

Ayahuasca

Ayahuasca or *Ayagwasca* (Hispanic) or *Aioasca* (Portuguese) or *Ayawaska* (Quechuan) is an entheogenic brew made from the *Banisteriopsis Caapi* vine. The origin of the word is: *aya* - soul and *waska* – vine. Other Brazilian words referring to the brew are *Caapi* and *Cipó*.



The brew is used as a traditional spiritual medicine in ceremonies of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon. Another ingredient in Ayahuasca is the shrub *Psychotria Viridis* which contains psychoactive and hallucinogenic compounds.

The ingredients of Ayahuasca are not subject to international control, and therefore not illegal to use.

Many states in the USA have recently decriminalized natural entheogens, and have ceased criminal penalties for the use and possession of entheogens derived from plants or fungi.



One senator stated: "Practices with entheogenic plants have existed for a long time and are considered to be sacred to human cultures and human interrelationships with nature, and are continued today by religious leaders, spiritual leaders, mentors and healers around the world.

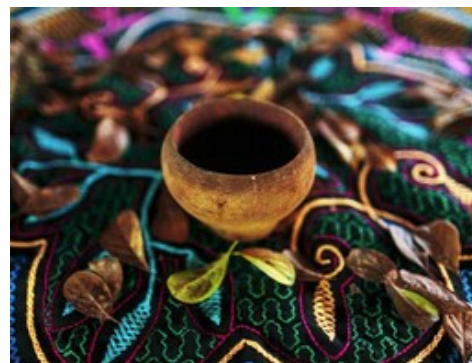
Ayahuasca is used as an aid to spiritual healing and enlightenment. People who work with it often align themselves with the philosophies and cosmologies associated with "Shamanism", as practiced by the indigenous peoples of Peru.

Ayahuasca affects the human consciousness for up to six hours, beginning half an hour after consumption, and peaking after two hours. In some cases, individuals experience significant psychological stress. Ayahuasca also has cardiovascular effects, increasing heart rate and diastolic blood pressure. So caution should be taken if you are at risk of heart disease.

The psychedelic effects of Ayahuasca include visual and auditory stimulation and psychological introspection that may lead to great elation, fear, or illumination.

Its purgative properties are important (known as "la purga" or "the purge"). The vomiting and diarrhea that it can induce clears the body of worms and other tropical parasites. Ayahuasca also contains alkaloids which help to kill other parasites in the body.

Dietary taboos are often associated with the use of Ayahuasca. For example, abstaining from fat, salt, caffeine, citrus fruits and sex before a ceremony are thought to reduce the possible side effects. However, dietary restrictions are not used by the Brazilian Ayahuasca church "União do Vegetal", suggesting that the risk of side effects is low.



Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayahuasca>

More reading (Portuguese): <https://www.tikura.com.br/o-que-e-ayahuasca/>