

# Story Telling Carved Gourds

In the Andean mountains of Peru, in a tiny village of 50 families, fine gourd carving has been practiced for generations. Pablo, a master carver, recalls his grandfather telling how it all started. "Around 200 years ago, people from Huancayo made regular trips to the jungle to trade for rice, corn, beans and other goods. They met there with people from many places including gourd carvers from Ayacucho." That's how they learned the carving techniques and brought them back to their village while creating a style of their own. Historically Andean people used gourds to store food and even to this day they are used for storing salt and spices or drinking chicha and mate.



Story telling or illustrative gourd carving in Peru has a long history. Carvers served their communities by recording Andean celebrations, oral traditions, rituals, myths, and even weddings. In fact archeologists recently discovered in Peru a deity figure on a gourd carved over 4,000 years ago. What once used to be a man's job today involves the entire family. "My 4 year old son already wants to learn" says Pablo.



Lucuma Designs works closely with talented gourd artists such as Pablo creating contemporary functional art pieces to help improve the livelihood in their village and preserve an ancient tradition.  
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