

Taíno Religion



The Taínos were deeply religious and worshipped many gods and spirits. Above the gods there were two supreme beings, one male and one female. The physical representation of the gods and spirits were zemis, made of made of wood, stone, bone, shell, clay and cotton.



Religious ceremonies were led by the cacique, who would communicate with the gods and spirits on behalf of his subjects. In preparation for communing with the gods, the cacique would purify himself by inducing vomiting and smoking cohiba, a type of tobacco. In his state of intoxication it was believed that he communicated directly with the spirits and gods.



Taínos believed that at death their souls would go to Coyaba, their heaven - a place of tranquility and eternal rest. Coyaba was thought to be a place where drought, hurricane and sickness were absent, and there was an abundance of feasting and dancing.



A selection of zemis made of different materials

