



VILLAGES
Port Colborne
Fair Trade since 1984

Your purchase supports the livelihoods of artisans



Villages Port Colborne has been supporting Fair Trade since 1984. We are a non-profit store that is largely volunteer-run.

As a business located in Ontario's first Fair Trade town, we are proud to be a part of a local community who support the livelihoods of producers from developing communities by providing ethically sourced products and their stories.

**Thank you for supporting
Fair Trade!**

Aj Quen

Aj Quen is one of the oldest associations of artisan weavers in Guatemala. Members are descendants of the four Mayan groups, and women make up 95% of the membership. The vast majority of members work from home allowing women to stay with their children and look after their households. There are also women's groups who have formed their own little workshops, and others who come to Aj Quen when they need a place to work.

Members use weaving techniques inherited from their ancestors and passed down from generation to generation. The artisans work on handlooms operated by foot pedals and on back strap looms. The textiles are then embroidered and sewn, and in this way, a single item can be created by more than one group – each group specializing in different techniques.

The mission of Aj Quen is to cooperate with the community's development to help them professionalize their crafting activities in the long run. Aj Quen offers courses to train members to improve their forms of production. The association also supports the members' efforts to learn to read and write in their respective Mayan languages.