

Despacho, Ceremonial Offering

Ceremonial offerings are deeply intertwined with all indigenous cultures. They can be material, a simple stick, or a stone, flower, incense, candle ... or more intricate ceremony and creation. They can also be non-material, a prayer, a thought, giving thanks, meditation, giveaway, action ...

A Despacho is a traditional ceremony from the Andes, to bring us into Ayni, to give back to Pachamama and Spirit, the organizing principle of the Universe. The ceremony invites old energy to be cleared and new energy to come in.

A Despacho is an interactive ceremony where all involved build together an offering using items gathered from the environment to offer prayers and intentions to Spirit.



There are many different intentions that can be offered in Despacho, but Ayni Despacho has the greatest impact on all our lives. For hundreds of years, the Laika (high shamans or wisdom keepers of the Q'ero lineage of Peru) have used the despacho ceremony for a wide variety of occasions – births, deaths, as an expression of gratitude, to heal physical and emotional ailments, to restore balance and harmony, or when there is a specific request of the spirit world.

Similar to a mandala or sacred creation, the despacho holds symbolic elements and the prayers of the participants. As the elements are added to the despacho, the vibration of the participants and the room raises. The despacho becomes a living prayer that brings energy shifts and healing. The ceremony can be as simple and short, or intricate and lengthy as desired.

As with any ritual, the despacho begins by creating Sacred space. Then the offerings are selected one by one, a prayer is said over each, and the prayer is gently blown into the offering before it is placed on the wrapping. The offerings can be arranged however feels right. (The experienced shaman will likely follow a specific pattern, but again, the intent is more important than the pattern).

Humility and gratitude and an open heart are important throughout the ceremony and will ensure that you experience more grace in your life by becoming a better vessel for grace.



Once completed, the despacho is wrapped and secured with a ribbon or a string. The bundle can be ceremonially buried (for slow, steady results), burned (for quicker transformation) or fed to running waters, thus conveying the gifts to Spirit. If the despacho is burned, someone should stay with the fire until the embers are cold, if possible.

Do not put water on the fire. Ashes created in this sacred fire should be buried in the earth at a later time.

The ceremony ends with giving thanks to the Guardians and Keepers of the Seven Sacred directions.

Resources:

<https://thefourwinds.com/what-is-a-despacho/>

<https://thefourwinds.com/despacho-ceremony-create-despacho/>