



Seeds Travels trip to California, 2024

My name is Sabina Cecilia Ajcote Sosof, and I was born in San Lucas Tolimán, Sololá, Guatemala, a village nestled among volcanoes on the shore of our beloved Atitlán, one of the world's most stunning lakes. As an indigenous Maya Kaqchikel woman, I take great pride in my heritage. Despite the political and social challenges, that attempt to diminish our worth, being an Indigenous woman is a testament to our resilience. Throughout my journey of self-discovery, long before I learned about Food Sovereignty and Permaculture, I struggled with my identity. I questioned my origins, my purpose on Mother Earth, and my sense of balance. This made it challenging to find harmony within myself and with my environment.

Entering the workforce, I joined IMAP, the Mesoamerican Permaculture Institute, which became a turning point in recognizing my identity and understanding who I am and where I come from. It took me many years to fully grasp and embrace that understanding. In my role as the Education Program Manager, I learned to cultivate and apply the wisdom of our Mayan ancestors. I was introduced to the work of Garden's Edge, through a founding member of IMAP, Rebecca Cutter. My experience with Garden's Edge has allowed me to grow both spiritually and professionally.

Thanks to your support, I had the opportunity, in 2023, to teach about Food Sovereignty at the University of New Mexico (UNM). I was truly grateful for the opportunity. Additionally, UNM allowed me to engage in other workshops focused on Curanderismo, (Traditional Medicine) which encompasses both internal and external healing practices utilizing ancestral medicine through plants and other elements from Mother Earth.



Knowledge exchange at UNM

## Moment of transformation

Through my participation in the healing workshops, I came to understand that I had much to work on within myself, stemming from past situations that were impacting my present and could influence my future on physical, emotional, and spiritual levels. During this journey, I reflected on the idea that wellness goes beyond simply eating healthy food; it begins internally with self-awareness, then extends to our relationships with others and the world around us. Often, as human beings, we strive to help others without fully understanding how to navigate our own challenges. To truly help, we must first identify what affects us, heal, and recognize the importance of closing cycles, as everything in our lives has a beginning and an end.

# Seed of the present and the future

## Time of rebirth and transition

In 2024, I had the chance to teach about food sovereignty once again at UNM. This time, the workshops were more focused on learning and practicing our ancestral wisdom around traditional medicine, agriculture, nutrition, even local economies and migration all of which significantly impacts our "Buen Vivir" (ability to live well). The lack of this knowledge can leave us feeling isolated and vulnerable.

To address these concerns, I partnered with a spiritual guide named Luis Morales in Guatemala to establish a project called Casa de Sabiduría Maya, or Maya Nao'j, which translates to School of Mayan Wisdom or Maya Intelligence. Through this collaboration, we are bringing our dreams to fruition.

This year, we collaborated with Garden's Edge, through a Creative Solutions Project to launch our inaugural workshop with a group of students from San Lucas Tolimán! A team of cultural educators taught a group of 10 youth, about Central American history of Indigenous peoples, and concepts of sustainability; fostering critical thinking and creativity using local resources. Our goal was to introduce a variety of practices, like artisanal weaving, cocoa processing, natural medicine, and sustainable agriculture while exploring the topic of colonization.



Youth visit to Iximche, the spiritual center of the Maya Kaqchikel pre-classic kingdom.

## Our philosophy

We firmly believe in the wisdom of indigenous elders, and that is why we're focused on creating a community school that facilitates the practical and philosophical transfer of a knowledge that's rooted in lived experience.



## What is “Mayan Worldview” for some of the students?

“The Mayan Cosmovisión is composed of the thoughts of our Mayan ancestors and grandparents, where they shared knowledge about our surroundings. I find it very interesting the way they thought and were so good at mathematics, languages, gastronomy, astronomy and more!”

- Dallany Yaxon

“It is the interpretation and value given to nature, the universe and everything that surrounds it.”

- Fatima Vásquez

“It is a way of life that integrates beliefs, spirituality, traditions and respect for natural cycles, recognizing that everything is connected and that each element of the universe has a purpose and a spirit.”

- David Calderon

The Mayan worldview encompasses the entire set of stories, beliefs and legacy that the ancient Mayan civilization left in Guatemala.

-Erick Tereta



Iximche Archaeological Site, Guatemala, group of students.

# Garden's Edge and Seed Travels

## Learning without borders

For the past two years, I have had the incredible opportunity to travel with a project of The Garden's Edge called Semillas Viajeras (Seed Travels), an experience I will never forget. During this journey, I have exchanged knowledge with my indigenous brothers and sisters from Guatemala, New York/Canada, California, and New Mexico.

I discovered that our stories share common themes of resilience, and we all strive to uphold important values, including respect for Mother Earth and all living beings. This journey has empowered me as an indigenous woman, fueling my passion to collaborate with others. Together, we can explore alternatives for promoting good health, achieving harmony within ourselves, respecting those around us, and ultimately living dignified lives as human beings.



Akwesasne Mohawk, Health Center



Seed Basija travels, building communities

Today, in the face of great global change, we have lost the meaning of life, respect, how to live in family, community, appreciate and value nature's elements, or take care of our grandparents. We have lost the thread that connects our destiny and our work on Mother Earth.

These changes make us feel frustrated and often unhappy with what we do in our daily lives. My vision in life is to continue learning and working with people and communities to bring back this balance. We have just one life, it is up to us how we want to live it.

**Thank you supporters of Garden's Edge for helping bring many young people's ideas to fruition!**



Mayan Ceremony in California