rarámuri, running is a way to connect with the Earth, honour their gods, and maintain health and balance of both body and soul.

Where does their reputation as runners come from?

The Rarámuris have gained worldwide recognition for their skills as ultra-distance runners. They are capable of running over 100 kilometers across mountainous terrain, either barefoot or wearing handmade sandals called “huaraches.”

They run as part of rituals—such as the “rará jipari” (a communal race where a wooden ball is kicked for hours or even days)—or simply as a means of transportation between their widely dispersed communities in the mountains.

Running also symbolizes resistance, autonomy, and spiritual connection to the land. Their physical abilities have drawn global attention; some Rarámuris have even competed in and won international marathons, like the Ultra Marathon of the Canyons in Urique, all without modern athletic gear.



Why should we support them?

Supporting the Rarámuri community is crucial for several reasons:

- Cultural conservation: They are keepers of a unique ancestral wisdom, with traditions, language, and values that enrich Mexico's cultural diversity.
- Preservation of their territory: The Sierra Tarahumara is under threat from illegal logging, so defending their land is also a way of protecting the ecosystem itself.
- Social Justice: Historically, they have been marginalized and face high levels of poverty, therefore supporting them means recognizing their dignity and rights.
- Inspiration and Resilience: Their way of life and physical and cultural resilience are examples of how it is possible to live in harmony with nature and maintain a strong identity in the face of adversity.





Masters Indigenous Games (MIG)

The Masters Indigenous Games (MIG) are an international sporting and cultural event for Indigenous adults. Organized by Indigenous Sport & Wellness Ontario (ISWO), the MIG provides a platform for Indigenous athletes to compete in a variety of contemporary and traditional sports, promoting physical activity, community well-being, and cultural pride.

More than just a competition, the MIG serves as a space for empowerment and advocacy for Indigenous communities. Sport becomes a powerful tool to:

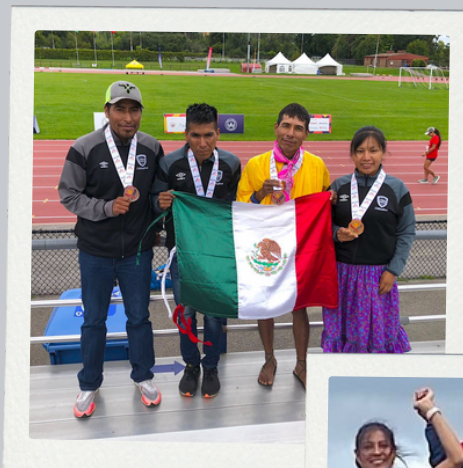
- Highlight the talent and resilience of Indigenous peoples.
- Promote physical and mental health in historically marginalized communities.
- Connect generations through traditional and modern sports.
- Reinforce cultural identities in a space of respect and international recognition.

Supporting Indigenous participation in these games not only enriches sport but also strengthens the social fabric, combats discrimination, and promotes dignified representation on global stages.

Rarámuri at the 2023 Masters Indigenous Games

At the 2023 Masters Indigenous Games, Rarámuri athletes from the Sierra Tarahumara won a total of five medals: three gold, one silver, and one bronze. These achievements reflect the athletic excellence and rich cultural heritage of this Indigenous community.

- Verónica Palma Cruz: Won three gold medals in the 1,500 meters, 3,000 meters, and 6 kilometers events. Wearing traditional Rarámuri attire, she proudly represented her community.
- Valentín Mendoza Mendoza: Won the gold medal in the junior men's 1,500 meters.
- Silvino Cubesare Quimare: Won a gold medal in the senior men's 1,500 meters and a silver medal in the 3,000 meters master category.
- Alfonso González Rodríguez: Won the bronze medal in the 1,500 meters.



Rarámuri Athletes in the 2025 Masters Indigenous Games

The next edition of the MIG will take place from August 14 to 17, 2025, in Ottawa, on the ancestral territory of the Algonquin peoples. Indigenous athletes from across North America are expected to participate in sports such as track and field, basketball, canoeing, golf, lacrosse, and volleyball.

The Rarámuri community, has been invited to participate for the second time in the 2025 MIG thanks to a collaboration between the Embassy of Mexico in Canada, the Government of Chihuahua, the ¡Ah Chihuahua! Trust, Link Travel Education (LET), Canadian Pacific, and Indigenous Sport & Wellness Ontario (ISWO). This alliance aims to promote Rarámuri culture and strengthen ties between Indigenous communities in Mexico and Canada.

20 Rarámuri athletes will continue competing in track and field and will include a women's basketball team – the first of its kind to be presented in Canada. Their presence highlights not only their athletic skill but also their commitment to preserving and sharing their ancestral culture.

Additionally, for the first time, two Rarámuri coaches and athletes will participate in a clinic on Arctic Sports during the MIG, thanks to the support of the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

We invite all those interested in supporting this remarkable group of Mexican athletes to register for the charity race taking place on the last day of the games. For more information, follow this page regularly:
<https://mastersindigenousgames.com/>

Mexico will also showcase its culture in the Games' "Cultural Village", where attendees can enjoy traditional Mexican dance and music.

Women's Basketball Team:

- María Dora Torres Fiero
- Lorena Díaz Palma
- Angélica Rufina González Fuentes
- Verónica Contreras Jiménez
- Maria Elena Cruz Corpus
- Susana Rosario Gardea Carrillo
- Elisa Fuentes Bastillos
- Graciela Rojas Carrillo
- Yarely Edith Rascón Rojas
- Ana Leviña Guanapaña Salido

Track and Field Team::

- Maria Isidora Rodriguez González
- Mayra González Bautista
- Gloria Quintero Hernández
- Aristeo Valencio Cubesari Murillo
- Alfonso González Rodriguez
- Juan Carlos Borja Carichi

Members of the Artic Games:

- Mateo González Bautista
- Angel Ortega Medina
- José Jorge Hernández Torres





México

Embajada de México en Canadá



**GOBIERNO
DEL ESTADO**
DE CHIHUAHUA



¡ah Chihuahua!

ES INMENSO, CONÓCELO



CPKC



LET

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