- **Where:** Pichimá, Chocó
- **Region:** Pacific
- **Material:** werregue

Werregue crafts

The basketwork manufactured in werregue (also, güérregue), the most elegant of fiber handicrafts, is unique in South America. Most probably it came from Africa, as is evidenced by the exactness, coordination and rhythm that allows the desired forms to be obtained and the harmony in the selection of the combination of designs.

Weaving a vase can take between 30 and 60 days. The result is a unique piece that will always be admired for its beauty and grace.

Comunidad Waunana

Werregue handicrafts are made by the Waunana Indian community that inhabits the San Juan River delta, in the rainforest of Colombia's Pacific Coast.

Basketry is a feminine occupation. It is the Waunana women who process the leaves of the werregue palm to obtain the fibers that are later dyed. They use a spiral technique to make the baskets. Using a spiral technique, they roll the flexible werregue fibers and sew them to the base and then work on the sides until they achieve a basket called "coca". (Lablaa)

History of the werregue vases

Originally, the Waunana women manufactured werregue vases with a texture so solid and compact that they could be used to carry water.

Raw material

Werregue crafts

The main material for the production of these handicrafts is a fiber from the werregue, a 20 to 30 meter high palm tree with a thorny trunk. The sprouts are removed to extract ribbon-like strips that later are turned into strands.

At present, and in response to the interest of the public for this kind of decorative products, the Waunana combined the werregue fiber with new materials. And they began to make not only baskets and vases, but also dishes and plates in which they used the werregue fiber as well as the wood from the werregue tree.

Design and color in werregue handicrafts

Werregue handicrafts have been widely accepted in national and international markets by virtue of the beauty, elegance and ingenuity of each and every product.

The designs include:

- Pictorial images from Waunana mythology
- Geometric shapes
- Schematic representations of men and animals

All these figures are depicted in a symmetrical balanced way, thus exhibiting the Indians' view of the Universe and Man.

In regard to color, the original white fiber of the werregue is combined with collored fibers dyed with pigments obtained from:

- Annatto seeds, with their orange and reddish tones
- The juice of the jagua (Genipa Americana) fruit is used as black dye.

If you like the werregue handicrafts, you may be interested in:

- Other handicrafts: basketry.
- Naturals parks: Gorgona , Malpelo y Utría .
- Fairs and festivals: San Pacho en Quibdó.
- Nuquí: amid whales and fishermen.