Fry bread is a staple food for many Indigenous American tribes. It was created out of necessity during colonization when Indigenous people were forced onto reservations and lost access to their traditional hunting grounds and food sources. Fry bread is made from simple ingredients, often provided by the colonizers, such as flour, water, salt, and lard.

Despite its humble origins, fry bread has become a symbol of resilience and pride for Indigenous Americans. It is a reminder of their ability to survive and thrive under challenging circumstances, and it is often served at powwows and other cultural events.

Fry bread is also versatile and can be eaten plain, with toppings, or used in other dishes. It is a delicious and meaningful part of Indigenous culture.
ROASTED WHITE FISH

Coastal Kinship

The Wabanaki's extensive knowledge and deep connection to Maine's coastal and inland waterways shaped their life. Fishing was a fundamental aspect of their sustenance, culture, and trade. Their keen knowledge of the local water ecosystems allowed them to navigate and utilize various fishing techniques. These included weirs and fish traps to corral fish, handlining, and hook and line methods for individual catches. They used gill nets to entangle multiple fish. The light birchbark canoe allowed them to pilot the rivers, while sturdier dugout canoes could take them as far as 100 miles out on calm waters in the Gulf of Maine.

The harvested fish included haddock, pollock, salmon, hake, cod, and eels. The importance of fishing to the Wabanaki is expressed in the Passamaquoddy name. Passamaquoddy is the English version of the tribe's name for themselves, Peskotomuhkhat, meaning "people that spear pollock."
The Wabanaki prepared their catch through drying, smoking, boiling, roasting, or in soups and stews. By drying and smoking the fish, they could preserve it, ensuring a reliable food source.
CORN CAKES WITH BLUEBERRY SAUCE

Harmonizing Harvests: Corn and Blueberries Unite

Corn, also known as maize, was a staple crop for many indigenous tribes in this region, including the Wabanaki. Corn was part of the "Three Sisters" trio: corn, beans, and squash. Three Sisters' sustainable agricultural practice showcases harmony and interdependence in cultivation. The corn stalks support the bean vines, while the beans help fix nitrogen in the soil, which benefits the squash plants. This allows the three crops to be grown together without additional fertilizers or pesticides.

Corn cakes were very popular with the Wabanaki. They were a common and convenient way to prepare and consume corn. They were baked over an open fire or cooked on a hot stone. Corn cakes were often eaten for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. They could be eaten plain or with various toppings, such as berries, maple syrup, or meat.

Wild blueberries were a dietary staple woven into Wabanaki traditions and ceremonies. The Wabanaki people were among the first humans to use wild blueberries, both fresh and dried, for their flavor, nutrition, and healing qualities; they were used in cooking, trade, and community rituals for centuries.