



Popcorn and Native Americans

Popcorn is native to America, and has been eaten for thousands of years. In fact, in 1948 5000-year-old popped kernels were found in caves in New Mexico. Have you ever seen the show *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving*? In it, Snoopy serves popcorn for Thanksgiving dinner. It seems funny to us, but it is believed that the Wampanoag Native American tribe actually did bring popcorn to the colonists for the first Thanksgiving in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Native American tribes regularly ate popcorn, often flavoring it with dried herbs and spices, and maybe even chili. They also used popcorn to make soup and beer. Popcorn was also used to make headdresses and corsages. Some Native American tribes believed that each kernel of popcorn contained a spirit. This spirit was generally quiet and harmless, but if its home was heated, it would begin to jump around, eventually becoming so angry that it would burst out with a pop.

1. How old is popcorn?

- A. 3,000 years B. 4,000 years C. 5,000 years

2. Which of the following did Native Americans use to flavor popcorn?

- A. salt B. dried herbs C. cheese

3. What did Native Americans make from popcorn?

- A. soup B. casseroles C. bread

4. Explain why Native Americans believed that popcorn popped.
