**The Masai**

The Masai people live in Africa, on the grasslands of northern Tanzania and southern Kenya. Most of them have held onto their traditional way of life, as cattle herders.

The Masai live in small villages called kraals. Each kraal is surrounded by a high fence made from branches of the thornbush tree. Inside the fence is a ring of huts arranged around a central area.

The Masai believe cattle are a gift from God, and the wealth and importance of a village is measured by the number of cattle it has. During the day, the cattle graze outside the village, but at night the Masai bring them inside the fence.

Masai men look after the cattle. This includes killing predators that hunt cattle, such as leopards, lions and hyenas. Masai boys become men at the age of 15. They then spend between five and seven years as a warrior before they are allowed to marry.

Masai women build the houses and take care of the home and children. Women build their houses out of branches covered with a mixture of grass, twigs and cow dung. The only openings are the doorway and a small hole in the roof or wall to let out the smoke from a fire.

In villages near tourist routes, Masai people sometimes earn money by selling beadwork or spears, posing for photographs or performing traditional dances.





















