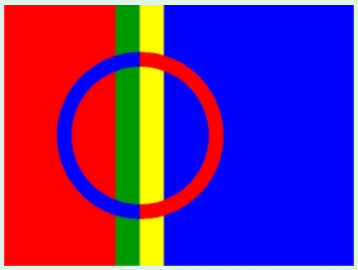
Hands On Learning
with Reading Museum Service

TRADITIONAL COSTUME FROM LAPLAND
G68



The traditional costume in this box comes from Lapland, a region covering the northern parts of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia. The region is shown on the map shaded green.



Lapland is also known by the name Sápmi and is the home of the Sámi people. The Sámi have been known as Lapps in the past, but this is now considered an offensive term. This is the flag of the Sámi:

The Sámi have their own culture, identity, traditional dress and language - although there are regional variations. The *gákti* is the traditional brightly coloured jacket worn by the Sámi. Each region has its own *gákti,* which is a good way to determine where a person comes from. The picture on the right shows two men wearing *gákti* from Rovaniemi in the north of Finland. The colours in the Sámi flag are the same as those used in the traditional costume.



The Sámi were originally reindeer herders and relied on the animal for meat, clothing and shelter. Only a small number of people still live in this way, as there have been great changes to the Sámi way of life in recent decades. Today you will find many additions from modern life such as Sámi schools, theatres and television companies but, there is also a strong sense of identity and a need to keep old traditions alive.



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Shoes



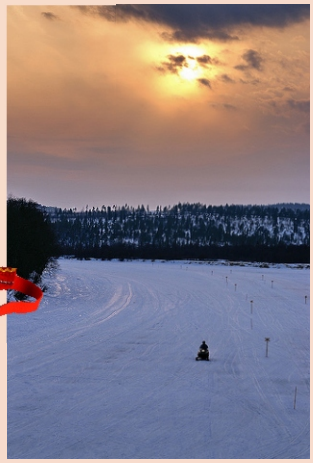


The shoes in this box are designed for winter use. They are made from reindeer skin and the fur has been left on the outside for warmth. The fur also adds extra grip to the sole when walking on slippery, frozen ground. The turned up toe helps to hold skis in place when bound to the foot in really deep snow. In the picture on page one of the two men in *gákti*, one is shown wearing furry winter shoes with turned up toes and the other is wearing Wellington boots.

The brightly coloured pieces of material and woollen laces would have matched the *gákti* of the owner of the shoes.

Hats





Like the *gákti*, the colour of a person's hat depends on the region they live in. The red hat was made for a girl and the blue for a boy. They were made in Ivalo - a town in the northern Finnish part of Lapland surrounded by beautiful scenery (see picture on the right).

The red hat is tied underneath the chin and has large side panels to keep the ears warm. It is beautifully decorated with flowers and strips of pretty material.



Men in some areas of Finnish Lapland traditionally wear the 'four winds' hat, like the blue hat in the box. The top is made in the shape of a four-pointed star and is decorated with bright colours. There is a picture of a slightly different one on the right. These were probably only worn in the summer, as those worn in the winter have a fur trim.

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Doll

The doll is wearing a similar hat to the one in the box with matching patterns on her clothing. The seams of the clothes must be carefully stitched and reinforced to keep out extreme weather. Adding decorative ribbons and material not only looks attractive, but also helps to cover the seams.

The doll's shoes are made from reindeer skin, although the fur was removed from the outside of the leather before it was made into a shoe. This type of shoe is worn during the summer months. The picture on the right shows an original reindeer shoe made for a child. The fur has also been removed.



The picture below shows a girl with a reindeer. Notice her furry shoes and coat and brightly coloured hat, scarf, gloves and leggings.



