



Through a blend of historical fact and supernatural legend, Incan mythology tells the story of Mama Huaco, the illustrious first Coya or queen of the Incan people, from whom sprang generations of Inca kings.

Born of a union between the sun and moon, legend has it that this revered Coya brought to the Incas an art that would become synonymous with their empire: the art of weaving. Indeed, the Incan Empire revered textiles above all other commodities, even gold and silver; when the Spanish arrived in the early 16th century, it was prized textiles these visitors were greeted with, and not precious metals.

The Empire's finest female weavers were hand-picked and worked tirelessly from the capital Cusco to craft beautiful textiles. Dyed with prized plant and insect life, and woven with the utmost care, this fine cloth was crafted specifically for the Coya and her royal family.

Today, the Incan weaving of old is carried on through the artisans of Cusco, passed down from mother to daughter over centuries. Although these artisans no longer work in service of the Coya, the practices perfected centuries ago by their ancestors ensure very little has changed. Through them, and now Coya Inca, the Empire of Cloth lives on.

## AN EMPIRE OF CLOTH.



Coya Inca highlights the works of two immensely talented Cusco communities of artisans - Totota and Taucca, located in the Cusco region, high in the Andean hills.

In these artisan communities, the techniques that have for hundreds of years produced excellent cloth remain rooted in pre-Hispanic Incan tradition; weavers still use waist-looms, natural dyes and fibers, and do so while celebrating Pachamama, an ever-present spiritual representation of the Earth.

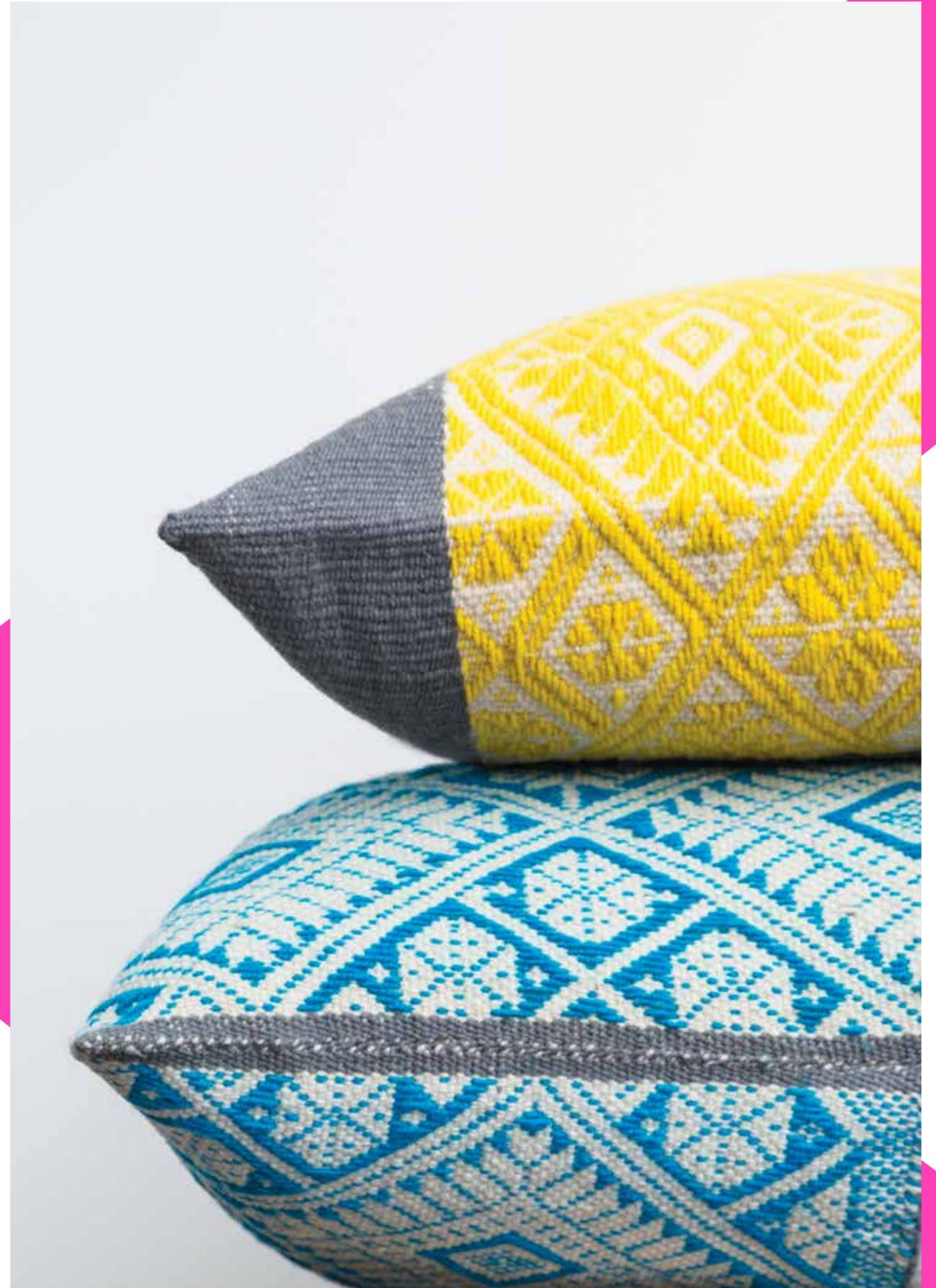
Although these separate groups are united by their pasts and a strong belief in the idea of community, they have managed to evolve distinct styles independently of one another. Through their use of colours and intricate, decorative patterns, both communities weave fabric that, while distinct, proudly celebrates their long and storied cultures.













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Four extraordinary communities are sending their finest handmade creations - and their stories - as ambassadors of Peruvian culture and excellence. Every piece is also a testament to the beauty and wisdom of the women who made them.

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