Maple Syrup in New France (Before 1800)

A Sweet Tradition Shared by Indigenous Peoples



The First Maple Sugar Makers

For countless generations before European settlers arrived, Indigenous people in north-eastern woodlands perfected the art of harvesting maple sap. Nations such as the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and Algonquin peoples taught settlers in New France the techniques we still use to make maple syrup today.

Shared Indigenous Kowledge

When French settlers arrived in the 1600s and early 1700s, Indigenous communities generously shared their knowledge of maple sugaring. Early French observers wrote: "*In the spring the people of this country gather the sap of the maple tree and boil it down into a sweet sugar.*" (Early French colonial account, 17th century)



Important Historical Fact

Everything Europeans knew about harvesting maple sap in early Canada came from Indigenous ecological knowledge developed over centuries. Maple syrup is more than a Canadian tradition; it is an Indigenous innovation that shaped North American food culture.