

# The History of <sup>2</sup> *Feature* Chamorro Clothing

歴史とともに グアムファッションの変遷

역사와 함께 괌 패션의 변천

Story by Cindy Hanson

Photo courtesy of Guam Public Library and MARC

When the first foreigners arrived in Guam hundreds of years ago, they found the ancient Chamorros didn't wear much clothing. There wasn't much need for it because of Guam's temperate climate. The men were usually completely nude, except for headwear to protect themselves from prolonged exposure to the sun. The women weren't wearing much more, often just a small triangular apron-skirt to cover their lower halves and keep them looking modest, although modesty wasn't really the concern.

Guam is only 13 degrees from the equator, so the beating sun can be quite brutal when you're out on the ocean fishing or working on the land. Woven pandanas hats called batya were very popular to keep the head from getting sunburned. Most of the time the ancient Chamorros were barefoot, but they did make a type of sandal out of palm leaves to protect their feet from sharp coral on the reef.

The men would also protect their upper bodies while out at sea or in battle with a sleeveless vest called a ngufa' guafak. In other cultures of Micronesia, the men wore a garment around their waist made of pagu fibers called pokse'. It is believed that the ancient Chamorro men also wore this garment, which had fronds that hung down in front to cover their private parts. There is evidence this may have been so based on drawings in French explorer Louis de Freycinet's collection.

The children were nude, but young girls would begin to cover themselves at about age 8 to 10. Ancient Chamorro women wore some clothing, but are mostly depicted wearing only a tifi', which was a woven apron made from the fiber of coconut trees. They also wore the grass skirts that we see worn by performers at dinner shows, but would have been bare chested. Chamorro women never wore the coconut bras that are favored by modern performers today.





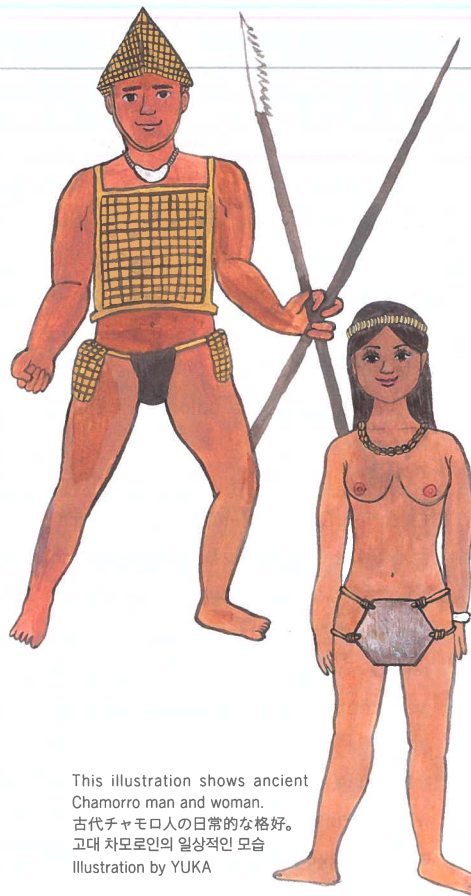
## The History of Chamorro Clothing

The grass skirts were made by suspending long leaves from a pandanus belt. On special occasions, women would wear a belt decorated with daddek, or baby coconuts. The belts would also be festooned tiny shells and more little coconuts. They would weave marmars with colorful flowers added and place them on their heads. Tortoiseshell was considered especially valuable in the Chamorro culture and if they had it, they would place a piece on their forehead. Women of the matua, or upper class, would wear a maku dudu, an apron made of polished tortoiseshell that was suspended from the hips on a double cord.

Like today, accessories were important to the ancient Chamorro woman. Women would wear necklaces made from shells and tortoiseshell. They would also decorate their foreheads with flowers, beads, and shells. Men also wore a neck piece called a sinahi, which is a crescent shaped piece made from giant clam shell. Sinahi means "new moon." This piece is still worn today by both men and women.

