- **Where?:** La Chamba, Tolima
- **Region:** Andes
- **Material:**clay

La Chamba ceramics

The ceramic work carried out in the township of La Chamba in the department of Tolima recues traditional Indian pottery making and is one of the most famous in Colombia for its quality, technique, design, style, and excellent finishing.

Manufacturing process of La Chamba ceramics

The everyday life of the residents of La Chamba revolves around ceramics. Children gather the clay and let it dry in sacks. Once dry, they beat it with sticks until it pulverizes. The men are in charge of lighting a fire and the women prepare the clay mass and shape it in molds.

After 30 days of drying, the pieces are fired in a dome oven, the use of which was introduced by the Spanish during the conquest.

La Chamba ceramics

The work of polishing and finishing then begins, with techniques used by Indian communities for several centuries.

Three types of La Chamba ceramics

This enormous ceramic wealth includes: bowls, vessels, plates, cups, serving dishes, flower vases and various representations of peasant life (piglets, donkeys, hens) and dish sets that imitate pre-Columbian shapes. The two traditional colors are red and black.

The community of La Chamba produces three kinds of ceramics:

- rustic, which lacks the red clay covering, is more economical and supplies the local market;
- bright red or Indian red, which has not been smoked and owes its color to the iron oxide in the clay;
- black, which is the result of a smoking process during which the pieces comes in contact with the hydrochloric acid present in donkey manure.

Types of clay

Potmakers gather three types of clay from various sites around the township:

- thick or greasy;
- sandy or non-greasy;
- fine and red.

If you like the pottery made in La Chamba, perhaps you would like:

- Colombian culture
- Other handicrafts
- Raquira Ceramics