

Bonnie Couchie



I spent my childhood growing up in 5 of Canada's most beautiful National Parks. Both of my parents are avid and capable outdoors people.

I was the kid, who had a full size teepee in her back yard, the top of which could be seen from down the street. To this day, my mom will sport a large green garbage bag as a jacket in her front driveway while she scrapes the hides from the animals that my Dad has hunted. I used to dread what my friends would see when I brought them home with me after school. I remember the look of revulsion when one friend discovered that my mom was cooking brains on the stove to soften the hides. I also remember the concern from another friend in the car: "Does your Mom always stop to pick up road kill off the highway?" This was followed by: "What does she do with it?" I let her know that if it were a fresh Moose or Deer, we would bring it home to eat. We would also take the porcupines for their quills, and beavers and raccoons for hats. I explained how my Mom would always offer a prayer and some tobacco first, to give thanks.

Today, I am so proud that I came from such a "strange" family. My parents both made birch bark canoes, tikanaagans, baskets, mukluks, moccasins, mitts, caribou hair tuftings, porcupine quill-work, beaded works, and all kinds of beautiful arts and crafts. My Dad continues to be able to fillet fish with the precision of a surgeon. Both parents are adept at skinning and processing wild game. As a family, we often do these activities together. As well, we still gather many things from the bush including medicine, food, and crafting materials. Through these precious experiences, I've learned how to do many of these things.

Our connection to the land is strong and rooted deeply in our Native culture. Both of my parents instilled in me a great love and respect for nature. I see this as a tremendous gift that is worth sharing.

I also am a singer-songwriter

<http://www.myspace.com/bonniecouchie> and love to sing and jam by a good campfire.