The most prized shell of the Chamorro culture, to this day, is red spondylus. This is a spiky shell that once was plentiful in Guam's water but is now very difficult to find. The spikes would be removed from the shell and used to make beads and the remaining shell was used to create larger beads and pendants. Jewelry made from red spondylus is still considered a prized accessory in today's Chamorro society.

When the Spanish arrived in Guam, their sense of modesty was shocked by how natural and comfortable the Chamorros were with their nudity. It took many years, but eventually as more and more Chamorros were converted to Christianity, either willingly or by force, their society changed. This included their style of dress. The men began to dress in chinina, a pair of loose pants and a

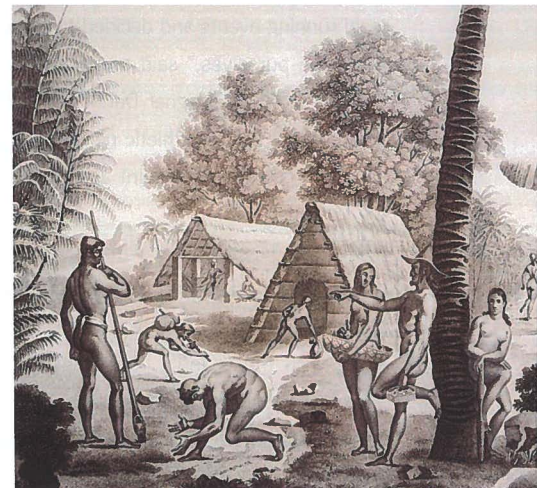


This illustration shows ancient Chamorro man and woman.  
古代チャモロ人の日常的な格好。  
고대 차모로인의 일상적인 모습  
Illustration by YUKA

cotton shirt worn over an undershirt.

Women wore the mestiza, a long flowing skirt, undershirt, and over blouse that is sometimes decorated with embroidery or plain with an edging trim that matches the same floral material of the skirt. The fancier the occasion, the fancier the mestiza. The over blouse is called a kimono, a word clearly adopted from the Japanese language despite the garment looking nothing like the traditional robe. The undershirt is called a kamisola, which means camisole. The skirt is called a lupes.

The length of the skirt was a problem for the Naval officers who held rule over Guam before World War II. Women and young girls were discouraged from wearing the mestiza because they were told the skirt kicked up dirt and germs. It was believed these "germs" could spread sickness so girls were encouraged to wear regular western-style dresses or a "mumumu" instead. The mumumu



The Ancient Chamorros were often unclothed, but they would keep their heads protected from the sun especially when they were fishing or working on the land. 裸同然の格好だった古代チャモロ人の漁や日常の暮らしの様子。な체나 다른 없었던 모습의 고대 차모로인의 조업과 일상 생활 모습

is a long tropical print style dress that hangs from the neck without much shape. It is Hawaiian in nature and was popular in Guam because it is also a cool, comfortable choice for Guam's warm weather.

After World War II, the Chamorro people began to dress in the western style clothing favored by the Americans. Today, local people continue to dress in modern fashions with a touch of island flair. Many government agencies and local businesses encourage their employees to wear tropical print shirts or dresses on Friday to celebrate Guam's island culture.

Today, some of Guam's young people have become amazing designers themselves, whose apparel is very popular. Local designer brand labels like Crowns Guam who offer a full line of shirt, hats, and accessories with a local appeal are very popular with residents and visitors. They have a store in Hagåtña near the Plaza de España and



across from the Post Office. You can also find them on Facebook.

Another really popular local design company is Run Guam, who focus on creating fashionable clothes for athletes looking for something new. "We were tired of wearing the same athletic wear at local running events and decided to make a change ourselves," said president and creative director/designer Derek Mandell. "We produce quality athletic performance gear that is true to the spirit and style of the Pacific."

