

- **Where:** La Guajira
- **Region:** Caribbean
- **Material:** cotton



Wayúu weavings

To the Wayúu Indian communities that inhabit the Peninsula of La Guajira, knitting is much more than a cultural activity and a legacy from their ancestors. It is a way to express feelings about their life concept by means of creativity, intelligence, and wisdom.

The tradition of Wayúu knitting

The products of Wayúu knitting capture the attention of many for their colors and designs and the complexity of their technique. Typical motifs are geometrical figures that represent the natural elements (animals, plants, stars, tracks, etc.) that surround Wayúu life. The more intricate the figures, the higher the value of the pieces.

Wayúu weavings typically have very bright and contrasting colors

The most representative Wayúu handicrafts

The chinchorro and the hammock

The chinchorro and the hammock, [“hanging beds where the Wayúu rest, sleep, chat, visit, do crochet work, and conceive and give birth to children”](#), are two basic fabrics in their culture. The difference between the chinchorro and the hammock is that chinchorros are loose-knit and therefore elastic, while hammock are made from compact fabrics and are thus much heavier.



Wayúu weavings

Interesting information:

- A Wayúu hammock or chinchorro can weigh up to six kilos.
- Two to six months of hand labor are required for making a hammock.
- Work is begun by making the central piece. The other parts are woven separately and joined later.
- The chinchorros made by the Wayúus protect from the cold on account of being double-sided. Additionally, they have side flaps or fringes made from thread that hang from the sides and can be used as a cover.

The mochila

Mochilas – a type of shoulder bag - are the utmost expression of Wayúu crocheting and are easily recognizable by their colors and designs. They are made by knitting cotton thread (a technique introduced by Catholic missionaries at the beginning of the twentieth century) with a crochet needle or a crochet hook.

Interesting information:

- Mochilas have a circular base and their knit is compact.
- Each one is made by one woman following her own design.
- It takes close to 20 work days to make a mochila.

If you like Wayúu knitting, you may be interested in:

- Other handicrafts: [Mompo Filigree](#) , [Hammock from San Jacinto](#) and [sombrero vueltiao](#).
- Fairs and Festivals: [Wayúu Culture Festival](#) .
- Natural Parks: [Makaira](#) and [Los Flamencos](#) .