Mandell is an award winning Guam runner, who uses that as part of his inspiration to create the Run Guam line, along with the island's natural beauty. "Our inspiration for designs comes from our surroundings on Guam. From the environment to our cultural history, we try to implement these local elements into all of our products," Mandell said.

Run Guam's main clients are runners, but athletes from other sports are reaching out and the clothing line has become so popular, they are now receiving orders from the US.

Run Guam doesn't have their own store yet, but you can shop online at their Facebook page or website at [werunguam.com](http://werunguam.com). Gâtbo Clothing is also on Facebook and has a store in the Chamorro Village. Gâtbo designs are casual wear that feature iconic images of Guam with an informative message. Some are of Guam's endangered species like the island's territorial bird, the Ko'ko', or Guam Rail, and the colorful Sihek, or Marianas kingfisher.

"We are an island lifestyle brand featuring Guam's heritage and nature," said owner Raymond Damian Anderson. "We print on 100% light weight cotton T-shirts that are comfortable for Guam's humid climate. They're available in long and short sleeve polyester, wicking, moisture control Dri-Fit. They're good for fishing, swimming or just hanging out with friends. We also have great 100% cotton jogger shorts and 100% cotton bandanas."

Anderson also finds inspiration for his designs in Guam's natural environment. "The t-shirts are comfortable, the colors are great and vibrant, but it's the designs that people always comment on how beautiful they are," he said. "I felt there was a lack of representation of Guam's culture, nature, and aesthetics. Gâtbo Clothing is informative wear that features Guam's heritage and

nature. I have always been inspired by the culture here on Guam and natural beauty of the island."

The ancient Chamorros dressed themselves in clothing made from the natural materials the island had to offer. Today, modern designers are creating new fashions that are inspired by the beauty of those same natural materials, from Guam's lush jungles to its tempestuous sea. The vibrant beauty of Guam will continue to inspire the island's young designers and we will all reap the benefit of looking our best in their designs.

グアムの歴史を遡ること約500年、初めてグアムを訪れた西洋の人々はその光景に衝撃を受けたと言います。古代チャモロの男性は何も服らしきものを身につけず生活していたためです。チャモロの人々にとっても彼らの出現、そして布を複雑に纏ったその風貌には驚いたことでしょう。その日からグアムの歴史は大きな変化を遂げていきます。その変化の中から、裸の暮らしから服を着るという現代の私たちにとって当たり前の行為への転換、そしてファッションの流行の歴史を辿ります。

現代においても温暖な気候のグアムでは半袖短パンの軽装は日常的な服装です。古代では男性は裸、女性は三角のエプロンスカートで下半身を隠す程度だったようですが、赤道に近いグアムは紫外線量も多く、長時間の屋外での仕事や漁は危険なことでした。そこで男性はパンダナスの葉で編んだ帽子「バットゥ (batya)」やノースリーブのベスト「ニューファ・グアファク (ngufa' guafak)」を身につけ、さらに漁の際には尖った珊瑚から足を保護するために椰子の葉で作ったサンダルを履いていました。ミクロネシアの文化として木の繊維で作られた「ポクセ (pokse)」と呼ばれるものを腰部に付け、それにシダの葉などを付けて腰回りをカバーしていたと記録が残されていますが、フランスの探検家が残した絵には、古代チャモロ人もこのような格好をしていた様子が描かれています。また首長など社会的身分の高い男性はジャイアントクラム

Men were wearing a neck piece called a Sinahi like this statue of Quiquha, chief of Hagatna in 17th century.

現代のチャモロ男性にも人気のネックレス、シナヒ。17世紀ハガツニャを治めていた首長キブハの像  
현대 차모로 남성에게도 인기 있는 목걸이, 시나히. 17세기 아가나를 다스리던 수장 키프하의 동상



Spondylus shell was used for accessory and money.  
古代、アクセサリーだけでなく貨幣にも用いられたスポンディルス貝  
고대, 액세서리뿐 아니라 화폐로도 사용된 국화 조개